

**RE-READING HEGELIAN DIALECTICS: A STUDY OF
THE CONTEMPORARY WRITINGS OF
FREDRIC JAMESON**

A Thesis

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the
degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

In

ENGLISH

By

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**LOVELY PROFESSIONAL UNIVERSITY
PUNJAB
2022**

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ABSTRACT

The present study entitled: **“Re-Reading Hegelian Dialectics: A Study of the Contemporary Writings of Fredric Jameson”** investigates the postmodern theories of Fredric Jameson in his cultural studies. In the 1960s Jean-Francois Lyotard and Jean Baudrillard reacted against the tenets of modernism and published books to establish the postmodern culture. Lyotard wrote *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* (1979), Jean Baudrillard published his seminal work *From Marxism to Postmodernism and Beyond* (1989). Fredric Jameson turned to Hegel and borrowed from him the dialectical approach to analyse contemporary issues such as media culture; television, consumer culture, and the rise of capitalism. Jameson reacted against the traditional forces of economic determinism intending to review Marxism to cater to the needs of the contemporary society of America. Sartre visited America in the 1960s and Jameson was greatly impacted by his liberal ideas. He overhauled Marxian ideology; reviewed his concept of totality; and introduced the culture of Late Capitalism. Jameson’s theory of postmodernism and the theory of political consciousness is envisaged in his famous works such as *Postmodernism* or *The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1990) and *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981).

In the first chapter of the thesis **“Hegel and Evolution of Postmodern Theory of Fredric Jameson”**, a detailed analysis is given of the idealistic ideas of Hegel. The economic theories of Karl Marx are taken into account for the analysis of this chapter. Jameson observes that Marx’s view of history is the unfolding of progressive stages of history in which new cultural ideas develop leading to cultural growth. Jameson wrote books investigating the contribution of various Marxists such as Adorno, Benjamin, Althusser, and Raymond Williams. Jameson supports an interpretative critical approach in contrast to the structuralist and post-structuralist criticism. Jameson turned to Karl Marx, Adorno, and Althusser to investigate the operation of the historical process. He praised Marx for his sound theory of history but called it bad logic. He argued that it is not always correct there is a conflict between the classes.

The second chapter entitled, “**Evolution of New Marxism of Fredric Jameson in Sartre: The Origins of a Style**” has explored the indebtedness of Fredric Jameson to Jean-Paul Sartre. He needed a logical style to review Marxian theories and Sartre supplied him with the logical and argumentative style. The most exhilarating thing about reading Jameson is his deep insight into the philosophy of Marx and the modern relevance of the ideas of Marx in American society. He brought a renaissance of New Left Marxism in America and published half a dozen books providing a compact and comprehensible analysis of the ideas of Karl Marx.

In the third chapter entitled, “**Revision of Traditional Marxism in Fredric Jameson's *Marxism and Form***” the overhauling project of Jameson is explored in this cultural study. He rejected the traditional ideas of Marxism and gave a new impetus to the Marxian ideology seeking inspiration from many radical intellectuals of Europe who fled to America during and after World War II. Jameson is a prolific writer as he wrote a wide range of works analyzing and investigating contemporary Marxian thoughts and developing his own New Left Marxism.

In the fourth chapter entitled, “**Re-Reading of Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism***” the basic theories of postmodernism are investigated. Marx wrote his famous *Das Capital* to repudiate the ideas of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and the other bourgeois thinkers. Jameson became an international celebrity like Karl Marx when he gave his postmodern theories in his essay *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism (1991)*. Following the spirit of Benjamin, Jameson defends the role of late capitalism. Jameson argues that the world has changed with the massive growth of science and technology and mass media. He is of the firm view that a correct and meaningful understanding of the cultural changes is not possible without the proper knowledge of the postmodern culture of late capitalism. Jameson argues that postmodernism functions as “a cultural dominant, postmodernism is the product of a historical process; the consumption of sheer commodification as a process” (Jameson163).

In the fifth chapter of the study entitled, “**Political Consciousness in Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act***”, the

role of political ideology is examined in the context of the contemporary capitalist society of America. Jameson's *The Political Unconscious* rejects the traditional view that literature can be created in isolation from its political context. He contends that political interpretation can be at the center of all reading and understanding of fiction. In his new book, he launched materialist cultural studies adapting "Late Marxism of Lukacs, Bloch and Adorno" relying on the impact of political and historical forces on literature. Terry Eagleton (1986) praised Fredric Jameson thus: "The idealism of American criticism, *The Political Unconscious* established Jameson as without question the foremost American Marxist critic" (*Against the Grain* 28).

In the sixth chapter entitled, "**Postmodernism in Fredric Jameson's *The Ancients and the Postmoderns***", a comparative analysis is given between the ideas and philosophy of the ancients and the moderns. Jameson says that high modernism is now very far from us today as antiquity was for the Renaissance. Fredric Jameson's major new work investigates the role of a modern painting of Rubens and the music of Wagner and Mahler. He has recorded the history of postmodern experiments conducted in art, literature, and architecture. Jameson deeply investigated the Left-Marxian Crisis and even published the two-volume *Ideologies of Theory* (1988). Jameson continued his cultural exploration and critical thoughts and published his book *Late Marxism* (1990) and his Marxian approach and understanding reached their height when he published *The Cultural Turn* (1998).

In the "**Conclusion**" of the study, the journey of Fredric Jameson from modernism to postmodernism is traced. Jameson is primarily a Marxist but a postmodern Marxist since he has purged out all the traditional ideas of Marxism in his study of New Marxism. The modern relevance of the study is also highlighted. This study establishes the fact that Jameson emerges as a radical cultural critic of America singing the song of postmodernism. He is the first American thinker who dared to review Marxism for the first time and purged out all the old, orthodox, and rigid ideas of Marx for the suitability of contemporary American capitalist society. This thesis explores the problems and challenges of the emerging capitalist society. The political leaders can take positive steps to bring harmony between the bourgeoisie and the proletariats. The political leaders ought to take care of the forces of a new

capitalist economy based on greed and profit motive. In this study the contributions of Jameson in the domain of Marxist cultural studies since he reviewed the old and traditional Marxist ideology.

Objectives of Research

Precisely the thesis shall have the following objectives:

- 1) To study the idea of Dialectic as given by GWF Hegel and evidenced in the writings of Fredric Jameson
- 2) To trace the emergence of the New Left in America
- 3) To examine the malaise in contemporary American Capitalism
- 4) To appraise the developments in New Marxism
- 5) To apply the theory of Postmodernism of Fredric Jameson on Western Marxism

This research is a qualitative study on postmodernism as discussed by Fredric Jameson and his concept of New Marxism and its relevance in present times. The thesis is divided into the following Chapters:

Introduction: An Overview of Theory and Literature

Chapter 1. Hegel and Evolution of Postmodern Theory of Fredric Jameson

Chapter 2. Evolution of New Marxism of Fredric Jameson in *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*

Chapter 3. Revision of Traditional Marxism in Fredric Jameson's *Marxism and Form*

Chapter 4. Re-Reading of Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*

Chapter 5. Political Consciousness in Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*

Chapter 6. Postmodernism in Fredric Jameson's *The Ancients and the Postmoderns*

Conclusion

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Introduction: An Overview of Theory and Literature

The thesis entitled, “Re-Reading Hegelian Dialectics: A Study of the Contemporary Writings of Fredric Jameson” explores and investigates the indebtedness of Fredric Jameson to Hegel’s dialectics in his reinterpretation of Marxian ideology. Jameson was the product of the new cultural transformation of the 1960s of America and he emerged as a radical social critic propounding his theories of postmodernism. Karl Marx turned to G.W.F. Hegel to explore the depth of the historical process. Marx needed a logical base which was provided to him by Hegelian Dialectics in his study of history and society. In this thesis, the philosophical views of Hegel and the genesis of Marxian ideology are discussed in detail.

Hegel and Marxian Relationship

Karl Marx borrowed heavily from Hegel as the historical theory of Hegel suited Karl Marx. Hegel propounded the idealistic theory of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. Marx discarded Hegel’s idealism and used his Dialectical theory for his theory of economic determinism and the class struggle. Karl Marx was excited to find the totalitarian theory of Hegel; he justified the dictatorship of the communes and in his *Das Capital* he advocated totalitarianism. Hegel supported the idea of the welfare of the people; Marx pretended that what he was doing was for the welfare of the people since he had been fighting for the rights and economic promotion of the working classes. Karl Marx supported violence to uproot the capitalist classes and gave the dream of a classless society. Fredric Jameson revised and restructured Marxian ideology; he believed that Marxism was a good philosophy but a bad logic. Jameson revised Marxism and added humanistic touch and his New Marxism.

Hegelian Dialectics

Hegel discussed his dialectics which revolve around three progressive stages of development; thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis form a Hegelian Dialectics. It is a logical formula to understand the growth and development of human civilization and the process of history. A thesis is an intellectual proposition and an anti-thesis is

simply the negation of the thesis. A synthesis solves all the conflicts between the thesis and anti-thesis by recognizing the common truths and forming a new thesis. Hegel believes that the historical process is a continuous journey of decline and development through the process of thesis, anti-thesis and synthesis.

Re-reading Hegelian Dialectics

Fredric Jameson realized that traditional Marxism is not suitable for postmodern American society. This study is focused on the re-reading of Hegelian Dialectics by Jameson from the perspective of his postmodern theories. Jameson radically restructured Marxism in the context of postmodern American capitalism. He found drastic changes in the cultural production in America and the urgent need to restructure the traditional theory of Marxian ideology. Jameson realized that the new currents of postmodernism have emerged with the growth of mass media, computers, television and money culture. Ernest Hemingway, Joseph Heller and William Faulkner had celebrated the glories of war in their novels but a massive change had occurred in contemporary American society with the emergence of mass media and capitalism.

Postmodernism has been propagated by Fredric Jameson, Jean-Francois Lyotard, and Jean Baudrillard. They reacted against the tenets of modernism and published books to establish the postmodern culture. *The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* defines postmodernism as: "a style and movement in art, architecture, literature, etc. in the late 20th century that reacts against modern styles" (Hornby). The learned critics believe that postmodern culture brought new changes in art and philosophy reaction against modernism. The majority of the critics believe that the cult of postmodernism was a reaction against the philosophical ideas and style of modernism. *The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* defines modernism thus: Modernism is "a style and movement in art, architecture, and literature popular in the middle of the 20th century in which modern ideas, methods, and materials were used rather than traditional ones" (Hornby). Ihab Hassan in his famous book *Toward a Concept of Postmodernism* (1987) contended that modernism is a part of postmodernism because the postmodern writers also use the techniques of modern

writers. The postmodern writers differ from the postmodern writers in narration, symbolism, and meaning. Brian McHale published his book *Constructing Postmodernism* (1992) and argued that “Postmodernism is not a found object, but a manufactured artefact” (1). He further observes that “there is no such thing as postmodernism” (1).

Jean Francois Lyotard was perhaps the first writer who gave the name postmodernism for the first time. He analyzed the nature of knowledge and its role in society and explored the meta-narratives. Lyotard defines postmodernism as “incredulity towards metanarratives” (*The Postmodern Condition* 24). He wrote *The Postmodern Condition* (1979) and realized that the growth of science and technology led to the growth of communication, mass media, and computer. Lyotard advocated the multiplicity of society and advocated surreal literary devices to articulate the complex nature of society. Lyotard’s *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* is considered the bible of the postmodern movement. He gave a new outlook on the knowledge that has arisen after the Enlightenment. Lyotard believes that cybernetics has come to dominate society in post-World War I. Lyotard calls meta-narrative containing the treasure of knowledge of old history. Lyotard comments thus, “Meta-narratives are total philosophies of history, which make ethical and political prescriptions for society and generally regulate decision-making and the adjudication of what is considered truth. Meta-narratives roughly equate to the everyday notion of what principles society is founded on” (*The Postmodern Condition* 123).

In his seminal book *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, Fredric Jameson propounded his theory of postmodernism discarding the traditional theories of modernism. Jameson’s new theory brought a revolution in the domain of art and literature. His ideas were utilized to evaluate new cultural production. Jameson investigated and examined the old cultural production from the perspective of growing scientific ideas and mass media. He observed that in contemporary society computers, mass media, print media, advertisement, cheap culture, and popular culture have grown after the 1960s and their role in the cultural transformation cannot be underestimated and ignored. This postmodern approach of Jameson excited the

interest of the critics and reviewers who took a keen interest in his theory of Late Capitalism. Jameson explores the culture of modernism and differentiates it from postmodernism. Jameson borrowed from Jean Baudrillard the theory of disgust with the current approach to history and hermeneutical thinking. According to Jameson “postmodernity amounts to an immense dilation of culture’s sphere; the sphere of commodities, an immense and historically original acculturation of the Real” (Jameson x).

Fredric Jameson brought a revolution in the postmodern culture and he established his name as a great postmodern thinker. In post-World War II America many writers appeared on the literary scene who rejected the old conventional ideas; techniques and styles of Ernest Hemingway, Norman Mailer, Joseph Heller and made innovations in fiction. John Updike, Thomas Pynchon, Bashevis Singer, Nabokov, and Kurt Vonnegut are among the most celebrated postmodern novelists. They highlighted the problematic nature of postmodernism. The framework of analysis has a consistent bearing on Jameson’s theory of postmodernism and the theory of political consciousness as envisaged in his famous works such as *Postmodernism* or *The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991) and *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981). The research project involves a postmodern interpretation of selected works of Fredric Jameson who emerged as a prominent cultural critic in the 1960s in America.

Jameson brought radical changes in the theory of art. His views on postmodern elements such as black humor, intertextuality, fragmentation, mastered irony, magic realism, pastiche and meta-fiction became very popular and the writers such as Thomas Pynchon, Kurt Vonnegut, John Barth, and John Updike employed these postmodern ideas in their fiction rejecting the traditional techniques of modern writers. This study is an attempt to historicize and reinterpret the texts of Jameson in the light of the growing capitalist society of America. Jameson sought inspiration from Jean-Paul Sartre who visited America in the 1950s and was given an unprecedented warm welcome by the learned critics and writers of the age. Jameson was a student of John Hopkins University at that time. He was so much influenced by

the liberal thoughts of Sartre that he took the works of Sartre for his doctoral project. Jameson realized that the age of modernism has vanished and new values are fast appearing. He observed the tremendous growth of new culture in America and new tastes of the people developing with the cultural transformation. The significant change was with the rise of industry and technology and the emergence of oppressive capitalism. Jameson was deeply interested in portraying the bourgeoisie's repressive practices. As they encouraged the exploitation and tyranny, Jameson was outraged by the workings of the American institutions. American capitalism promoted the culture of greed, money-making, and profit-making. Fredric Jameson keenly observed the working of the capitalism of America and published several books to review and revise Marxian ideology for the healthy growth of capitalism. Jameson's views thrived in the intellectual circles and Jameson soon became a world-famous cultural critic of modern US capitalist society. In all his major writings the repressive policies of the bourgeoisie which exploited and subjugated the young Americans were exposed and criticized by Jameson. He wrote on the trapped character of workers to offer them freedom. He began a crusade against institutions and capitalism repressive structures. He read Foucault, who is regarded as the defender of freedom.

A Deterministic Economy of Power

Foucault studied the many stages in history and concluded that the power structure is prevalent and the major cause of loss of uniqueness in each civilization. Rousseau also observed that "Man is born free but he is everywhere in chains" and this ideal became the main cause of the French Revolution of 1789 in France. Foucault's writings have profoundly affected Jameson's current social and political thinking, as his critique of the power system is based on scientific and rational observations. He examined power via speeches, practices and tactics. In his study of many processes that affect the mind and thinking of the person, Foucault (1986) is of the firm belief that the power structure functions in each company. Foucault studied the nature and relationship between knowledge and power. The study of Foucauldian results in the question of who owns the knowledge that has the authority? He commented thus, "May be philosophy can still play a role on the side of counter-power, on the

condition that it gives itself the task of analyzing, elucidating, and making visible, and thereby intensifying the struggles that take place around power” (Foucault 140).

To examine the diverse forms of power, Foucault utilizes historical events. The ideas of archaeology and genealogy were explored by him to study the functioning of powerful institutions in history. Jameson’s hermeneutics is an investigation of the economic policies of Karl Marx; his theory of base, superstructure, and totalitarianism. Jameson is clear in his revision and interpretation of Marxist philosophy; he gives a perceptive and deep analysis of Marxian ideology through the lens of pragmatism. Jameson turns to Hegel to investigate the dialectical approach to history. Jameson was greatly impacted by Hegel’s view of history and Marxian deviation from Hegel’s idealism. Jameson observes that Marx’s view of history is the unfolding of progressive stages of history in which new cultural ideas develop leading to cultural growth. Jameson argues, “Only Marxism can give us an adequate account of the essential mystery of the cultural past, which, like Tiresias drinking the blood, is momentarily returned to life and warmth and allowed once more to speak and to deliver its long-forgotten message in surroundings utterly alien to it . . .” (91). He further added that, “These matters can recover their original urgency for us only if they are retold within the unity of a single great collective story; only if, in however disguised and symbolic a form, they are seen as sharing a fundamental theme” (*The Political Unconscious* 19).

Jameson in his *The Political Unconscious* argues that a literary work is “disguised and symbolic” in theme and form. Literary works are “cardinal episodes in a single unfinished plot” (20). It is essential to reinterpret the old theories and works of classical thinkers such as Karl Marx. The process of investigation and rewriting explores the mystery of the intrinsic relation a text has with history. The process of reinterpretation is helpful to comprehend the hidden meanings of the texts and their relevance in contemporary society. Jameson argues that the Marxist critics attempt to rewrite the texts in an allegorical mode. There is a consistent attempt to reconstruct a historical text. Jameson wrote books investigating the contribution of various Marxists such as Adorno, Benjamin, Althusser, and Raymond Williams. Jameson supports an interpretative critical approach in contrast to the structuralist and post-

structuralist criticism. Marxian approach to literature is an attempt to describe the relationship between literature and society. Gramsci has theorized that people collude in consent to prevailing ideological values. Michel Foucault in his essay *The Subject and Power* (1982) observes thus, “Power consists of taking the forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point. To use another metaphor, it consists in using this resistance as a chemical catalyst to bring to light power relations, locate their position, find out their point of application and the methods” (780).

Althusser gives a new theory of ideology in *Essays on Ideology* (1984) and argues that “ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (109). This means that the identity of people is constituted within ideology so that ideology is not only a matter of performing but also of living in ideology. Althusser (1969) observes thus, “Ideology acts or functions in such a way that it recruits subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or transforms the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpellation” (48).

Jameson learned the value of freedom from Sartre and he promoted the belief that man is born to enjoy freedom. He rejected the theory of totalitarianism advocated by Karl Marx. Jameson in his *The Political Unconscious* says, “The symbolic act, therefore, begins by generating and producing its context in the same moment of emergence in which it steps back from it, taking its measure with a view toward its project of transformation” (81).

Jameson discusses the contribution of Adorno who reinterpreted the theories of Karl Marx after World War II. Jameson argues that Adorno keenly observed the working of the capitalist society. He evaluated societal strengths, assuming his major interest is property ownership and capital accumulation. In this study, the social, political, historical views of Jameson are investigated. He is a pioneer of postmodern philosophy and argues that the world has changed and it is the right time to understand the real significance of history. This involves a radical transformation of the old interpretative methods. Fredric Jameson investigated the stylistic techniques and cultural values prevalent in contemporary postmodern society. The stylistic

techniques of Jameson created problems for the critics and admirers. MacCabe (1992) highlights the problem thus, "At one level this difficulty must simply be encountered. Jameson's style is an integral part of the effort to understand the world as both one and multiple, and if there is difficulty and awkwardness there is also pleasure and grace. He is a systematic thinker, like Sartre and Adorno, his two great masters". He further adds that, "That is to say, even the most local and specific analysis finds its place within an overarching theoretical framework. The specific analysis is always related, albeit in a dialectical fashion, to an extraordinarily sophisticated and detailed theory of culture and society". He emphasized that, "That theory, however, provides the underlying assumptions and reference - it is not present explicitly in every text. It is thus the paradoxical case that to read Jameson is always to read the entire oeuvre rather than a single particular text" (MacCabe ix).

Linda Hutcheon wrote *A Poetics of Postmodernism* and explained the postmodernist puzzle; she argues that postmodernism itself is paradoxical. She reiterates that postmodernism is both over-defined and under-defined since it has so many definitions. Linda Hutcheon in her *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History Theory and Fiction* (1988) observes that "post-structuralism and deconstruction are the main obvious theories that contributed to the growth of postmodernism" (188). Hutcheon argues that postmodernism is "an open, ever-changing theoretical structure" (14). In Western philosophy, Wittgenstein's philosophy in language and mathematics, mind remained revolutionary. His philosophy has much resemblance with the postmodern culture and movement. Like Nietzsche, Wittgenstein is hailed as the real precursor of the entire school of postmodernism. Jameson came under the influence of Auerbach when he submitted his doctoral thesis in 1961 entitled *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*. Erich Auerbach was a German philosopher and critic of literature. His seminal work *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* is often cited by critics. Jameson analyzed the literary form of poetry; investigated the role of history in making literature and studied philology and philosophy in the work of Sartre. He also explored the Marxist aspects of Sartre's work and in his career of forty years. When Jameson started writing Marx was becoming very popular in American society as many European intellectuals who had taken refuge in America after the Second World

War took a keen interest in the Marxian ideology. Theodor Adorno was one of the leading intellectuals who reinterpreted the ideas of Karl Marx in the 1960s. Jameson was also driven by his political connection with New Left and pacifist movements. Jameson seriously watched the Cuban Revolution and its global impact on politics as he stated that Marxism was alive and was considered as a culturally productive force. Jameson was influenced by the Frankfurt School and the Marxist scholars such as Kenneth Burke, Gyorgy Lukacs, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Louis Althusser. Jameson writes in his *From 'Reflections On The Brecht-Lukacs Debate* (1977): "In these circumstances indeed, there is some question whether the ultimate renewal of modernism, the final dialectical subversion of the new automatized conventions of aesthetics of perceptual revolution, might not simply be realism itself" (11). Jameson in his *Postmodernism* used the term "late modernism". The modern writers were impacted by the events of the Depression, Stalinism, the Jewish Holocaust, and new concepts of Socialism. Authors of Postmodernism are not much concerned with social realism but use the techniques of Dadaism and Surrealism. Jameson broke from orthodox Marxism-Leninism which held a narrow view of historical materialism. Jameson became an active Marxist like Raymond William and cofounded Marxist Literary Group in 1969 with many students of California University. Jameson rejected the orthodox and rigid view of Marxian ideology and contended that the cultural superstructure is determined by the economic base in the society. The Western Marxists analyzed the growth of culture as a historical process. Jameson and his followers held that culture must be studied relying on the idealistic theories of Hegel. Interestingly, Marx was also greatly impacted by the idealistic critique in his writings of Hegel. Jameson argued that the contribution of Hegel in the evolution of Marxism is undeniable. Jameson wrote *The Hegel Variations* and expressed his views on Left Marxism and Hegel. Jameson emerged as a cultural critic and philosopher of the postmodern movement and a critic of American society. W.E.B. DuBois was a black American novelist who incorporated the ideas of Hegel in his theory of double consciousness. Jameson wrote on the ideas of Hegel to bring a systematic study of Hegel as Jameson's *The Hegel Variations* is a close reading of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. Jameson found that the philosophical ideas of

Hegel are incoherent and unsystematic scattered in various places. He looks to rectify the shortcomings of Hegel's philosophical system. Jameson's book is a text of 400 pages on the dialectical theory of Hegel covering all the important topics such as art, criticism, globalization, and cultural studies. Jameson clarifies all the major ideas of Hegel in simple language. He puts forward a new system of thought, a new dimension of thinking, and follows the dialectical method of Hegel. Jameson argued that the reading of Hegel should be open system reading and closed-ended system based on orthodox ideas. Jameson argued that Hegel can help modern people to understand the postmodern tendencies to impose a correct language. Hegel helps man to come out of a mirage of universality that regresses cultural growth. Jameson argues that Hegel and his ideas can help human beings to understand the main problems of postmodernism. He redefined the meta-narrative and discussed its cultural value. He opined those meta-narratives are total philosophies of history containing ethical and political knowledge; people have great faith in these narratives as they regulate the decision-making process. According to John Stephens, a meta-narrative is a global or totalizing cultural narrative scheme which orders and explains knowledge and experience. The present thesis entitled "Re-Reading Hegelian Dialectics: A Study of the Contemporary Writings of Fredric Jameson" explores the philosophical ideas of Fredric Jameson who is a modern critic and philosopher. He reviewed all the important philosophical ideas and philosophical premises of Hegel and reinterpreted them from a postmodernist perspective. In the subsequent chapters, all the major postmodernist ideas of Jameson are explored and investigated.

Review of Literature of Past and Present

Christopher Pawling published *Popular Fiction and Social Change* (1984). He also published an article: "The American Lukacs? Fredric Jameson and Dialectical Thought" Jameson was interviewed when he published a book on Georg Lukacs and expressed his opinions on the fall of communism. He disclosed to Eva Corridor who interviewed him about his ideas of postmodernist Marxism. Jameson made a depth study of Lukacs's book *History and Class Consciousness*.

Clint Burnham (1986) published his article: "Postmodernism is the Theory, Gentrification is the Practice: Jameson, Haraldsson, Architecture, and Vancouver" and asserted that the postmodernist ideas had a great impact on the architectural designs of modern buildings. Jameson (1998) states that "the interesting buildings are those which try to resolve those contradictions through more or less ingenious formal and stylistic innovations" (Jameson 177).

David S. Gross (1988) in his article "Marxism and Resistance: Fredric Jameson and the Moment of Postmodernism" observes that "Fredric Jameson devoted his entire life and developed his positions by bringing his Marxist critique to bear the major critical theorists of the century" (2). He is similar to Marx whose writings on Hegel and Feuerbach were early and who produced *Das Capital* for denouncing the class war. David Gross believes that Jameson's critique is consistently administered in a lame, clarified and poetic style.

Neil Lazarus (1990) published his famous article: "Fredric Jameson on Third World Literature: A Qualified Defense" in which he reviewed the ideas and thoughts of Jameson. He expressed his Leftist ideology in his article "Third World Literature in the Era Multinational Capitalism" published in *Social Text*. Lazarus argues that Jameson makes controversial statements about Marxism in this article. His ideas about the relevance of Marxism have generated heated discussion among the cultural theorists.

John O'Kane (1998) published the article "Postmodern Negative Dialectics" arguing that the cultural change began with World War I and the Bolshevik Revolution of Russia. In France Marxism took a new turn and all the Marxian ideas were reinterpreted and reconsidered by the Western theorists. This led to the openness toward Marxism and its Hegelian concepts. Sartre turned to philosophy and his experiments are perhaps symptomatic. He tried to achieve a blending of Hegel and Kant. For Western Marxism, the 1960s was a testing time. There was a wave of discontentment against Fascism and Marxism took a new turn.

Jack Anderson's *The Origins of Postmodernity* (1998) is an epoch-making book of criticism of Jameson relating to an assessment of Western Marxism that

Jameson advanced three decades ago. He argued that Fredric Jameson was the product of the political defeat of the proletariat struggles of the 1920s; the revolution of the proletariats was crushed and this led to a sharp decline of Western Marxism since the center of gravity shifted toward philosophy. Adorno, Horkheimer, Sartre, and Marcuse focused their attention on philosophy and discarded the study of Marxism. But Jameson took the lead and wrote books to explore the value of Marxism in contemporary society.

Adam Roberts (2000) in his book *Fredric Jameson* observes that Jameson has been called the most important cultural critic of today. He has intensively explored the ideas of Marx relying on the theories of deconstruction, structuralism, and post-structuralism. He has a wide range of analyses from architecture to science fiction. Jameson is associated with two names Marxism and postmodernism. Marxism is a system of beliefs based on the writings of Karl Marx concerned with analyzing and changing the inequalities and injustices in the human world.

C.B. Sudhakaran in his thesis entitled, *Text as Praxis: a study of Frederic Jameson's critique of postmodernism* (2001) discusses about the writings of Frederic Jameson and has made a comparative analysis of Jameson along with his counterparts Lyotard and Baudrillard. The main focus of the thesis is on, the Logic of Periodization, the Cultural Logic, the Political Logic: Jameson, Lyotard and Baudrillard, the Logic of Totalization and the Logic of the Social Collective.

Maria Elisa Cevalco's *the Political Unconscious of Globalization: Notes from the Periphery* (2002) investigates the usefulness of the ideas and the cultural theories of Fredric Jameson. His critical tools are valuable for "cognitive mapping" in the postmodern world. The idea of space and time is predominant in postmodernism. Society is always flowing like a stream as lifestyles, fashions, and beliefs are always changing.

Douglas Kellner (2004) in his book *Fredric Jameson: A Critical Reader* argues that the Marxian trajectory of Jameson began with the production of his analysis on Jean-Paul Sartre. Jameson's *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* is the backbone of his Marxian criticism. He was influenced by Leo Spitzer in his stylistic narrative as

he evolved his new vision of the world. This book is devoid of the Marxian readings but it has the germs of the working of the business society of the 1960s. The book on Sartre empowered Jameson to develop his critical intellect which later on helped him in analyzing and deconstructing Marxism.

Xudong Zhang (2004) in his article: “Modernity as Cultural Politics: Jameson and China” contends that the theories of Jameson have profound theoretical influence in China. Chinese intellectuals were excited by the new theories of postmodernism of Jameson as they took a keen interest in “critical theory”, “cultural criticism” in China. Jameson visited China in 1985 and delivered some lectures there at Peking University during the Fall semester. The new generation of Chinese students took a keen interest in the cultural theories of Jameson. This article discusses the influence of Jameson on the Chinese intellectuals.

Slavoj Zizek (2004) published his famous article: “Jameson as a Theorist of Revolutionary Philately” investigating the important cultural ideas of Fredric Jameson. He refers to Marx and his theory of economic determinism from the postmodern perspective. Marx explores the inner universe of merchandise discussing the “primitive accumulation” and the myth of the capitalist and its origin. Jameson explores the nature of the Western New Left. Jameson investigates the horrors of Nazis and the horrors of Soviet Communism.

Michael Chanan’s (2004) “Talking Film with Fredric Jameson: Conversation with Michael Chanan” is an important dialogue between two modern thinkers. Jameson discusses his views on French films and the historical role of the theories of Althusser in France. Jameson argued that good films should communicate the relevance of postmodernism and there should be an ideological analysis of films. The films should be free from “vulgar content”.

Christian A. Gregory’s (2010) article “Stranded Economics” investigates the postmodernist Marxian ideology of Jameson. His revolutionary ideas and thoughts generated huge interest in an entire generation of students and scholars. His postmodernism has become a brand name of the contemporary cultural scene. His discourses created great interest in the writers and thinkers of the U.S., Europe, and

Asia. In 1991, Jameson published *Postmodernism* and synthesized disparate observations.

The Research Gap in the Past and the Present Research

The intensive review of literature of the past and the present research articles, thesis and the books published on the cultural theories of Jameson reveals that there is no full-length study on the topic “Re-Reading Hegelian Dialectics: A Study of the Contemporary Writings of Fredric Jameson”. This research will fill the research gap and the study is a fruitful analysis of the cultural and Marxian theories of Fredric Jameson who is a postmodernist American critic and cultural theorist.

Objectives of the Proposed Research

- (a) To study the idea of dialectic as given by GWF Hegel and evidenced in the writing of Fredric Jameson
- (b) To trace the emergence of the New Left in America
- (c) To examine the malaise in contemporary American capitalism
- (d) To appraise developments in New Marxism
- (e) To apply the theory of Postmodernism of Fredric Jameson on Western Marxism

Texts taken for the Research Project

- (a) *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* (1961)
- (b) *Marxism and Form* (1971)
- (c) *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991)
- (d) *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981)
- (e) *The Ancients and the Postmoderns: On the Historicity of Forms* (2015).

Research Methodology

In this thesis the guidelines of the latest 8th edition of the MLA style sheet have been observed. A comparative study of all the important works of Fredric Jameson has been done. The main focus of the study is on the postmodernist issues discussed by

Jameson and his concept of postmodernist Marxism. The original works of Hegel and Fredric Jameson have been examined and the old reviews of research journals, newspapers, and magazines have been consulted. This study is qualitatively based on the textual analysis of Hegel and Fredric Jameson. The textual analysis of Fredric Jameson has been done to explore the ideas and concepts of postmodernism propounded by Jameson and their relevance in the present world.

Chapter 1

Hegel and Evolution of Postmodern Theory of Fredric Jameson

Fredric Jameson's postmodern aesthetics excited great interest among the cultural critics and reviewers and philosophers of American society. The thesis, "Re-Reading Hegelian Dialectics: A Study of the Contemporary Writings of Fredric Jameson" is a serious attempt to explore and investigate the texts of Fredric Jameson. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel brought a revolution in the domain of philosophy. He was a prominent German thinker and philosopher; a scholar of Tübingen and explored the philosophical ideas of Immanuel Kant and Fichte and Russell. Hegel wrote his seminal book *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). Hegel came under the influence of French Rationalism, British empiricism, and the transcendental philosophy of Immanuel Kant. The philosophical ideas of the Romantics also influenced Hegel. He dedicated his whole life to explore the mystery of truth and envisages a philosophical theory incorporating all knowledge developing a totalizing philosophy comprehending reality. The main focus of Hegel is to integrate all the ideas found in art, religion, and literature. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel is an idealist who followed the principles of Plato and wrote *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807), *Science of Logic* (1812), *Elements of Philosophy of Right* (1820), *Lectures on the Philosophy of History* (1837), *Lecture on Aesthetics* (1830) and *Philosophy of Nature* (1842). Hegel brought a revolution in the domain of philosophy as he emerged as a great German thinker and philosopher, a scholar of Tübingen.

Fredric Jameson as a Radical Cultural Critic

Jameson turned to Karl Marx, Adorno, and Althusser to investigate the operation of the historical process. He praised Marx for his sound theory of history but called it bad logic. He argued that it is not always correct there is a conflict between the classes. Jameson started writing in the 1960s when science and technology had made tremendous strides in America. The wave of rationalism had deeply influenced the mind and sensibility of American thinkers. They questioned everything from a rational perspective. Rapid industrialization brought about the growth of money

culture and this led to the decline of the idea of the American Dream. The rich industrialists owned the means of production, they had become selfish, greedy, and mean. Their main aim was to amass wealth and their main motto was to make a profit. Jameson realized that a new world has dawned after World War II as the old values of the pioneers had been replaced by the new values of money culture. The progressive era in America had started with the rise of heavy industry in the 1960s. There were two powerful sections in society; one controlled by the power structure of the capitalists and the other populated by the poor and middle-class workers living in slums and struggling to survive and fighting against the destructive policies of capitalism. America needed an ideology to battle with the forces of capitalistic oppression. Jameson emerged as a new cultural critic of America who evaluated everything from the perspective of the theory of postmodernism.

Karl Marx and Fredric Jameson on Historicity

He turned to history and read the theories of Karl Marx who gave a scientific analysis of the historical process. Jameson realized in the early phase of his writing career that no systematic theory can be evolved without the scientific theory of history because the basis of Marxism was based on the logical historical process. Sartre also had praised Karl Marx for his logical view of history. If Jameson had to bring the transformation of Marxism it was essential for him to evolve a new view of the historical process. He investigated the ideas on history expressed by Marxist thinkers such as Althusser and Georg Lukacs. In his *History and Class Consciousness* (1971) Lukacs observed thus:

History as a totality (universal history) is neither the mechanical aggregate of individual historical events nor is it a transcendent heuristic principle opposed to the events of history, a principle that could only become effective with the aid of a special discipline, the philosophy of history. The totality of history is itself a real historical power - even though one that has not hitherto become conscious and has therefore gone unrecognized – a power which is not to be separated from the reality (and hence the knowledge) of the individual facts

without at the same time annulling their reality and their factual existence. (72)

They are the true and ultimate foundation of their actuality and factual existence and hence their knowledge even as separate facts. (Lukacs 151). In his *The Political Unconscious*, (1981) Jameson's punch line is "Always historicize". This book was a continuation of the investigation of the historical process. He contended thus, "The primary energy of revolutionary activity derives from this memory of prehistoric happiness which the individual can regain only through its externalization, through its reestablishment for society as a whole" (Jameson 113). He further adds:

The loss or repression of the very sense of such concepts as freedom and desire takes, therefore, the form of a kind of amnesia or forgetful numbness, which the hermeneutic activity, the stimulation of memory as the negation of the here and now, as the projection of Utopia, has as its function to dispel, restoring to us the original clarity and force of our own most vital drives and wishes. (113)

Jameson scrapped all the old and obsolete ideas of Marx and introduced new ideas to cater to the needs of the contemporary capitalistic society. Robert Young in his book: *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (1990) praised Jameson for his revival of Marxian ideology in the context of postmodern society. He commented thus: "Jameson's Marxist criticism offered a return to a kind of ethical criticism, which Structuralism and Deconstruction appeared to have ruled out of the debate" (Young 91). He further adds, "As Young writes 'this appealed to a traditional understanding of criticism's value, as well as to male critics who felt increasingly upstaged by the forceful politics that feminism had made available to women'" (Young 91).

His *The Political Unconscious* was seen as a breakthrough in the revolutionary book on Marxism. He called it the "Althusserian Revolution" (37). Jameson announced that Althusser was a great discovery for him as his Marxian theory gave him a new direction. The influence of Althusser is quite visible in his reformation project of Marxian ideology. Mark Poster in his *Sartre's Marxism* (1982) observes thus:

Jameson was heralding a theoretical revolution that had already passed by and of which the critique was now firmly established within British Marxism. This model provides him with a means by which to come to terms with the persistent problem for Marxism: the problem of mediation, the task of specifying the relationship between various levels, and of adapting analyses from one level to another in light of a meaningful story of the past, present, and future of the human community. (Poster 91)

Hegel and his Philosophical Ideas

The punch line in the Philosophy of Hegel is “only the whole is real” as Plato declared that art is thrice removed from reality. Like Plato, Hegel is an idealist who introduced a new concept of *Geist* or Spirit that unifies everything. Hegel sees an order prevailing in the universe and argues that each particle of reality in isolation is incomplete and is an abstraction. Every particle of reality becomes effective when connected with the whole. For Hegel whole is the real factor operating in the universe; it symbolizes the Spirit and has the potential to resolve all the perplexities and problems of life and society. Russell also argued that Hegel came under the spell of mysticism and opposed separateness and demonstrated that nothing in this universe existed independently. Jameson emphasizes the whole because he feels that units have no existence.

Spinoza had put faith in the essential homogeneous reality; it symbolizes the Substance of God. For Hegel reality is inseparable; homogeneous and universal operating all parts of the world. Hegel's views of reality differ from Spinoza's; his system is complex compared to an organism. Reality is absolute; Hegel believes that reality is ideal and the teleological principle governs the structure of reality. Hegel sought inspiration from Aristotle in his teleological conception of reality. Hegel explored Kant's theory of reality discussed in his *Critique of Reason* and argued that the approach of Kant is defective to explore reality. Kant argued that reason is supreme and reality is governed by reason because reason is the faculty of the soul. Reason forms a systematic structure of truth explaining principles, forms, and rules.

Hegel attempts to fill the gap and he goes beyond Kant in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The approach of Kant is scientific and rationalistic but Hegel's approach is historical. Hegel argues that there were contradictions in his thinking but all these contradictions can be resolved by the principle of synthesis. The reason is the law that produces; it is both subjective and objective reality. Categories of thinking are just not elements of subjective thinking but are modes of being. They are not empty frames but are substantial things. Hegel opposed Kant's idea of pure reason; he opposes the deduction of categories in terms of empirical statements of facts. Hegel evolved a new theory of reality and a new metaphysics. Hegel's *Geist* includes nature, humanity, and history. In his, *The Philosophy of History* Hegel discusses his concept of all-inclusive idealism. Hegel is an idealist believing that truth is a reality; it is a living process in the universe. The dialectical method is the ideal approach to explore reality.

Hegel and His Dialectical Method

Hegel is known for his "Dialectical Method" in the history of political thought and philosophy. There are two approaches to dialectic; Plato's dialectical method is based on the solution of conflicting points of view and this was very famous in the Greek world. Immanuel Kant believed that the dialectical method is a means to discover the truth as "truth is the truth behind the appearances". In *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant explores the nature of transcendental dialectic. In 1808 Hegel strived to construct a bridge between the logic of Aristotle and his own and published his dialectical methods in *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). Hegel also wrote *Elements of Philosophy of Right* (1820) to investigate the role of freedom in human society. Hegel maintains that freedom can be used to explain the moral, social, and economic implications discussed in a text.

Dialectical Thinking

Dialectical thinking of Hegel cannot be so easily explained but it can only be seen in practice. It is not a method of a set of principles. For Hegel, only the whole is true. Every stage is partial and therefore partially is untrue. Hegel has full faith in the concept of totality which is a manifestation of the Spirit pervading in this universe. Hegel was an idealist like Plato and wanted to bring about an ideal society based on

equality and justice. For Hegel, dialectic is not a method as he observes in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*, “The dialectic is more of a panorama of human experience than a form of cognitive ascension. It has its definite movements, even improvements, but it is the journey, not the final destination, that gives us our appreciation of humanity, its unity, and differences” (48). Dove in his *Hegel’s Phenomenological Method* claims that “Hegel’s method in *Phenomenology* is radically undialectical”. The philosophy of Hegel is the experience of consciousness itself. Stephen Houlgate in *The Hegel Reader* (1998) contends thus:

The experience of consciousness itself is dialectical, according to Dove, Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* is merely the description of this dialectical process. This is why Hegel calls his study *Phenomenology*. Hegel aims to show how true knowledge—philosophy—gradually and necessarily *appears* or ‘come on the scene’. On the other hand, Hegel demonstrates the necessity of philosophy by considering, not what natural consciousness *is*, but what natural consciousness takes itself and its objects to be, that is, the way consciousness and its objects appear to consciousness itself. (41)

Dialectic in *Phenomenology of Spirit*

Dove has analyzed the theory of Hegel’s dialectic maintaining that his theory is based upon sound logic *and* rationalism. Dove contends that “Hegel’s theory is based on the progressive development of *Geist*” (60). Dove has discussed the three important stages of growth and development of the spirit. Dove says: “Hegel mentions three main stages in *Phenomenology of Spirit*: Consciousness, Self-Consciousness, and Reason. Each stage also includes sub-stages. Every stage generates the subsequent one. The general view of Hegel’s philosophy is first to describe the attitude of consciousness by itself and then to make an analysis of this description” (Dove 60). He develops via a description of the dialectical process of consciousness itself, from natural awareness in the chapter "consciousness", Hegel (1977) observes thus, “The mind’s immediate existence, conscious life, has two aspects cognition and objectivity which is opposed to or negative of the subjective function of knowing” (60). He

further added that, “Since it is in the medium of consciousness that the mind is developed and brings out its various moments, this opposition between the factors of conscious life is found at each stage in the evolution of mind, and all the various moments appear as modes or forms of consciousness” (Hegel 60). Hegel is not materialistic like Karl Marx; he wanted to improve the spiritual development of the people. His idealistic theory was scrapped by Karl Marx who wanted to explore the historical bases of the society based on class antagonism. Hegel in the *Preface to Phenomenology* states thus:

The scientific statement of the course of this development is a science of the *experience* through which consciousness passes; the substance and it's the process is considered as the object of consciousness. Consciousness knows and comprehends nothing but what falls within its experience; for what is found in experiences is a merely spiritual substance, and, moreover, *the object* of its self. Mind, however, becomes an object, for it consists in the process of becoming another to itself, i.e., *an object for its self*, and in transcending this otherness. (Hegel 96)

Aufhebung or Sublation

The logic of Aristotle is based on the deductive pattern of thoughts. Hegel dissolves this static view of Aristotle and gave it a dynamic form giving his idea of “whole.” The whole preserves what it overcomes. Hegel argues that nothing is lost or destroyed but preserves as in a spiral. The growth of a fern or shell is an example of preservation. Hegel gives an organic and dynamic approach and discards the mechanical logic of Aristotle. His term *Aufhebung* means “sublation” or preservation. Today all theories; chaos theory, postmodern cosmology, Quantum theory subscribe to the ideas of Hegel of “whole of totality”.

Hegel's Thesis; Anti-thesis and Synthesis

Karl Marx was greatly impacted by Hegel's theory of *Thesis*, *anti-thesis*, and *Synthesis* when he wrote his famous book *Das Capital* (1867). Marx brought a

revolution in the history of art, literature, and philosophy. The dialectic process of Hegel is the core idea to reach Absolute Reality. Hegel has outlined three stages of the dialectical process; thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis. They are the three moments of the dialectic. At the end of the dialectical process, the thesis and anti-thesis are integrated into a whole called synthesis. Hegel's exploration is based on the ideal view of the world. Hegelian dialectics revolve around three progressive stages of development. These dialectical terms form the basis of Marxian theory as no writer could a satisfying answer to the sequential Hegelian dialectic. Mark Poster (1982) says: "*Thesis, Anti- thesis and Synthesis* is a formula for the explanation of the change. The thesis is an intellectual proposition. Anti-thesis is simply the negation of the thesis. And synthesis solves the conflict between the thesis and anti-thesis by reconciling their common truths and forming a new thesis" (Poster 92). The historical process of the growth of human civilization is based on this sequential formula. Hegel observes thus, "Mind is, therefore, in its every act only apprehending itself, and the aim of all genuine science is just this, that mind shall recognize itself in everything in heaven and on earth" (Hegel 284).

Poster (1982) observes that "Self-consciousness is not the last stage of *Phenomenology*. It is a process to attain the following stages. The last stage is the stage of 'Reason'. It is the negation of the second one" (Poster 91). Hegel states thus, "The reason is spirit when its certainty of being all reality has been raised to the level of truth, and the reason is consciously aware of itself as its world, and of the world as itself" (Hegel 457).

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels took up the cause of the proletariat exploited and oppressed by the capitalists. The struggle of the workers ultimately leads to a class society and helps the workers to gain a higher form of human society based on justice and equity. Contrary to Marxism, Hegelian Dialectic relies on the theory that human experience is dependent on the perceptions of the mind. Marxist dialectics emphasize the significance of class and labor and the socio-economic forces. Marx used Hegel's theory of thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis to defend his economic determinism and materialism. Marx argued the evolution of social organization

manifests the true spirit of material growth. Marxian concepts of *Dialectical Materialism*, *Historical Materialism*, and *Marxist Economics* are based on Hegel's Dialectical methods. Marx rejected Hegelian dialectic and his idealist views and developed Marxist dialectics and gave the materialist view of society. He argued that the economic forces govern the growth of human civilization. His theory of base and superstructure are the bases of his theory of economic determinism. Marx sees economic as the basis of all societies; it's all about money and who owns producing means to generate money. Out of these grows the superstructure that is determined by the base. Precisely, the shape of the superstructure depends upon the shape of the base. The law of society, ethics, religion, art and culture, and political power comes under the superstructure. He talked of exploitation and poverty which were the real culprits in society. In *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845), Marx defended his theory of "Dialectical Materialism" Marx holds that the world is material and materialism is "a realist philosophy of science" as all matter in the universe consists of matter of motion. Marx says that Hegel is concerned with "the process of "the human brain". Hegel's ideas are based on dialectical idealism but the ideas of Marx are based on dialectical materialism; the world of production and economic activity.

The Theory of Alienation: Hegel and Marx

Karl Marx propounded the theory of alienation and this concept brought a massive transformation in art and literature and criticism. Hegel explored the nature of alienation and this is the basis of his theory of art and literature. The poets, novelists, and dramatists have taken a special interest in the role of alienation and its impact on the mind and sensibility of individuals. In Hegel's writings, the term alienation is mystical and transcendental but in Marx, it deals with the relationship of labor with his product. *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy* defines alienation as "the act, or result of the act, through which something, or somebody, becomes alien to something, or somebody, else" (76). Gyorgy Lukacs in *Young Hegel* (1938) observes that "alienation is a loss of freedom in society by social contract and he explores alienation in the context of social relations" (Lukacs 123). Bernard Murchland in his book *The Age of Alienation* (1971) observes "that alienation has multiple manifestations

disorders such as loss of self, anxiety, anomie, depersonalization, rootlessness, and meaninglessness, isolation and lack of community” (Murchland 4). In Marxian philosophy of economic determinism, alienation leads to the sufferings of the workers. Murchland further argues that “It is an outcome resulting from political and economic conditions. Marx sees alienation as a curse in society. Marx’s theory of alienation is based on alienation from the product of labor and alienation from the labor process” (Murchland 4). Marx discarded the philosophical abstract concepts such as “beauty”, “spirit” and “truth” and he expressed his concern for the actual economic condition of the people suffering abject poverty and unemployment and hunger. Marx wrote in *The Communist Manifesto* (1845) that “the philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways, the point is changing it” (158). Marx argued that the world needs to be transformed because modern society is inequitable and millions of people today are living in poverty and are confronting diverse economic disparities. Marx’s journey begins with Hegel and no study of Marxian ideology is complete without the understanding of the impact of Hegel on him. Paul Edwards (1967) observes thus: “For Hegel alienation means self –alienation; it is the process or result of the process, by which a self (God or man) through itself that is through its action becomes alien to itself that are to its nature” (Paul Edwards 78). Bernard Murchland (1971) observes that “Alienation manifests in multiple disorders such as loss of self, anxiety states, anomie, depersonalization, rootlessness, and meaninglessness, isolation, and lack of community” (Murchland 4). According to Bernard Murchland, “This condition is obvious in segments of our society—among the poor, blacks, women, students, individuals, workers, the mentally ill, and dope addicts, etc.” (8). Murchland explains the process of alienation thus:

Marx analyses alienation as something that causes the control to be lost from hands. He argues that alienation is an outcome resulting from political and economic conditions. He sees alienation as the reduction of human essence to the status of a commodity. Feuerbach uses this concept to criticize religion. He argues that religion is a kind of alienation that leads human beings to be alienated and severed from

themselves. For him, the idea of God is no more than our idea of our human essence. (33)

Fredric Jameson and Marxism: Beginning of Marxist Post-structuralism

Fredric Jameson is a prolific writer who reviewed and reformed Marxism in the 1960s developing his own neo-Marxist theoretical position in America. Fredric Jameson (April 1934) is primarily a Marxist thinker and the bulk of his critical work is engaged in the debate of Marxist post-structuralism. After World War II, the leftists had become critical of the theories of Marx and a range of debates ensued challenging the Marxian radical ideas enshrined in his *Das Capital*. Michel Foucault systematically challenged historicism in his *The Order of Things* (1966) and *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1969). Deluge and Guattari published *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) giving their views of history in the twentieth century. Theodor Adorno (1939-1971), Walter Benjamin (1892-1940), and Georg Lukcas (1885-1971) wrote many articles and reinterpreted Marxian materialism. Theodor Adorno's book *Late Marxism* (1990) is a sophisticated analysis of the Marxian ideology. Jameson's *The Political Unconscious* (1980) remains as his fervent critique of Marxism as it includes a lengthy discussion of the ideas and relevance of Marx's ideas. Jameson initiated the debate on Marxist post-structuralism by publishing his book *Marxism and Form* which generated huge interest in American readers. *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1990) of Fredric Jameson's is regarded as the Bible of postmodernism. His more recent works include *Valences of the Dialectics* (2009), *The Antinomies of Realism* (2013), and *The Ancients and the Postmoderns* (2015).

Fredric Jameson is a reputed Professor of Contemporary Literature Romance Studies. He is known as a cultural critic of modern America. He has taught courses covering modernist literature and cinema. He studied the works of Marx, Freud, Nietzsche, Sartre, and Zizek and is closely linked with the Frankfurt School. He has introduced the postmodernist trends in the analysis of Marxist methodology. Jameson's originality lies in the fact that he reinterpreted most of the famous concepts of Marx such as "totality, universality, historicism, representation" in his writings. Globalization of Western capitalism inspired to review of all the prominent ideas of

Marx in his books and articles. Jameson talks of the “crisis of Marxism” and discusses all the major issues from the perspective of his postmodernist vision. In his book *The Ideologies of Theory, Volume I; Situation of Theory* (1988), Jameson discusses the crisis of Marxism thus: “It would be idealistic to suppose the deficiencies in the abstract idea of social class, and in particular in the Marxian conception of class struggle, can have been responsible for the emergence of what seem to be new non-class forces” (181). Jameson argued that intellectual ideas are useless if they don’t carry forward the material conditions of society. Marxism was a dominant intellectual paradigm before World War II and many intellectuals supported Marxian “dreams of an emancipated humanity.” The intellectual climate changed in 1945 as humanists, Catholics, Moralists and Existentialists were dissatisfied with the Marxian ideology and wanted it to be reviewed. Poster in his book *Sartre’s Marxism* (1982) argued that Marx himself had to “reduce human value and human experience to economic value and work experience” (Poster 64). The modern critics of Marx expressed their concern for human freedom, agency, and subjectivity. Sartre and other existentialists talked of humanist Marxism as Sartre says, “A Marxist should look at the relations of daily life, not just relations of production, to make society intelligible, that picks up from existentialism the effort to capture human beings in the moment of the active creation of their world, and finally, that rejects the attempt to have a closed theory complete within itself” (Poster xi).

Sartre argued that Marxism and existentialism converge in a significant way as the subjects create their destiny and both are the philosophers of action (Poster 109). His first book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* (1961) was written under the influence of his teacher Erich Auerbach. The book focused on the stylistic techniques of Sartre and, values and vision of the world. But this critical work encouraged Jameson to evolve a critical style and discard the modes of contemporary criticism. Jameson intensively explored the various critical trends and he studied Marxian literary theory of the 1960s being influenced by the New Left and anti-war movement. Fredric Jameson wrote his first book *Marxism and Form* (1971) to deal with the problem of the Marxian crisis. This first book of Jameson established him as a spokesman of the dialectical tradition of Neo Marxist post-structuralism. Jameson’s Marxism is focused

on the issue of totality. Those who believe in this concept of Hegel are called Hegelian because they believe that the whole picture of society and the universe in which man lives is governed by a supreme power and they view the system as a totality. But Louis Althusser of France lashed at the concept of totality and considered it oppressive. Jameson is usually seen as a Hegelian Marxist who inherited the traditions of thoughts from Lukacs and Adorno and rejected the ideology of Althusser. Marx believed that ideology is false and misleading; it is a set of beliefs that distorts the truth of the economic base of the society. He advocated the cause of the labor class exploited and oppressed by the rich capitalists for their profit aggrandizement. He rejected the idea of the people that some people are rich and some are poor because of nature. Jameson gave his concept of culture rejecting the traditional ideas of Althusser. He argued in *Marxism and Form* that Marx ideology was “false consciousness”. In this book, Jameson argues that, “Culture is to be thought of as something more and other than...the false consciousness, that we associate with the word ideology, and is instead something that possesses an “uneasy existence, an uncertain status” (Jameson 4).

Jameson published his thought-provoking book *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* (1981) which made him an international celebrity and an authority of post-structural Marxism. In this book *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson articulates his literary method. Jameson successfully establishes Marxian criticism as the most inclusive framework incorporating issues and ideas related to the workers. He gives the history of literary evolution showing his dual ideological and utopian hermeneutics. He was inspired by Lukacs who argued that the “cultural texts contain a political conscious buried narrative and social experience”. Jameson observes thus, “the construction of the bourgeois subject in emergent capitalism and its schizophrenic disintegration in our own time” (Jameson 9).

The phrase “political unconscious” became famous in American cultural criticism expressing a class conflict expressed in his text. The purpose of the analysis is to resolve all contradictions which cannot be bridged at the material-historical level. The text is analyzed as an allegory, an ideological signifying method that functions in

the gap between signifier and signified. Jameson discusses the ideas of Frye, Levi-Strauss, Lukacs, and Freud. Jameson employs “mechanistic causality” “express causality” “structural causality” to analyze the structure of the texts. Jameson (1981) comments thus, “There seems, for instance, to have been an unquestionable causal relationship between the admittedly extrinsic fact of the crisis in late nineteenth-century publishing, during which the dominant three-decker lending library novel was replaced by a cheaper one-volume format and the modification of the ‘inner form’ of the novel itself” (Jameson 26).

In Fredric Jameson’s *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*, the approach is hermeneutic and cultural as he sought inspiration from Ernest Mendel. Jameson deeply explored the stages of growth of capitalism divided by Mendel into three phases. The first stage is the industrial development and second is the coming of the electricity and internal combustion engine and the third stage is the emergence of the nuclear age. Jameson has named the first stage as the stage of realism; the second period is characterized as an age of modernism and the present age is described as an age of postmodernism. Postmodernism is the sensing of the end of movements, particularly the modern movement. Modernism is characterized by the abstract in the art for example, and by technology elsewhere. The integration of trade, advertising and cheap culture into the character of individuals characterises postmodernism. Other names for post-modernism are the "electronic" age or post-industrial age. This suggests that the social system of postmodernism no longer obeys the laws of capitalism. Baudrillard takes a dystopic view of the global world because there is a disconnection of the historical process. Today postmodernity has converted the past into the pastiche. The outcome is capitalism thinking over all types of thinking in all disciplines. He contrasts the contemporary with the outmoded postmodern condition. Modernism in “some residual zones of nature of being of the old, the older, the archaic” and till believed that one could “do something to that nature and work at transforming the referent” (Jameson ix). Jameson says, “postmodernist amounts “to an immense dilation of culture’s sphere; the sphere of commodities, an immense and historically original acculturation of the Real” (Jameson x). In his *Marx: Modules: Jameson: Late Capitalism*, Jameson observes that

“modernism was still minimally and tangentially the critique of the commodity and the effort to make it transcend itself, and postmodernism is the consumption of sheer commoditization as a process” (x). Indeed, the “victory of commodification over all spheres of life marks postmodernity’s reliance on the cultural logic of late capitalism” (Jameson 13).

Fredric Jameson’s Postmodernism: Main Characteristics

Pastiche

In his *The Cultural Turn: Selected Writings on the Postmodern* (1998) Jameson observes thus, “I want here to sketch a few of how the new postmodernism expresses the inner truth of that newly emergent social order of late capitalism but will have to limit the description to only two of its significant features, which I will call pastiche and schizophrenia” (Jameson 3).

Fredric Jameson rejects techniques employed by modern writers and evolving his perception of reality. His sense of visual acuity is unique as the witty style of Jameson is charming. The prose of Jameson has “the sharpness of a surgeon’s scalpel, the precision of a fine watch and focuses on the commonplace like the eye of an X-ray machine.” Most of the critics of Jameson note that he is very difficult to understand because of his subtle and metaphorical prose style. Terry Eagleton (1986) considers it “unimaginable that anyone could read Jameson’s magisterial, busily metaphorical sentences without profound pleasure, and indeed I must acknowledge that I take a book of his from the shelf as often in place of poetry or fiction as literary theory” (Eagleton 66). Jameson defines pastiche in *The Cultural Turn* thus, “Pastiche is blank parody, a parody that has lost its sense of humor: pastiche is to parody what that curious thing, the modern practice of a kind of blank irony, is to what Wayne Booth calls the stable and comic ironies of the eighteenth century” (5).

Jameson argues that the old themes and styles of the 19th and 20th centuries have become outdated. In his topic ‘Death of the Subject’ Jameson talks of various socio-political developments of the contemporary age. He is confronted with the same problem which Eliot confronted when he wrote *The Waste Land*. Eliot needed a new

medium so he turned to Ezra Pound and Baudelaire for inspiration. Jameson observes in his essay *Postmodernism and Consumer Society* that individualism and individual subjects are no more relevant. He comments thus, “Yet today, from any number of distinct perspectives, the social theorists, the psychoanalysts, even the linguists, not to speak of those of us who work in the area of culture and cultural and formal change, are all exploring the notion that this kind of individualism and personal identity is a thing of the past” (6), he further added, “that the old individual or individualists subjects are “dead”, and that one might even describe the concept of the unique individual and the theoretical basis of individualism as ideological” (Jameson 6).

Jameson rejects all stylistic techniques including parody which was popular in the 18th and 19th centuries. He argues that in the postmodern age pastiche is the right and suitable stylistic technique to articulate the contemporary malaise of the American people. He comments thus in *The Cultural Turn*, “Pastiche is, like parody, the imitation of a peculiar or unique style, the wearing of a stylistic mask, speech in a dead language: but it is a neutral practice of such mimicry, without parody’s ulterior motive, without that still latent feeling that there exists something normal compared with which what is being imitated is rather comic” (6).

Fredric Jameson and Intertextuality

Fredric Jameson discusses in detail the significance and relevance of the technique of Intertextuality in the contemporary situation. T. S. Eliot published his *The Waste Land* and loaded his poem with allusions and textual lines from various great writers including the Hindu Scriptures. It can include an author’s borrowing and transformation of the texts of other writers to bring intensity to the scenes and situations. William Irwin says, the term “has come to have almost as many meanings as users, from those faithful to Kristeva’s original vision to those who simply use it as a stylish way of talking about allusion and influence” (Irwin 228).

Meta-fiction

Fredric Jameson observes that postmodern literature has introduced many new themes and styles and for postmodern writers, the old forms of novels are outdated as they

deal with diverse issues. Modern novelists such as Thomas Mann, John Barth, and John Updike wrote meta-fiction. Updike's Rabbit tetralogy is epic in dimension. Mann's Joseph tetralogy is also in the tradition of meta-fiction. Updike has focused on the mysterious and the uncanny reflecting a world view that is pessimistic and challenging. Thomas Pynchon wrote novels following the techniques of a meta-fiction. His novels evince mythopoeia realism. John Irving's *The World According to Garp* is a fine example of meta-fiction. Updike imitated James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist* when he wrote *Rabbit Run* and *Rabbit at Rest*. Linda Hutcheon in her *Poetics of Modernism: History Theory and Fiction* (1988) observes that post-structuralism and deconstruction are the main obvious theories that contributed to the growth of postmodernism (188). Hutcheon talks about postmodernist novels that fictionalize actual historical events and characters. For instance, the hero of Updike's *The Poorhouse Fair* is Stephen Conner who in a Cartesian sense is a linear and rational thinker with the scientific approach to an irrational world.

Magical Realism

Fredric Jameson took a serious view of magic realism employed by postmodernist writers. He defines thus: "magic realism depends on a content which betrays the overlap or the coexistence of pre-capitalist with nascent capitalist or technological features" (311). The Chinese novelist Mo Yan, the Nobel Prize winner wrote *Big Breasts and Wide Hips* using the technique of magic realism. Salman Rushdie wrote *The Midnight's Children* presenting his hero Saleem who has supernatural powers. In the novels of John Updike, there is a unique mix of brutal incidents, magic realism, descriptions of the scenes of nature, and far-flung metaphors. Updike's famous and controversial novel *Terrorist* (2006) presents the protagonist Ahmad Mulloy and who may be regarded as a radicalized Muslim. The novel is the epitome of an "essentialist" work of art that abounds in fantasy and uncanny episodes. The postmodernist writers touch upon all the important issues of the 21st century; there is a fruitful commentary on the AIDS epidemic; the terrorist attack on Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie and the American trade war.

Dissonance and Fragmentation

Fredric Jameson observes that in postmodernist art and literature dissonance and fragmentation are dominating features. He realized that in life and the universe reality is fluid and decay and fragmentation of the values are inevitable. Jameson borrows the concept of dissonance from Machiavelli's *Prince* believing that "duplicity" and "virtue" are two aspects of social reality. For example, the real present remains in the novels of Pynchon as "impasse" as in *Gravity Rainbow*, Pynchon remarks that "it's all theatre" (1).

Fredric Jameson published *Valences of the Dialectic* (2009) and he made serious efforts to resolve all the important issues of Marxian ideology as the book is hailed as a fruitful contribution to the in-depth analysis of Marxism. Jameson has devoted himself to the interpretation of the ideas and political ideology of Marx. He is often associated with a particular brand of Western Marxism. His *Valences* is a collection of previously published essays focusing on the theme of the dialectic in cultural and political theory. The contradictions thus can be resolved only through non-dialectical ideas. He argues that through the process of breaking down the problem, the contradiction can be resolved. He has discussed the process in three stages; The Dialectic, "a dialectic" and the "dialectical". Jameson comments thus, "We have already argued that the conception of the dialectic as a system, and indeed as a philosophy as such-along with the very idea of philosophy itself is undialectical" (Jameson, *Valences of Dialectic* 49).

Jameson has discussed in detail the operation of the philosophical system of Marxism. Dialectical materialism is the greatest pillar of Marxian ideology. It is the basis of economic determinism. He also refers to Stalinism who brought the reign of terror in Russia. In the West Marxian ideas; his theory of determinism and alienation brought a massive transformation in the society. Marx has laid stress on historical materialism and dialectical materialism.

To conclude, in this study the ideas and postmodernist Marxian thoughts of Fredric Jameson have been explored and investigated in this thesis analyzing all the

important texts of Jameson written over fifty years. Jameson deconstructs the Marxian ideology from the perspective of contemporary society and the forces of change and transformation of the West. Jameson is a great American cultural critic and Marxian philosopher who wrote half a dozen famous books to interpret his Marxian thoughts from the postmodern perspective. Jameson evolved his dialectic in his book *Valences of Dialectic* highlighting the nature of the dialectical process. The dialectical system is a comprehensive; all-inclusive system and Hegel and Marx are associated with totalitarian thinking. Jameson has given his rational response to the theory of Marxian determinism. The dialectical materialism of Marx is packed with ambiguities. Jameson concludes thus: "It would therefore be profoundly undialectical to exclude this patently undialectical description of the dialectic" (15). For Jameson, the notion of a monolithic dialectic offers something like a deconstructive manifesto: "I believe that theory is to be grasped as the perpetual and impossible attempt to deify the language of thought" (9).

Chapter 2

Evolution of New Marxism of Fredric Jameson in *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*

Fredric Jameson emerged as the most powerful cultural critic and the most challenging American Marxist thinker. Like Max Weber and Louis Althusser. Jameson made a significant contribution in the domain of Marxist hermeneutics. Adam Roberts (2000) in his book *Fredric Jameson* observes thus, “Marxism and postmodernism. For many, Jameson is the world’s leading exponent of Marxist ideas writing today: and his work on postmodernism has been the single most influential analysis of that cultural phenomenon. Anyone working in these two fields will almost certainly find themselves engaging with the ideas of Jameson” (Roberts 4). For many cultural critics, Jameson is the leading exponent of Marxist philosophy and his theories on postmodernism and Marxism have been recognized as great strife in cultural phenomena.

Anyone working in these two fields will almost certainly find themselves engaging with the ideas of Jameson. The theories of Jameson have been extremely influential in multiple areas of culture and thought. Jameson came to prominence for his Marxian radicalism. His first book: *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* (1961) reveals his insights and penetrating style to investigate the theories and ideas of Karl Marx. Sartre belonged to France; it was a country that was the birthplace of Enlightenment. The French philosophers resolved to change the world after the War. France had experienced the horrors of war and this led to the growth of nihilism and pessimism. Marxism was popular with its established doctrinal structure and its power of political organization. Sartre wrote in his *Sartre Against Stalinism* on 14 September 1939, “I am now cured of socialism if I needed to be cured of it” (Ch. 4). Sartre created a resistance group in France and named it *Socialism and Freedom* but unfortunately, this group collapsed and Sartre collaborated with the Communists in *The Front National*. In a letter to Brice Parain, Sartre wrote thus, “As for the political side of the business, you have no cause for alarm: I shall go into this rough and rumble on my own; I shall follow no leader, and if anyone wants to follow me, that’s up to them. But

the most urgent thing is to stop the young men who got into this war at the same age you went into the last one from coming out of it with sick” (Quoted in Buhle 4).

Sartre had read Marx's *Das Capital* and he understood “absolutely nothing if understanding means changing oneself” (18). Marxist defended his doctrine and called it an instrument of social change. But ironically, the mass of workers was the force to put his ideology into practice. Sartre was dissatisfied with the theory of Karl Marx and believed that if changes were not taking place this was due to a lack of conspiracy theory. He did not hold Marx responsible for the lacuna but held Marxists responsible for the Marxist current which promoted violence and force. Marxism was free from idealism and its strength lay in the dogmatism of Stalinism. Sartre was disgusted with the role of the communists since they were entrenched in a Marxism that had lost its vocation of universal humanism. He concluded that only existentialism could restore Marxism to that vocation and existentialism found a reason for its continuing presence in the decline of Marxism. When Sartre visited America in the 1960s Jameson was excited to know the liberalism of Sartre. It is an indisputable fact that Marxism is a system of beliefs based on the critical writings of Karl Marx (1818-1883) who launched a crusade against the forces of capitalism. He raised the cries of the proletariat analyzing the mode of changing the inequalities and injustices of the world in which human beings live. Fredric Jameson is an eminent American cultural critic because he became an exponent of the New Left of North America giving a fuller definition and discussion of Marxian ideology and its relevance in contemporary American society. Jameson's two books, *The Political Unconscious* (1981), and *Postmodernism* (1984) provide powerful elaboration of Marxist literary criticism. His penetrating analyses of the postmodern are the elaboration of his lifelong Marxist attitudes. Jameson's insights derive from and always relate to a left-wing perspective on culture and literature but Jameson is never doctrinaire. In all his writings he is flexible and never dogmatic in his ideas. Anybody interested in the cultural forms of the 1980s and 1990s, the diverse manifestations of that much-contested term “postmodernism” will find his diagnoses of that cultural logic essential reading. Jameson is a prolific writer and an established cultural critic of America. He wrote more than twenty books and hundreds of critical essays

propagating the ideas of postmodernism. The renowned universities of America and the world invited him to deliver lectures. Jameson observes in his essay *Postmodernism and Consumer Society* thus:

I believe that the emergence of postmodernism is closely related to the emergence of this new moment of late, consumer or multinational capitalism. I believe also that its formal features in many ways express the deeper logic of that particular social system. I will only be able, however, to show this for one major theme: namely, the disappearance of a sense of history, how our entire contemporary social system has little by little begun to lose its capacity to retain its past, has begun to live in a perpetual present and in a perpetual change that obliterates traditions of the kind which all earlier social formations have had in one way or another to preserve. Think only of the media exhaustion of news: of how Nixon and, even more so, Kennedy are figures from a now distant past. One is tempted to say that the very function of the news media is to relegate such recent historical experiences as rapidly as possible into the past. (Jameson 11)

The conspicuous feature of the writings of Fredric Jameson is his deep interest in Hegelian Marxism. In all his works the underlying thread of Hegelian Marxism runs throughout depicting his concern for the totality of thought. In the postmodern climate, this Hegelian passion of Jameson also creates difficulty in understanding his works but at the same time, the work gives a critical analysis of the study of New Left Marxism. Jameson published *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* (1961) expressing his faith in the new style evolved by Jean-Paul Sartre and his books and articles reveal a blend of Marxist ideas and the existential style of Sartre. The critics and admirers of Jameson explore the identity and continuity of ideas in his works. Colin MacCabe in *The Geopolitical Aesthetic* (1992) observes that Jameson took inspiration from Adorno and Sartre and evolve his critical perceptions, “Jameson’s style is an integral part of the effort to understand the world as both one and multiple, and if there is difficulty and awkwardness there is also pleasure and grace.... He is a systematic thinker like Sartre and Adorno, his two great masters” (MacCabe ix).

There are other striking analogies in *Being and Nothingness* (1956). Jameson was indebted to Sartre in many respects and the main influence was to evolve the formalistic techniques. Sartre (1956) observes thus, “Hitherto we have attempted to ascend to the elementary and formal structures and - at the same time - we have fixed the dialectical bases of structural anthropology. He further adds that, “For the time being, we must leave these structures to live freely, to oppose and compose among themselves” (755). He further added that, “the reflexive experience of this still formal adventure will prove the object of our second volume. If the truth must *be one* within the growing diversification of interiority, in answering the ultimate question POSM by this regressive experience, we shall discover the profound meaning of History and dialectical rationality” (Sartre 755).

Fredric Jameson is primarily concerned with form, history, desire, style, and postmodernism in his writings. He is considered an outstanding cultural critic of postmodern America. Many writers came under the influence of Jameson. John Updike, Kurt Vonnegut, and Thomas Pynchon borrowed heavily from his postmodern ideas and experimented with postmodern culture. His first book provides an exposition of Jameson’s Hegelianism as Jameson explores Hegelian ideas and dialectical theory from the perspective of postmodern society. Jameson is the product of the Post-World War II political situations of American society. The intellectuals of Europe migrated to America and they were greatly influenced by the Marxian ideology. The intellectuals such as Herbert Marcuse, Ernst Bloch, Louis Althusser, Walter Benjamin, Georg Lukacs, and Theodor Adorno were the active thinkers and critics of the New Left of America. Paul Buhle keenly observed the rise of social and political movements. Buhle averred that the emergence of new movements in the post-1960s era marked a break from the traditional Marxism. Jameson devoted his attention to analyzing the impact of history and subjectivity on Marxian thoughts. Jameson expresses his concern for the style and political developments of America. Jameson observes thus, “Sartre’s *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, at the beginning of the 1960s, written during the Algerian revolution and appearing simultaneously with the Cuban revolution, the radicalization of the civil rights movement in the United States, the intensification of the war in Vietnam, and the worldwide development of

the student movement” (54). Jameson further added that, “therefore corresponds to a new period of revolutionary ferment, and in the spirit of Marx himself offers a reworking of the economic model in that terminology of praxis and of overt class conflict which seems now most consistent with the day-to-day lived experience of this period: it is a little like having the sound turned back on” (Jameson 54).

Jameson followed Sartre and his new Marxian ideas. Sartre in his *Critique* (1960) believed that with the entry of existentialism, Marxism is bound to disappear, “As soon as there will exist for everyone a margin of real freedom beyond the production of life, Marxism will have lived out its span; a philosophy of freedom will take its place. But we have no means, no intellectual instrument, no concrete experience which allows us to conceive of this freedom or this philosophy” (Sartre 34).

The cult of the New Left swept all the major universities of America and students took an active role in propagating the Marxian ideology. New Left became privileged areas of cultural politics and the university campuses became the site of struggle. In an essay with James Kavanagh, Jameson reflected on this current political situation of campus Marxism. He clearly and openly discussed the issue of the resurgence of Marxism. Like Dos Passos who was a radical novelist of America, Jameson highlighted the bourgeois domination of American society and the trends of young Americans towards New Marxism. James H Kavanagh (1984) observes that the politics of culture became a crucial aspect of socialist politics, “The analysis of literary and cultural texts and the tasks of the cultural revolution in general, then, increasingly appear as central, not secondary, to socialist political strategies’ necessary conditions for transforming the patterns of ideological closure and political passivity that are enforced in societies like ours less by fear of the police than by fascination with the page of the screen” (Kavanagh 3).

Jameson provides organizing principles in his writings. Paul Buhle writes in his book *Marxism in the United States: Remapping the American Left* (1991), “The feeling of starting over began here for the simple reason that the existing organizations and ideas seemed so inadequate to the civil rights revolution or the

problem of nuclear disarmament. Perhaps not since the turn of the century has the sense of virginal beginnings upon been so absolute” (Buhle 227).

Jameson’s main obsession was to revise and renew Marxism in the context of the American capitalist society. He passionately wanted to investigate the historical process; the class struggle and capitalist dehumanization seriously. The pressing problem that plagues Jameson is to resolve the question of totalitarian political setup advocated by Karl Marx. Sartre had explored the nature of exploitation as the outcome of the economic base in his *Critique*. He comments thus:

Economism is wrong because it makes exploitation into a definite effect, and no more than that, whereas as an effect it can only be maintained, and the capitalist process can only develop if they are supported by a project of exploitation- I am fully aware that it is capital that produces through the mouths of the capitalists and which produces them in the form of projects of unconditioned exploitation. But inveracity, it is the capitalists who support and produce the capital and who develop industry and the credit system utilizing their project of exploitation to realize a profit. (Sartre 687-88)

Sartre explored the relationship between the workers and the bourgeoisie who exploited him. Sartre found that the workers are considered animals by the bourgeoisie. He was dissatisfied with the working of the Communists who instead of supporting and helping the workers used him as an instrument for their selfish motives and to gain political power. Sartre observes thus:

In France 1848, the bourgeoisie constitutes itself at first as the secret of the worker; it presents itself to its wage-earners as their necessity of living the impossibility of living. Or, if you like, as their impossibility of struggling against their misery without running the risk of being exterminated by its ranks. For this reason alone, the boss must be ruthless in jettisoning the proletariat from all that is humane if he is not prepared to accept the proletariat doing the same by him. The boss is made an executioner, so the worker is the criminal. (Sartre, *Critique* 713-14)

Under the influence of Sartre, Jameson's gallant attempt to discard the obsolete ideas of Marx is praise-worthy. He attempted to transform Marxism in the context of the capitalist society of America. The New Left radicals turned to Europe for themes and models and Sartre and the writers of the Frankfurt School were the main figures who had a great impact on Fredric Jameson in shaping his style and Marxian principles. Jameson (1982) argues thus in an article *On Aronson's Sartre* published in *Minnesota Review*, "For a whole generation of French intellectuals but also for other Europeans, most notably the younger British Left, as well as for Americas like myself. Sartre represented in few roles the model of the political intellectuals, one of the few role models we had, but a sufficient one" (Jameson 122).

Douglas Kellner is of the view that Jameson's "original choice" for Sartre was his initial gesture to understand the existential situation of America. His interest in the philosophy and style of Sartre reveals his firm commitment to existentialism and liberalism. His existential ideas led to the growth of New Marxism.

The doctrine of Marxism: Main Principles

The main principle of Marx's philosophy is its materialism and totalitarianism. Marx has very abstract opinions about truth, beauty, spirit. He is not an idealistic philosopher like Hegel but is a materialistic philosopher who gave his theory of base and superstructure. He wrote in 1845 that "the philosophers have only interpreted the word in various ways, the point is to change" (Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* 158). Marx believes that the world needs to be changed because society is based on inequality and injustice and millions of people are the victims of oppression, misery, and poverty. On the surface level, Marxism looks very attractive but in reality, Marx's ideas are very dangerous and cannot be accepted by liberal American society. He argues that philosophers should work to make society better and worth living for the poor and the needy. In the *German Ideology*, Marx described his proposed alternative to capitalism thus, "Communism differs from all previous movements in that it overturns the basis of all earlier relations of production and intercourse, and for the first time consciously treats all natural premises as the creatures of men... Its organization is, therefore, essentially economic" (Marx 36).

There is a lot more to society and culture than just economics. Paul Buhle argues that “Marx believed that all the things we observe in human life, from poverty and wealth to religion, art, politics, and even sport, are all *determined* by the economic relations between people. ‘Determined’ means that these things derive from economic roots” (Buhle 227). Through his textual analysis of Jameson’s *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* doesn’t reveal any perceptible Marxist influence on Jameson. Paul Buhle further argues that “the model Marx developed to express these relations in society was that of base and superstructure, “The base of all societies is an economic activity and it is all about money and who owns the means to make money” (Buhle 227). According to Paul Buhle “The superstructure’ consists of things like the forms of law and political representation of the society: so, for example, an economic base that is all about private property and owning things is going to produce a superstructural set of laws that are primarily designed to protect property” (227). Jameson writes thus, “I came to Marxism through Sartre and not against him; and not even through the latter. Marx oriented works such as the Critique, but very precisely through the classical existential texts of the immediate postwar-period” (Jameson 122).

Jameson read the works of Adorno and observes that his writing “doesn’t conform to the canons of clear and fluid journalistic writing. He believed that there should be clarity and fluidity and a work of art should be free from abstractions. He turned to Sartre for theoretical models and stylistic devices. Jameson comments thus, “In the language of Adorno density is itself conduct of intransigence: the bristling mass of abstractions and cross-reference is precisely intended to be read in a situation against the cheap facility of what surrounds it, as a warning to the reader of the price he has to pay for genuine thinking” (Jameson xiii).

Jameson evolved a logical and genuine deep style to articulate his logical ideas in his works. He found the style of Sartre logical, systematic, terse, and loaded with the images of reality. In the theory-journal *Diacritics* (1982) Jameson talked about his writing in similar terms, “There is the private matter of my pleasure in writing these texts: it is a pleasure tied up in the peculiarities of my ‘difficult’ style (if that’s what it is)” (88). Jameson further added that, “I wouldn’t write them unless there was some minimal gratification in it for myself, and I hope we are not too alienated or

instrumentalized to reserve some small place for what used to be called handicraft satisfaction” (Jameson 88).

The difficult style of writing is radical. Jameson says he hopes “we are not yet too alienated to reserve some small place for what used to be called handicraft satisfaction” (Jameson 88). This is an invocation of a classic Marxist idea. For Marx, a worker became ‘alienated’ from his labor with the increasing industrialization of the nineteenth century. In the *Critique* Sartre says, “Yet the field of possible, however, reduced it may be, always exists, and we must not think of it as a zone of indetermination. But rather as a strongly structured region that depends upon all of History and which includes its contradictions” (Sartre 93).

We might imagine a rural craftsperson making chairs; this craftsperson collects the wood, carves, and fits it together, beginning and ending the process of producing each chair. The chair directly embodies the work the craftsperson put in. In contrast to this, Marx might say, with the same man forced (by economic necessity) to take a job in a chair factory. Now the worker has only one small, repetitive job— say sticking the arm rests into the body of the chair. He is not involved in the complete process; he no longer finds much satisfaction in his work; “and the amount of work he puts in no longer has a straightforward relationship with the finished product. In all, he has become *alienated* from his labor. Jameson’s use of ‘alienated’ here suggests, without actually saying it, that he is like the old-fashioned craftsperson: that his writing is individual, unique, it has quirks and rough edges that reflect his investment of labor in it. This is set in opposition for the produced” (123). In his book *The Political Unconscious* there is a fine example of the influence of Sartre’s sentence used by Jameson. In the third chapter, he begins the discussion with Balzac and he writes, “Indeed, as any number of ‘definitions’ of realism asserts, and as the totemic ancestor of the novel, *Don Quixote*, emblematically demonstrates, that processing operation variously called narrative mimesis or realistic representation has as its historic function the systematic undermining and demystification”, he further added that, “the secular ‘decoding’ of those preexisting inherited traditional or sacred narrative paradigms which are its initial givens” (Jameson 152).

Jameson uses simple and touching images drawn from the old classics to bring out seriousness and depth in imitation of Sartre. His writings are free from ambiguity and abstractions and go deep into intellectual understanding. The sentences are sometimes long but carry a clear vision of Jameson. Consider for example the following paragraph, “The ‘objective’ function of the novel is thereby also implied: to its subjective and critical, analytic, corrosive mission must now be added the task of producing as though for the first time that very life world, that very ‘referent’ the newly quantifiable space of extension and market equivalence”, he further added that, “the new rhythms of measurable time, the new secular and ‘disenchanted’ object world of the commodity system, with its post-traditional daily life and its bewilderingly empirical, ‘meaningless,’ and contingent *Umwelt* - of which this new narrative discourse will then claim to the ‘realistic’ reflection” (Jameson 152).

In the first chapter of his book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*, Jameson investigates the role of characters in the play *No Exit*. He is of the firm opinion that the freedom of a person is essential for the formation of identity. Marx is not in favor of the identity of the individuals because he opposes Hegel’s theory of idealism and advocates the concept of totality. Jameson remarks thus, “The characters of this play think about their pasts in the other direction: they want to reduce the things they have done to mere examples of qualities, to be able to fix names and adjectives to them; the meanings they are looking for have a solid and indispensable core of language” (1).

The liberal ideas and his views on the importance of individuality led to the growth of Jameson’s Marxism. Sartre supplied Jameson the theoretical base to review and reinterpret Marxism. Kellner in his article “Jameson, Marxism, and Postmodernism” notes that “The early Sartre was received in the 1950s in the U.S. and elsewhere as a figure of the individualist radical intellectuals as the rebel against the convention of all sorts” (Kellner 8). Anderson published the book *The Origins of Postmodernity* (1998) giving a critical assessment of Western Marxism. Anderson argued that in the 1920s all the proletarian insurgencies were crushed and this political defeat encouraged Jameson to work for Western Marxism. The new Marxian radicals shifted their focus from the economic analysis “to philosophy. Adorno, Sartre, and Marcuse were the second generation of thinkers, “They evolved a

remarkable theory according to the currents of non-Marxist thoughts, but in creating tension with them. This tradition was concerned about the method; they explored the understanding of the epistemology; of society and culture and Classical Marxism” (Jameson 69).

Jameson regarded Sartre as his role model expressing his radical intentions to change the face of traditional Marxism. He observed that Sartre was his model of “intellectual engage” to review and reinterpret Marxism in the light of modern political and economic developments. Sartre is certainly a pessimistic and nihilistic intellectual thinker known for pessimism and nihilism that impacted many Western thinkers. Jameson was confronted by the dilemma expressed in his first book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*. As the title shows the title indicates Jameson’s serious concern for the evolution of a particular style Jameson outrightly rejected the famous New Critical doctrine and he investigated the economic framework which provided Jameson with his analytical strategies. Jameson took up the project to develop a theoretical framework for the evolution of New Marxism in America. Jameson argued that Adorno’s negative dialectic can serve as a “corrective solvent” in the capitalist American world. Jameson investigated new cultural formations representing the new spirit of the age. In the opening part of the book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*, Jameson tries to understand the role of history, “The past can be described in two different ways: it is that which can no longer be changed, which has passed out of reach, still felt as ourselves but fixed forever; and yet at the same time it is inconstantly subject to change and renewal at our hands, he further added that, “its meaning is as fluid as our freedom and every new thing we do threatens to re-evaluate it from top to bottom” (Jameson 4).

In this chapter, the early work of Jameson is explored highlighting the contribution of Fredric Jameson to the growth of New Marxism. It is observed that in the 1950s and 1960s the new forces were active to launch New Left in North America. Jameson adopted Sartre as a role model for the wider “generational radicalization” during the period. Jameson’s encounter with Sartre proved very fruitful because he became aware of the limitations of existential Phenomenology and this pushed Jameson toward Marxism:

When the American reader thinks of Marxist literary criticism, I imagine that it is still the atmosphere of the 1930s which comes to mind. The burning issues of those days no longer correspond to the conditions of the world today. The criticism practiced then was of a relatively untheoretical, essentially didactic nature, destined more for use in the night school than in the graduate seminar, if I may put it that way; and has been relegated to the status of intellectual and historical curiosity. (Jameson 54)

Jameson was not allied to Sartre. His conversion to the existentialism of Sartre was rather different from the conventional modernist conversions. Frank Lentricchia observes that the impact of Sartre on Jameson was just very small. Sartre had influenced Jameson in theoretical and political development. Jameson wrote *Marxism and Form* and, in this book, he devoted some pages to analyze the ideas of Sartre who had an enduring influence on the contemporary thinkers of his time in Europe and America. There is an undercurrent of the philosophy of Sartre in almost all his works. Unlike Kant and Heidegger and Derrida, Jameson (1985) displays his commitment to Sartre's philosophy as he says: "this influence was more a matter of a general problematic than of agreement with Sartre's positions" (Jameson v). The theory of Sartre is embedded in the texts of Jameson. Douglas Kellner observes that Sartre was given a warm welcome when he visited America and all the literary critics and writers hailed him as "individual radical intellectual" and a rebel against all sorts of conventions. When Jameson took him as his role model, he was signaling his radical vision and non-conformist aspirations. In America Sartre was a symbol of the "intellectual engage" to bring transformation in the society. Sartre didn't belong to any political party or he was not a cardholder of any party organization but he was seriously concerned with the problems of the people suffering under the capitalist regime. Jameson wrote the book *The Political Unconscious* and discussed the issues relating to culture and politics. It is on this basis that Sartre's declared adherence to historical 'materialism' is to be understood. He says, "To be still more explicit, we support unreservedly that formulation of *Capital* by which Marx means to define his 'materialism': 'the mode of production of material life generally dominates the development of social, political and intellectual life'" (33-34).

Many mass movements emerged after the 1960s but the majority of them failed as they had no clear direction and philosophical base. Jameson explored the significance of the dialectical interaction between individuals and history. Jameson explored the modern relevance of the Marxist historical perspective. Jameson found that the approach of Sartre to Marxism is ambiguous; he sought to give clarity to the subject. Jameson begins his quest by examining the major continental Marxian thinkers. He follows the tradition of Marxist dialectical thought. Jameson's dialectical project exposes the intellectual bankruptcy of American thought. Jameson states thus:

Less obvious, perhaps, is the degree to which anyone presenting German and French dialectical literature is forced—either implicitly or explicitly—to take yet a third national tradition into account, I mean our own: that mixture of political liberalism, empiricism, and logical positivism which we know as Anglo- American philosophy and which is hostile at all-points to the type of thinking outlined here. One cannot write for a reader formed in this tradition—one cannot even come to terms with one's historical formation—without taking this influential conceptual opponent into account; and it is this, if you like, which makes up the tendentious part of my book, which gives it its political and philosophical cutting edge, so to speak. (Jameson, *Marxism and Form* x)

Fredric Jameson and the Politics of the Left

Jameson was perhaps the first cultural critic of America who investigated the role of cultural politics. New Left thinkers like Kavanagh (1984) believed that culture plays a vital role in the development of radical thinking, “The analysis of literary and cultural texts and the tasks of cultural revolution in general, then, increasingly appear as central, not secondary, to socialist political strategies” he further adds that, “necessary conditions for transforming the patterns of ideological closure and political passivity that are enforced in societies like ours less by fear of the police than by fascination with the page or screen” (Kavanagh 3).

The New Left thinkers differed from previous generations of radicals concerning culture. But Jameson argued that the world and its economic structure have changed with the emergence of television and mass culture. He discusses the classical writers of Europe such as Balzac, Flaubert, Conrad, and Joyce who were not aware of the crime thrillers and science fiction of Hollywood. Jameson contends that European High culture has no place in the contemporary postmodern society of America. Paul Buhle (1991) argues that:

The political and theoretical views of the New Left relate to the period after 1965: there was a renaissance of traditional forms of American radicalism', particularly in the areas of racial conflict, the women's movement, and the free press. However, what was very obviously lacking were the two historical conditions ascribed as central to mass radicalism by orthodox Marxism. (Buhle 222)

Jameson took the project to review Marxism seeking inspiration from Sartre constructing a new Marxism appropriate for the late capitalism of America. Buhle argues thus about the rise of new radicals, "The feeling of starting over began here for the simple reason that the existing organizations and ideas seemed so inadequate to the civil rights revolution or the problem of nuclear disarmament. Perhaps not since the turn of the century had the sense of virginal beginnings been so absolute" (Buhle 227).

Jameson turned to Europe and Sartre to evolve his radical thoughts. He discarded the old theories of the European and Western thinkers in his cultural study. He believed that the world has changed and a new ideology is needed to confront the forces of late capitalism. Jameson makes it clear that totalitarianism has no place in the postmodern society and the Americans are for liberty and freedom. Sartre had advocated liberalism in the political setup. But Marx believed in Hegel's theory that the whole is more important than parts. Jameson expressed his mission of life in his Preface to *Prison-House of Language* (1972) thus, "My plan—to offer an introductory survey of these movements which might stand at the same time as a critique of their basic methodology—is no doubt open to attack from both partisans and adversaries

alike ...” (x). He further added that, “The present critique does not, however, aim at judgments of detail, nor the expression of some opinion, either positive or negative, on the works in question here. It proposes rather to lay bare what Collingwood would have called the "absolute presuppositions" of Formalism and Structuralism have taken as intellectual totalities”(x). He further emphasized that, “These absolute presuppositions may then speak for themselves, and, like all such ultimate premises or models, are too fundamental to be either accepted or rejected” (*Jameson x*).

The first Marxist intellectual who invites the attention of Jameson is Theodore Adorno who offers the most formidable challenge to him. His quest for the totalitarian society disturbed Jameson. Adorno’s Marxian approach is based on his idea of totality as an illusion. Adorno is a negative thinker. Jameson presents the approach of Adorno thus, “It is to this ultimate squaring of the circle that Adorno came in his two last and most systematic, most technically philosophical works, *Negative Dialectics* and *Aesthetic Theory*”. He further added that, “Indeed, as the title of the former suggests, these works are designed to offer a theory of the untheorizable, to show why dialectical thinking is at the same time both indispensable and impossible, to keep the idea of the system itself alive while intransigently dispelling the pretensions of any of the contingent and already realized systems to validity and even to existence...” (56). Jameson further emphasized that, “Thus, a negative dialectic has no choice but to affirm the notion and value of an ultimate synthesis, while negating its possibility and reality in every concrete case that comes before it...” (56). Jameson argued that, “Negative dialectics does not result in an empty formalism, but rather in a thoroughgoing critique of forms, in painstaking and well-nigh permanent destruction of every hypostasis of the various moments of thinking itself” (*Jameson 56*).

For Jameson Adorno is a dangerous Marxist. He accepts the philosophical challenge of Adorno and outrightly rejects the theories of Adorno. Jameson turns to Benjamin and Marcuse who supplied to him the theoretical mechanism sustaining hope in the present historical process. In the second chapter entitled: “The Nature of Events”, Jameson explores and investigates the historical process of events, “With the breakdown of traditional life patterns, an unquestioned ritual that lives developed along, and with the rise of boredom as the possible quality of life, the notion of an

event, of an experience, of something happening, becomes problematical: when not everything is real living, only certain things can be told and can constitute anecdotes or stories” (19).

Jameson realized that without a proper style no review of theory is possible. He accepted the Marxian principle that man is the product of his production. Sartre rightly maintains that “the structures of a society which is created by human work define for each man an objective situation as a starting point; the truth of a man is the nature of his work, and it is his wages” (92). For the real analysis of Marxian doctrine, a unique and new style is needed. He writes thus, “The time of Sartre's world is regulated by an instrument in appearance more extrinsic to literature than any of these schemes. Once more, it is a question of the ways sentences are connected, but it is as if the sentences themselves counted for little in the process, possessed little intrinsic weight or effect upon it” (41), he further adds that, “like the bits of valueless material which modern sculptors join together into a form that rises above the cheap or ephemeral nature of its contents. The pace at which this world unfolds is supervised by punctuation” (Jameson 41).

It must be noted that Jameson's style is important in his quest for postmodernism and revision of Marxism. In his *Preface*, MacCabe observes thus, “That is to say, even the most local and specific analysis finds its place within an overarching theoretical framework. The specific analysis is always related, albeit in a dialectical fashion, to an extraordinarily sophisticated and detailed theory of culture and society”. He further added that “That theory, however, provides the underlying assumptions and reference - it is not present explicitly in every text. It is thus the paradoxical case that to read Jameson is always to read the entire oeuvre rather than a single particular text” (ix).

Jameson investigates the cultural ideas of Adorno who propagated false consciousness in his works. Jameson says culture is to “thought of as something more and other than the false consciousness that we associate with the word ideology and is instead something that possesses an uneasy existence, an uncertain status” (Jameson 4). He further argues thus, “Adorno's treatment of these cultural phenomena – musical styles as well as philosophical systems, the hit parade along with the

nineteenth-century novel – makes it clear that they are to be understood in the context of what Marxism calls the *superstructure...*” (4). He further added that the, “presupposes a movement from the intrinsic to the extrinsic in its very structure, from the individual fact or work toward some larger socio-economic reality behind it” (Jameson, *Marxism and Form 4*).

Legacy of Sartre

Sartre remained as a major force that impacted the mind and sensibility of Jameson. Like Lukacs and Adorno Sartre is the main intellectual for discussion in his works. Jameson’s book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* (1961) and his other works are an extended analysis of the Marxian ideology. Jameson comments thus on the style and approach of Sartre, “Sartre’s world has to express itself in the play form, it corresponds to something that would find its way into the novels; but it is certain also that within the new form it will appear in a wholly different way” (18).

Jameson’s discussion of Sartre’s concept of totalization is quite meaningful. He has taken up the dialectical approach to explore the hidden defects of traditional Marxism. Jameson’s most important theoretical formulations are based on the theories of Sartre. Jameson discusses the “nausea” of Sartre thus questioning the relevance from the postmodern perspective, “Nausea, for instance, is the moment of feeling acute that we exist: the historical fact of suddenly becoming aware of our existence”. He further adds that, “Thus a realization that is not dependent on any content of our existence becomes content in its turn, and a feeling of existing that transcends any of the events of our existence becomes itself an event” (Jameson 32).

Philip Wood (1985) has given a “similarity between Jameson’s conception of three horizons of interpretation in *The Political Unconscious* and Sartre’s hierarchy of significations” (Wood 23). Jameson argues that all the guidelines to reform the society exhibiting Jameson’s search or method. Sartre argued that “Marxism represents the one philosophy of our time that one cannot go beyond, as history forms the matrix and horizon of theory” (Poster 17). Jameson borrowed the cumulative style of Sartre; he borrowed the gradual assemblage of words, phrases, images, and unconventional phrases. He was greatly fascinated by the innovation; originality and

the role he accords to consciousness. Jameson is inspired by the themes of existentialism in *Phenomenology*. Jameson observes thus, “Sartre is known for the inherited form and the style that fills despite itself with more modern content coexist in a work” (123).

Jameson highly praises Sartre for his consistent and systematic style: “Sartre’s reflects not so much a weakness of writer’s talent but a new problematic situation, a moment of crisis in the history of the development of the writing itself” (Jameson 6). Sartre is crucial for Jameson’s political formulation is based on the theoretical base of Sartre. In the post –World War II Jameson appears as one of the most prominent thinkers and cultural critics. In his book, *Marxism and Form* Jameson goes tracing all the historical forces that led to the evolution of Marxism. He frankly admits that when he wrote the book, he was not much aware of the Marxist culture and its influence. Jameson was confronted with the problem of how to articulate the complex relationship between individual experience, history, and social change. Sartre gave him the guidelines. Jameson praises Sartre thus, “In a sense, it might be said of these moments that the author of *Being and Nothingness* and Not-Being has a special sensitivity for events in which “nothing” happens and this quality of theirs reflects the moment of literary history at which the work came into being” (34). He further augmented that, “The experimenters of the early twentieth century had discovered new kinds of content: new structures of lived human time which they were obliged to invent a new organization to express new complications of consciousness in which they discovered hidden forces that had to be registered with a new language, even new relationships between human beings appearing against the background of the collapse of the new content added to make a subjective event more striking and more solid” (Fredric Jameson, *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* 34).

Fredric Jameson needed a unique style, a new medium to depict the complexities of the postmodern experiences and he turned to Sartre who was the prominent philosopher of the 1950s. Jameson realized that American society is different from European society as the cultural transformation in America had created new challenges and the rise of capitalism in America was a big challenge for the writers and the philosophers. John Steinbeck got Nobel Prize since he took up the

challenge and depicted the plight of the fruit pickers and the miserable workers in his novels. Sinclair Lewis also got Nobel Prize since he was called a messiah of the middle-class Americans. Lewis had portrayed the Babbitt culture of America in his style Dos Passos was another American writer who turned into a Marxian radical and depicted the rise of the proletarian consciousness in America. But all these writers were not philosophers and Jameson wanted to bring a resurgence of New Marxism based on the philosophical theories. He observed that New Left suffered from “collective amnesia” concerning their radical thinkers such as Buhle and Denning who could not find a clear direction. Jameson took up the responsibility to give new strength to New Left Marxism introducing the theory of reification referring to the process under capitalism whereby all aspects of human life are fragmented and recognized to meet the demands of capital. In this sense, all human activity is recognized in terms of efficiency and sheer means. Reification led to the commodification of labor power turning into a product, a commodity to be “consumed”. The cultural implications of reification are serious as all cultural artefacts are turned into commodities to be consumed. One doesn’t buy a new car, new clothes but also buys a new image. Thus, reification is a double-edged sword, which results in the commodification of culture and the aestheticization of the commodity. For Jameson, Sartre is the most important intellectual radical of the post-war era. Jameson was perhaps was the first cultural critic who investigated the politics of culture of the New Left. He traced the history of socialist politics and ventured seriously to eliminate the bottlenecks of rigid Marxism. Jameson observes that the culture of the New Left was entirely different from the culture of the previous generation. With the emergence of television, mass media, the electronic revolution the culture of consumerism came into existence. Paul Buhle (1991) argues thus, “Jameson's work is interesting in this respect in that it presents a prolonged meditation on the classics of European literature: Balzac, Flaubert, Conrad, and Joyce” (227). He further gives example as, “for example, whilst simultaneously reappraising what are often seen as more marginal figures like George Gissing and Wyndham Lewis, and giving such popular forms as crime thrillers, Science-Fiction and Hollywood blockbuster movies equally serious attention. Recently Jameson has paid less attention to the canonical works of realism” (Buhle 227).

Jameson investigated the theory of Sartre and found that Sartre has taken the project to replace dogmatic Marxism. Jameson directed his attention to compete with the project of Sartre in his works. He took the aid of existentialism to achieve his project. He believes that without idealism and freedom his project would be incomplete. Sartre supplied him with the cult of idealism and freedom to replace dogmatic Marxism. Sartre is of the firm view that the absorption into Marxism will lead to the disappearance of Marxism. Sartre observes thus, "As soon as there will exist for everyone margin of real freedom beyond the production of life, Marxism will have lived out its span; a philosophy of freedom will take its place. But we have no means, no intellectual instrument, no concrete experience which allows us to conceive of this freedom or this philosophy" (Sartre, *Critique* 34).

Jameson was greatly impacted by Sartre's theory of the dissolution of existentialism. He believed that with the emergence of existentialism the scope of Marxism would broaden and when existentialism is absorbed into Marxism there will be a shift from communism to humanism. Jameson discusses the contribution of Lukacs who devoted himself to the revival of Marxism. Jameson says, "Yes. Lukacs has the instruments to understand Heidegger, but he will not understand him; for Lukacs would have to *read* him, to grasp the meaning of the sentences one by one. And there is no longer any Marxist, to my knowledge, who is still capable of doing this" (38).

The Politics of Criticism in America: Jameson's Cultural Critique

Fredric Jameson's book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* was originally his doctoral thesis submitted in the 1950s but he published it in the form of a book at a time when New Criticism was very popular. He was aware of the trends in criticism of the late 1960s and 1970s and the thinkers and philosophers of America rejected the conservative approach of New Critics. Georges Poulet and J. Hillis Miller introduced the informed criticism. Under these circumstances, the choice of Sartre was natural and quite in tune with the cultural transformation of America. Jameson took Sartre as his model the critics and thinkers started taking a keen interest in his ideas and philosophy. In 1952 Merleau-Ponty published *Adventures of the Dialectic* (1955) and

distanced himself from Marxism. But during these years Sartre began to take interest in Marxism. Jameson (1982) explored the existential philosophy of Sartre and his understanding of Karl Marx.

Sartre was dissatisfied to observe the hegemony of the party politics encouraged by Marxian ideology. Sartre sought to explore the relevance of Marxism in the modern culture protecting the liberty and individuality of people. Sartre explored the inherent contradictions of Marxian ideology. He believed that the orthodox solutions given in Marxism cannot solve the problems of modern man. He rejected the traditional political ideology of Marx. Jameson has also discussed the failure of Sartre; his weakness in understanding Marxism and his theory to combine art with politics. This attitude of Sartre is not like that of Jameson.

Sartre and his New Left Marxism

The history of Sartre's Marxism is very interesting. He was a passionate lover of liberty even in his school days. Sartre took keen on politics even when he was in school days. His friends took a keen interest in politics and laughed at the Marxian and jeered at the laws and principles of Marxism. Sartre intensively studied history and formulated his independent views of history and society. He argued that the "secret truth of History was nothing but the concept of radical freedom that he was developing" (Jameson 10). He was a Marxist like De Beauvoir who wrote in *Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter* (1959) thus, "According to us, there was only one way of preventing general madness, and that was by the overthrow of the ruling class...out the most passionately held conviction that freedom is an inexhaustible source of discovery, and every time we give it room to develop, mankind is enriched as a result" (Beauvoir 11).

Jameson's study of Sartre is targeted at the relationship between the subject and object. He investigated the role of history in the evolution of the theory of consciousness. Jameson observed thus: "It is not because "all works ought in some way to have something to do with things and something to do with consciousness but because this particular work turns out to depend constantly and insistently on such an

opposition” (Jameson 10). Sartre believed that consciousness is the basis of all philosophical speculations. Sartre opines that human beings can acquire real experience only through a philosophical understanding of the universe. Sartre uses the word “facticity” to explain that experiences of the world are often beyond the understanding of human beings. Jameson (1984) comments thus, “It is the nature of a human being to humanize everything he comes into contact with; he wants to know everything. The basic need of a man is economic freedom and his love for liberty and individuality but Marx advocated totality” (Jameson 13).

Jameson argues that in Sartre’s dramatic texts there is the separation of consciousness and world. He has depicted the dilemmas; anxieties and existential challenges of modern man in his plays in an unconventional style. He has ignored the historical consciousness in his works but his love for liberalism is quite appreciating. Each individual has his understanding of the past and history as the past “never really happens objectively; the subject must take up a position to it” (17). Sartre’s theatrical aesthetics give a new perception of reality and give a structural framework for the visual and verbal aspects of drama. Jameson comments thus, “This new culture is emerging and the radical intellectuals coming from Europe are debating on the relevance of Marxism in American society. They are taking their views about history” (Fredric Jameson, *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* 6).

Jameson argues that the naturalistic staging of the plays is a unique feature of his dramas. He doesn’t recognize the role of economic forces like Marx as he has developed his view of history. The language plays a vital role in structuring this opposition in the plays of Sartre. He subverted traditional narrative forms to articulate the new currents of modernity. He published *The Reprieve*, the second volume of the *Roads to Freedom* trilogy. The flow of sentences in his plays is disrupting. Like the plays of Ionesco, the main focus is on new words and phrases clichés, and broken communication. Jameson argues that “there is no continuity, and the divisibility and multiplicity of the individual moments are quite interesting and conspicuous” (Jameson 45). Jameson comments thus about the style of Sartre, “Sartre unites these opposites in conceiving time as a unity that multiplies itself. Time is therefore not a thing, the nature of which we can describe. It is not somewhere inside the world; it is

the way we live the world". He further adds that, "we are temporal in the structure of our being and time is one of the negations that we bring to the pure simple being of the world by surging in the midst" (Jameson 46).

The texts of Sartre are based on practical wisdom and his existential vision. Jameson is not concerned about the abstract philosophy of Sartre but his primary concern is on the unconventional style of Sartre; the broken communication; pauses; clichés and uncommon phrases depicting the psychological neurosis of the characters. Jameson is concerned with the form and not with the content. Jameson finds contradictions in the form and style of Sartre. In his book *Marxism and Form*, Jameson gives the notion of a "historical trope." Jameson comments thus: "In Sartre's texts we find tension between "the modernist tradition and Sartrean narrative or stylistic procedures" (205). He investigated and found defects in modernism as both "a social crisis of narrative experience, and a semiotic crisis of narrative paradigms" (211). In most of his works such as *Marxism and Form*, (1971), *A Singular Modernity* (2002), Jameson tried to address the problem of social crisis. Jameson observes that the time has come to understand the historical crisis. He scrutinizes the philosophy of Sartre in his critique and he gives an analysis of the categories of his philosophy. Jameson insists that Sartre's plays may be described as 'idea plays.' The plays of Sartre are philosophical; they "are wholly different in quality from the thoughts developed in the philosophical works" (Jameson 3). Sartre's greatest contribution is his stylistic philosophical style. Jameson gives a critique of the stylistic techniques used by Sartre in his plays. In his analysis of *No Exist*, he writes: "the theatre is a kind of mixture of language on the one hand and the merely seen sets and gestures on the other" (17). Adorno (1977) also lashed at Sartre's work dubbing them as merely "thesis plays" and "philosophical novels". Adorno argues that the plays of Sartre convey sublime philosophical ideas but in the final analysis the plays of Sartre are "vehicles for the author's ideas, which have been left behind in the race of aesthetic forms" (182). Peter Osborne (1992) pointed out that Jameson's book on Adorno gives his original and perceptive philosophical ideas of Adorno. In Jameson's book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*, Marxism is not the main issue but the text exhibits a remarkable self-referentiality. Jameson has a unique grasp of philosophy and theory,

and the text of Sartre is unique. He investigates Sartre's literary production and his philosophical assumptions and interpretative strategies. Kellner (1989) says there is "a manifestation of the phenomenological desire for the 'thing-in-itself', eschewing other methodological approaches and approaching the object of study without preconceptions" (Kellner 8–9). The interesting thing about the text of Sartre is the preferred form. Jameson contends thus: "the problem of the individual life can no longer be located from the society in which it is to be lived, and is suddenly subordinated to history and social change" (7). In Jameson's career, Sartre played a vital role and through the bodywork, he was able to give a clear picture of New Marxism.

Sartre and Marxism

Sartre's study of Marxism is full of contradictions. In the early 1950s, Sartre wholeheartedly defended Marxism extending full support to the organization. The Soviet Union attacked Hungary in 1956. Sartre publicly spoke against forces of oppression of the Bolshevik Revolution of Russia. Sartre pointed out the barriers before accepting Marxism. The political developments in the Soviet Union were the reality of "existing socialism." He also investigated the trials of the 1930s, because of the oppressive policies of Stalinism. There was a contradictory situation of the socialist organizations in France, the French working class "slavishly followed the dictates of the Soviet Union instead developing Marxist theory into a viable path of socialism in France" (Jameson 11). Stalinists crossed all the limits and Marxism degenerated into the rigid dogmas of an economic system. The Marxists failed to evolve a critical and revolutionary theory. Sartre was dissatisfied as his search for a viable form of Marxism failed. He desired Marxism divorced from the dogmatic approach of radical thinkers of the political party of Russia. Jameson argued in *Marxism and Form* that Marxism is "not a rigid system but an open and flexible body of thought that develops according to the specific historical circumstances" (24). Jameson (1971) writes that it is consistent with "the spirit of Marxism; with the principle that thought reflects its concrete social situation that there should exist several different Marxism in the world today, each answering the specific needs and

problems of its socio-economic system” (Jameson 18). Sartre struggled to formulate a new form of Marxism to root out the ills of society. He contended that a new form of Marxism is required to handle the fluid situation of the Middle East and Europe. Sartre defended individualism and challenged the collective power of Marxism. Sartre’s existential passion for individual freedom and personal identity conditioned his embrace of Marxism. From Sartre’s perspective, the role of individual liberty was a part of the historical process but the oppressive policies of Stalin destroyed the very spirit of Marxism. He tried to resolve the contradictions in Marxism in his book *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. He developed a “politics which acknowledged the role of the situation – social forces, the economy, political alliances in the play of individual freedom” through the notion of the “group in fusion” (quoted in Poster 13–14). Sartre rejected the traditional idea of socialism and reinterpreted it from the modern perspective. Sartre developed an elaborate theory of the “group” as the main step towards the loss of individual liberty. Sartre deeply studied the role played by classical Marxism but these ideas of Marx had become “irrelevant” and no longer being practiced. In his book, *Marxism and Form* Jameson investigated the issue of freedom and totality. He took inspiration from Friedrich Schiller and Herbert Marcuse and he envisaged a society where people enjoyed freedom. Jameson argues that “a sudden perception of an intolerable present which is at the same time, but implicitly and however dimly articulated, the glimpse of another state in the name of which the first is judged” (85). Personal liberty and individuality are very significant and functions as a valuable weapon of political philosophy. Jameson opines that Marxism has not one language but two languages with which it can express the stages of historical development. He also traces the history of class struggle depicted in *Capital* of Karl Marx. The Communist Manifesto also Marx discusses the class antagonism of the bourgeois and proletariat. Sartre investigated the working of historical forces and the role of the social class and its relationship with the liberty of an individual. Class affiliation in Marxist terms is described as “a particular relationship to a particular, determinate mode of production” (Jameson 283). Jameson published his famous book *Marxism and Form* depicting the urgent need to explore the meanings of necessity. Jameson’s political trajectory begins and ends with the process of political radicalization in his study of the politics of the New Left.

The Emergence of the New Left and Philosophy of Sartre

McCarthyism and the emergence of the New Left were two great political events that influenced Fredric Jameson. Khrushchev delivered a historical speech in the twentieth party congress stating that the process of destalinization of Soviet communism is continuing. He also referred to the disintegration of the communist party in Hungary. Jameson investigated the impact of the Cultural Revolution of China and the successful Cuban revolution. America had a big setback in the Korean and Vietnam wars and the national liberation movements in Africa offered new challenges to the world philosophers. Jameson investigated the rise of new national movements and the civil rights movements of the 1950s and 1960s. The rise of the New Left was the result of the socio-economic and historical forces in Europe and America and it didn't represent a unified political program. Sartre has outlined the politics of the New Left in his book exploring the thinking and strategy of the New Left. The socialists and the Marxists in America pointed out a sense of "collective amnesia" and many radical thinkers deviated from the Marxian ideology. In the 1930s and 1940s, many "radical intellectuals lost their jobs; they migrated to other countries and many of them were deported or went to exile. Many writers could not publish their articles fearing persecution and, in many cases, they were killed" (Jameson 425). Paul Buhle opines that the younger generation of radicals "grew up almost completely ignorant of the struggles that had passed by" (226). He further adds, "The feeling of starting over began here for the simple reason that the existing organizations and ideas seemed so inadequate to the civil rights revolution or the problem of nuclear disarmament. Perhaps since the turn of the century, the sense of virginal beginnings had been so absolute" (Buhle 227).

The New Left Marxists "felt instinctive that the weakness of this generation was its lack of firm training in the critical traditions of thought which Europeans seemed to understand so well" (239). The Frankfurt School had anticipated the New Left crisis and highlighted the problems of the American New Left. Buhle says: "the Frankfurters, in their peculiarity European despair, were unable to feel the real pulse of resistance in American popular life" (229). Jameson discusses Marxism keeping in mind the growth of the changes in industry and technology in America. He has traced

the growth of positivism in American cultural life. Denning (1998) observes that “there is richness and vitality of Marxist tradition in the book *Marxism and Form*, but this richness had stagnated because of the Cold War and McCarthyism” (Denning 433). The rise of the New Left was like a romantic myth and the radicals of Marx were ignorant of the rise of new American culture, science, technology, mass culture, and computer.

Michael Denning in his book *The Cultural Front* (1990) traces the history of the radical past of North America and its discovery by the New Left. There were debates over the issues of feminism, race, and ethnicity by the radicals in the 1930s. Herbert Marcuse and C. Wright Mills were two great radical Marxists who tried to achieve a juxtaposition of the old and the New Left. The early New Left was not a naïve Marxian ideology but there was a link between the old culture and the new culture. In 1932, many pamphlets were published to spread the Marxian culture. Stanley Abramowitz also found a link between the Old and the New Left. Aronowitz (1984) observes that the Old Left and all the Reform Movements got involved with the students of a Democratic Society. Many reforms were introduced in the union organizations and many radicals acted as advisors and facilitators of the unions. Sartre visited America and found the presence of a strong “generational” factor in American politics in the 1960s. Buhle argues that the new generation felt “no cause to trust anyone over in matters of political guidance” (228). The radicals of the New Left introduced new changes and launched a new crusade against capitalism in America. New Left discarded the old ideas of Marxism and forged a new beginning in the history of cultural materialism. The Marxist of New Left declared that: “the triumph of the will, the limitless capacity to shape the future in its way” (Jameson 25). The intellectuals of the New Left had realized that with the advent of a new century the historical situation has changed. Raymond Williams called it “the structural change of feeling”.

The New Left as a Structure of Feeling

The New Left focused on the cultural growth of the people recognizing the independence of the individuals. He rejected the totality of Marx and focused on the

growth of the economy of America and the importance of the labor problem of the industrial workers. C Wright Mills observes that America had been heading towards consumer society and with the rise of media, mass culture, and technology a new revolution had come in America. The new labor unions define themselves in opposition to labor metaphysic. The New Left emerged without the two “basic historical conditions thought to be central to mass radicalism. They were well aware of the economic crisis and the working-class militancy” (Buhle 222). Jameson argued that the New Left faced with two crucial problems; there was a need to reformulate the concept of revolutionary agency and secondly, the New Left felt the necessity to develop a coherent theory and politics “equal to the ambition of naming and overcoming, a system for which the available analysis had fallen short” (222). Sartre found many contradictions and ambiguities in Marxian ideology and the need of the hour was the social change in advanced capitalist countries. Jameson opposed virulently the idea of Marx those workers are the agent of historical and social change. Sartre pointed out that the Marxist radicals were fighting for civil rights. No wonder, in America the civil rights movement; feminism, and black consciousness emerged powerfully. Workers were organizing a campaign for Nuclear Disarmament in the 1960s. Jameson writes in his book *The Political Unconscious* that the new social movements “find expression in a long footnote wherein he argues for an alliance politics as the privileged form of renewed Left politics in the U.S.” (Jameson 54). However, Terry Eagleton criticized Jameson for incipient liberal pluralism. Eagleton (1986) argued that the strategy of Jameson defused “the less comfortable political realities of Marxism itself; realities of which one is likely to be kept constantly mindful only in a society with a more militant working-class movement” (81).

Jameson pointed out that Sartre in his book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* discusses the enormous expansion of the “cultural apparatus” in America. The institutions were engaged in production, consumption, and information technology. Media industries and the student unions were actively participating to revive Marxism in America. Denning also reports that there was a massive cultural transformation during these years. In the 1950s Jameson found that the New Left of America was led

by the movement controlled by students. It was a source of strength as New Left was not dominated by the old ideas of the traditional Marxists. The new Marxists rejected the old ideas of the Marxists and sought to bring changes and transformation in the Marxian ideology. They developed new forms of organization based on democratic practices and opposed the totalitarianism of Stalinism. They rejected the old idea that industry is a primary site of struggle of the working classes. They reinterpreted history and investigate Marxism from the postmodern perspective. Jameson investigated the growth of capitalism in America and gave new ideas to confront the oppressive policies of capitalism. New Left doesn't mean the rejection of "vulgar" or "economic" Marxism. Staughton aptly remarks that "the celebrated New left revolts against authority were a revolt against paternalistic, indirect authority which hides the hand of power in the glove of verbal idealism" (Staughton 123).

To conclude, Jameson wrote *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* to investigate Sartre's radicalism in the 1950s. Sartre's thoughts have been dubbed as nihilistic, pessimistic, and subjective. But Jameson eulogized Sartre for his clear ideas about freedom of individuals and the eternal value of Marxist ideology. Sartre is a reputed existential philosopher; a devoted individualist but lived in a depressing world where the only alternative is death. Sartre has explored the struggles of the proletariat and the social determinism of Karl Marx. Jameson eulogizes the style and philosophy and liberalism of Sartre. He followed the literary techniques of Sartre when he wrote books on cultural history and culture. Jameson was deeply impressed by Sartre who has an insight into the existential problems of man. Sartre wrote *Being and Nothingness* in the 1940s in which he articulated the radical implications. This was the first book in which Sartre in which he discusses the concept of freedom. His views on freedom were adequate for a renewed Marxism.

Chapter 3

Revision of Traditional Marxism in Fredric Jameson's

Marxism and Form

Fredric Jameson rejected the traditional ideas of Marxism and gave a new impetus to the Marxian ideology seeking inspiration from many radical intellectuals of Europe who fled to America after World War II. He developed his unique position by reviewing the major concepts of Marxism applying the idealistic theories of Hegel and Feuerbach. He began his quest by investigating the prominent continental thinkers who believed in Marxism. Jameson keenly observed all the important cultural changes of American society and the growth of capitalism. He wrote on the working-class people's trapped character. Jameson began a battle against individual liberty-destroying institutions and governmental systems. In *The Subject and Power* (1982) in his writings, Michel Foucault discussed and noticed the issue of the power structure: "We lacked an adequate understanding of power as something other than a reflection of economic structures. Two alternatives were available; one that equates mechanism of power with repression, another that locates the basis of the relationship of power in the hostile engagement of forces" (Introduction, xv). Foucault observed thus in his *The Subject and Power*, "I would like to suggest another way to go further towards a new economy of power relations, a way which is more empirical, more directly related to our present situation, and which implies more relations between theory and practice" (Foucault 28).

Jameson investigated the destructive forces as the liberal ideas of Foucault and Sartre greatly impacted him when he wrote his seminal work *Marxism and Form*. He uses the word postindustrial to describe the era of Hemingway and William Faulkner. But he changes the name of the period after the 1960s and calls it late capitalism. In this book he "takes up the main issues such as Hegel's philosophy; the relationship of part to whole, the connection between concrete and abstract and the concept of totality, the dialectic of appearance and essence, the interaction between subject and object - is once again the order of the day" (Fredric Jameson, *Marxism, and Form*

xix). Jameson indicated that the purpose of writing this book was to review traditional Marxism in the context of new American culture and late capitalism. He observes thus, "In psychological terms, we may say that as a service economy we are henceforth so far removed from the realities of production and work on the world that we inhabit a dream world of artificial stimuli and televised experience: never in any previous civilization have the great metaphysical preoccupations", he further adds, "the fundamental questions of being and of the meaning of life, seemed so utterly remote and pointless" (xvii-xviii).

Indeed, the greatest contribution of Jameson is the dialectical approach that he borrowed from Hegel in his review of Marxism. Jameson firmly believed that there is nothing wrong with the idea and philosophy of Karl Marx and with the growth of heavy industries the role of capitalistic institutions has increased manifold. The Marxian ideology can help to solve the problems of the working classes and the harmony between the workers and the bourgeoisie can be established with the new Marxism. He is concerned with the ideological discourses in his books, "The method of such thinking, in its various forms and guises, consists of separating reality into airtight compartments, carefully distinguishing the political from the economic, the legal from the political, the sociological from the historical, so that the full implications of any given problem can never come into view", he further added that, "in limiting all statements to the discrete and the immediately verifiable, to rule out any speculative and totalizing thought which might lead to a vision of social life as a whole" (Jameson *Marxism and Form* 367).

In his book, Jameson has evolved a new method and formulated new strategies to overhaul Marxian ideas. He contends that in contemporary America there is an absolute need for Marxian ideology to constrain the forces of capitalism but Jameson discarded the old and rigid policies of Karl Marx enshrined in his *Das Capital*. Marx took inspiration from Hegel but scraped his idealism and introduced economic materialism. His theory of base and superstructure is in opposition to the idealistic ideology of Hegel. Jameson observes thus, "As a method of analysis and critique, it is inseparable from the gradual working through of the system's inner logic, through a

sympathetic internal experience of the gradual construction of a system according to its inner necessity” (xi).

Jameson investigated the Marxian thoughts of Adorno, Raymond Williams, Benjamin, and Lukacs. He follows dialectical thinking as his language is logical and based on research and through a reading of Marxism. He has investigated almost every idea of Marx discussed in his *Das Capital*. He investigates the concept of alienation, reification, surplus value, class antagonism, and totalitarianism. Jameson comments thus, “What happens is ... that for a fleeting instant we catch a glimpse of a unified world, of a universe in which discontinuous realities are nonetheless somehow implicated with each other and intertwined”, he further added, “no matter how remote they may at first have seemed; in which the reign of chance briefly refocuses into a network of cross-relationships wherever the eye can reach, contingency temporarily transmuted into a necessity” (8).

For Jameson, the example is a sign of “thought imperfectly realized” (*Marxism and Form* 338). Examples are “always the mark of abstraction or distance from the thought process: they are active additive and analytical whereas in genuine dialectical thinking the whole process would be implicit in any given object” (*Marxism and Form* 338). The essence of dialectical thinking is the difference between form and content. He appreciates Marx’s theory of history which describes the real historical process. But he rejects the methods and observation of Marx observing that it is not certain that in the future there will be a classless society. Marx’s view that there will be an extinction of capitalism is bad logic. In America, capitalism has flourished and the economic condition has improved miraculously. Jameson observes that there is nothing wrong with Marxian ideology but what is needed is its transformation and radical changes in its structure and content. He advocated the rational method that is the “ceaseless generation and dissolution of intellectual categories” (336). Apparently, Jameson is a revolutionary hermeneutical thinker employing the strategies of recuperation, restoration, recovery, and transformation. The project of Jameson encountered the dialectical thought prevalent in Germany. Adorno is one of the Marxist thinkers who followed the tradition of German thoughts. Jameson commented in his Preface thus, “Less obvious, perhaps, is

the degree to which anyone presenting German and French dialectical literature is forced ... to take yet a third national tradition into account, ...that mixture of political liberalism, empiricism, and logical positivism which we know as Anglo- American philosophy and which is hostile at all points to the type of thinking outlined here". He further added that, "One cannot write for a reader formed in this tradition-one cannot even come to terms with one's historical formation-without taking this influential conceptual opponent into account; and it is this, if you like, which makes up the tendentious part of my book, which gives it its political and philosophical cutting edge, so to speak" (x).

Jameson highlighted for the first time the philosophical bankruptcy of this bourgeois humanist tradition. He took the historical and cultural view and explored the contemporary relevance of Marxian philosophy in the context of changes sociological and political environment of America. When the ideas of Marxism are investigated through the lens of Fredric Jameson the period of the 1930s comes in the mind. It was a period the main burning issue was; anti-Nazism. He was greatly impacted by Feuerbach when he wrote *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* (1961). Jameson was inspired by Sartre and led him to intensive exploration of Marxist Literary Theory. No wonder, Jameson himself acknowledged the contribution of Sartre and his deep interest in the philosophy of Karl Marx. Jameson gives an analysis of the dialectical theory of Sartre who got enlightenment about Marxism through Sartre, "I came to Marxism through Sartre and not against him; and not even through the later, Marx-oriented works such as the Critique, but very precisely through the "classical" existential texts of the immediate post-war period" (Jameson 122).

Many intellectuals sought refuge in America after the Second World War and they got fascinated by the theories of Karl Marx. Theodor Adorno was a prominent Marxist thinker in the late 1950s and 1960s. Jameson came under the influence of the Marxist scholars of the Frankfurt School. Cultural Materialism was considered an integral part of Marxian ideology. Jameson wrote more than twenty books; and many research articles and delivered scores of lectures on Marxian Theory. He rejected the orthodox and narrow views of historical materialism. Jameson founded the Marxist Literary Group with as many young graduates of the University of California joined

this group. The traditional Marxist thinkers believed that the cultural superstructure is determined by the economic base. Jameson and his followers firmly held that the right approach to study culture should be dialectical.

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the formative political experiences of Jameson started as the era led to the evolution of the New Left in America. Paul Buhle (1991) published his book *Marxism in the United States: Remapping the History of the American Lefts* in which he traced the evolution of the New Left. This new movement was born at a time when The Third Wave of Feminism, Black consciousness, and Civil Rights Movement were bringing cultural transformation in America. Buhle argues that the New Left broke from the orthodox tradition of economic Marxism. Jameson was a voracious reader and he read all the major works of Balzac, Flaubert, Conrad, and Joyce to formulate his New Marxism. Buhle further states thus, “In the year 1965, the wave of feminism and American radicalism was very powerful that shook America. However, what was very obviously lacking were the two historical conditions ascribed as central to mass radicalism by orthodox Marxism that is to say an economic crisis and working-class militancy” (Buhle 222).

Buhle noted that the ideas of traditional Marxism were unfit to solve the problems of the new middle class of America exploited and oppressed by the capitalists. It was a time to reconsider and re-interpret the theories of Marxism appropriate to handle the new challenges faced in the industry, coal fields, and mines. The new generation of radicals was ignorant of the struggles of the past and the need to evolve new Marxian philosophy was widely felt. Buhle comments thus, “The feeling of starting over began here for the simple reason that the existing organizations and ideas seemed so inadequate to the civil rights revolution or the problem of nuclear disarmament. Perhaps not since the turn of the century had the sense of virginal beginnings been so absolute” (Buhle 227).

American intellectuals turned to European for new ideas and inspiration and Fredric Jameson turned to Sartre for inspiration and later The Frankfurt School. Jameson expresses his indebtedness to Sartre thus, “For a whole generation of French intellectuals, but also for other Europeans, most notably by the younger British left, as

well as for Americans like myself. Sartre represented the model of the political intellectual, one of the few role models we had, but a sufficient one” (Jameson 122).

Result Analysis

The critics observe that it was not an easy task for Jameson to give a fresh interpretation of the ideology of Max. The texts of Sartre paved the way for his interest in Marxism since he got the problem to be solved. Jameson himself discussed this dilemma using the phrase “the crisis in Marxist theory” in his book *The Ideology of Theory, Volume II: The Syntax of History* (1988). The history of the evolution of the New Left of Jameson is very interesting and illuminating. France saw a war of positions take place within the Marxian Marxist theory. A battle started between Marxist and poststructuralists; the major writers such as Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, Michael Foucault, Kristeva, and Baudrillard had been Marxists. Kellner observes thus: “The early Sartre was received in the 1950s in the U.S. and elsewhere as a figure of the individualist radical intellectual as the rebel against all sorts” (Kellner 8). When Jameson adopted Sartre as his role model, he presented himself as a radical non-conformist. Sartre became his model of “intellectual engage” and over time, Jameson became a radical individualistic. Perry Anderson remarks that when he made Sartre as his role model Jameson Sartre became a pessimist and nihilist. The textual analysis of his second famous book *Marxism and Form* depicts Jameson’s pessimism and nihilism which he borrowed from Sartre. He admitted the challenges thus: “It would be idealistic to suppose the deficiencies in the abstract idea social class, and in particular in the Marxian conception of class struggle, can have been responsible for the emergence of what seem to be new-non class force” (Jameson 121). Fredric Jameson took the challenge to study the nature of the class struggle in society; investigated the forces of history that change life, thoughts, and culture of human beings; examined the operation of means of production and their role in determining the class consciousness in his *Marxism and Form*. Jameson developed his own Left Marxism by bringing his Marxist critique taking into consideration the time and culture of postmodernism in his works. He emerged as the second Karl Marx of America. The reactive quality of Jameson brought about the technique of intertextuality in modern thought. Jameson says: “Marxism is a critical rather than a

systematic philosophy.” Jameson argued that Marxism presents a “correction of other positions rather than a doctrine of a positivistic variety existing in its own right” (*Marxism and Form* 121). Jameson’s *Marxism and Form* is a quite energetic and valuable critical treatise on Marxism criticism written to understand the veracity and fundamental truth hidden in *Das Capital*. Terry Eagleton eulogized him as “America’s leading Marxist critic,” and Adam Robert echoes this sentiment in writing that “Jameson remains the world’s most famous American Marxist thinker.”

Left Marxism and Soviet Marxism: Historical Perspective

Western leftist and social and political thinkers exposed the contradictions in socialism and Marxism. There were many debates on the issue of the relevance of Marxism and many radicals wanted to overthrow Marxian ideology found unsuitable to solve the problems of society, Fredric Jameson found Althusser attacking Marxian historicism in his *Reading Capital* (1968). Michel Foucault wrote *The Order of Things* (1966) and *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1969) and in both books, he virulently attacked Marx’s philosophy of history in a systematic way. Derrida, Barthes, and Baudrillard were other intellectuals who expressed their dissatisfaction with the theories of Karl Marx. They wanted to overhaul the Marxian analytical framework completely. The new Marxists took up the project to purge Marxism from contradictions as they rejected the Marxian concept of totality. The Western radicals rejected the historicism and universality of Marx. They argued that Marxism is no longer a transcendental theory. The revision of Marxism is required with the growth of new culture after World War II. The collapse of the Marxian ideology in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union further led to the Marxian crisis. There were trends of the rise of Western globalization and American society was also growing global and capitalistic. Laclau gives his theory of hegemony and Jameson propounded his dialectical criticism. A confrontation between Marxism and post-structuralism started. Fredric Jameson published *The Seed of Time* (1994) and argued that the time has come to review the idea and the philosophy of Karl Marx. The “crisis of Marxism” was a serious concern for the Marxian thinkers and many books were published during these years. Perry Anderson wrote *In the Tracks of Historical Materialism* (1983), Gregory Elliot wrote *Althusser: The Detour of Theory* (1987) in which he

discussed the pessimism of Althusser who had expressed his discontentment about the relevance of Marxism. In France, The Communist Party of France became very active as it recruited half a million members and supporters of Marxian ideology. The PCF supported the Rulers of the Soviet Union intending to fight with the forces of fascism. Mark Poster in his book *Existential Marxism in Postwar France* (1975) discusses in detail the role of the PCF and how the people of Europe invested the Soviet Union with “dreams of emancipated humanity” (Poster 38). Poster observes that during these years Marxism became very popular among the intellectuals as they found a lot of scope in Marxism. Stalin and his thoughts also greatly influenced western intellectuals. The officials of PCF took inspiration from Stalin and used the Marxian strategies to fight the nightmarish experiences of fascism. Poster argues that during the regime of Stalin, the character of Marxist philosophy “became closed, orthodox, rigid dogmatic and reductionist” (Poster 39). The officials of Marxism in France assumed the role of orthodox philosophers and became rigid in their approach. But in 1945, the situation turned explosive as many radicals started reacting against the rigid and dogmatic policies of French Marxism. The poster further observes that “the intellectuals, humanists, moralists, Calvinists, and the existentialists deviated from the mainstream of Marxism and made innovations challenging the conventions of Marxism. A kind of “mass enthusiasm over Marxism” (Poster 50) was underway in France. The French intellectuals realized that Marxism was a spent and outdated philosophy and couldn’t help to solve contemporary problems because of its dogmatic approach. Europe was growing capitalistic but the intellectuals and the radicals were helpless in containing the forces of capitalism. It was found that “Soviet Marxism was guilty of economic reductionism” (Poster 52). The error of economic reductionism was considered a major flaw in the Marxian system. Marx himself had “reduced human value and human experience to economic value and work experience”. (Poster 64) They restructured Marxism and considered seriously the role of human freedom, agency, and subjectivity shifting from the modes of production ideology of Marx. The humanist philosophers scrapped the old and orthodox ideas of Karl Marx. In the words of Mark Poster, the somewhat “on again, off-again project of existential Marxism, as an example of such humanist Marxism, was nonetheless, persistent in its substantial intellectual and, to a degree, popular purchase up to the end of the 1960s”

(Poster vii). Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau Ponty made serious efforts to combine existentialism and Marxism. Poster remarks that this was a new trend in France revolting against the dogmatic tenets of Marxism of Stalin, “A Non-Leninist Marxism that...looks at all the relations of daily life, not just relations of production, to make society intelligible, that picks up from existentialism the effort to capture human beings in the moment of the active creation of their world, in their subjectivity, and, finally, that rejects the attempt to have a closed theory complete within itself” (Poster ix).

The Western Marxists greatly influenced the existentialist Marxist and prominent among them was Georg Lukacs who was introduced to the French philosophers. He took up the concept of alienation which is central to Marxian ideology. The Soviet Marxists held the dogmatic view of the concept of alienation; it was considered an anti-scientific residual of Marx’s early ideas. But the French Marxist took the existential and humanistic view of alienation. They discussed the concept of alienation from the perspective of history, culture, and freedom of the individuals and took up the existential approach. Poster observes that during these years “two Marxists” (Poster 58) appeared; one the traditional and the dogmatic following the dictates of Stalin and the other humanist and the existential following new ideas and philosophy based on humanism and existentialism. The Party workers of PCF resisted all these changes. Sartre who attempted to “synthesize philosophy” blending existential freedom with Marxist politics was condemned as “nihilist and individualistic” (Poster 78). He was distorting the original tenets of Marxism and was thus a rebel. But Sartre argued that Marxism and existentialism converge in a significant way. Sartre argued that “Marxism lacked a theory of revolutionary subjectivity and existentialism could supplement it in this regard” (Poster 126). Claude Lefort formed a new small group in France and started the journal *The Socialisme ou Barbarie*. They were hostile to Sartre and the existentialists arguing that “state ownership of the means of production had led to the emergence of an exploiting bureaucratic class” (Jameson 131). Kate Soper in his book *Humanism and Anti-humanism* (1986) argues that the French humanists did not envisage a universal human nature or essence, but instead recognized the historicity of human culture”

(Soper 17). Laclau emphasized social change and took into consideration of history, facticity, and freedom of the individuals.

De-Stalinization and Fredric Jameson

It is important to understand the social and political events of Europe that dismantled Marxism. In 1960, Khrushchev surprised the world by giving references to the atrocities committed by the supporters of Stalin. He announced the De-Stalinization of the Soviet Union and thus “the crisis of Marxism deepened” (Poster 67). In 1956, The Soviet Union invaded Hungary and this event gave a setback to the Marxist thinkers of France who had pinned high hopes on Marxism to fight against Fascism. Sartre rejected the PCF completely but he continued his belief in Marxism. Merleau-Ponty also “abandoned the Party and Marxism both” (Poster 145). Many intellectuals expressed their resentment and left the Communist Party. Roland Barthes and Edgar Morin published a new journal *Argument* in 1956 and recruited many radicals who had left the party but were “unwilling to retreat from radicalism” (Poster 212). Mao Tse Tung condemned the de-Stalinization of the Soviet Union as a betrayal of a scientific revolutionary political will and his ideas led to the split of Communism into Chinese Communism and Russian Communism in 1960.

Fredric Jameson emerged as a Leftist Marxist of America in the time of the “crisis of Marxism.” He investigated all ideas and the thoughts of Karl Marx in detail; he explored the relevance of the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre and the possibility of a juxtaposition of Marxism and existentialism. He studied many of the reformulations of Marxist thought of the West “who focused on the subjects of history of non-class type” (Jameson 181). He found that the traditional theory of Marxism based on social class and class struggle had exhausted and the time had come to explore new radical social theory. In America “de-Stalinization and McCarthyism were responsible in bringing the death of the American Communist Party” (Jameson 182). The disappearance of the American Communist Party in America brought about the disintegration of the feminist movement and of the labor classes who were fighting against the oppression of the capitalists. Jameson argues thus, “The absence of the Communist Party of America consolidated the new anti-political social contract

between American business and the American labor unions and created a situation in which the privileges of the white male labor force take precedence over the demands of black and women workers and other minorities” (Jameson 182).

Fredric Jameson *Marxism and Form* (1971) depicted the contemporary social and political situation of America breaking from the dogmatic theories of Marxism. He observed that the blacks; women and other minorities were helpless as they were not represented and hence, they were forced to “find new modes of social and political expression” (Jameson 182). Jameson followed the new philosophy of Georg Lukacs who wrote *History and Class Consciousness*. Jameson like Lukacs believed in the theory of that commodification. Workers sell their labor to the capitalists and generate wealth for them. Jameson explores the main cause of discontentment and an expression of the domination of the capitalists. Jameson explored the historical process governing norms, values, and movements. Jameson confronted the problems of history, class struggle, and dehumanization of capitalism in his book *Marxism and Form*. He wanted to evolve a philosophical idealism that can ignore difference, flux, and dissemination. His *Marxism and Form* is a brilliant attempt of Jameson to restructure Marxism for the benefit of humanity, freedom, and democracy. Fredric Jameson begins his quest by examining the major European Marxist thinkers. The first chapter of the book *Marxism and Form* is devoted to the study of the works of Adorno. His dialectical perspective forms the core of his analysis as he states, “Less obvious, perhaps, is the degree to which anyone presenting German and French dialectical literature is forced; either implicitly or explicitly to take yet a third national tradition into account” (x), he further added that, “I mean our own that mixture of political liberalism, empiricism, and logical positivism which we know as Anglo-American philosophy and which is hostile at all points to the types of thinking outlined here” (Fredric Jameson, *Marxism and Form* x).

Jameson published *The Ideologies of Theory* (1988), a collection of essays. In his “Introduction” to the essays, Jameson discussed his project of the critiques of Marxian theory. He admitted a shift of emphasis in his work *Ideologies of Theory*, “There is a shift from the vertical to the horizontal: from an interest in the multiple dimensions and levels of a text to the multiple inter-weavings of an only fitfully

readable narrative: from problems of interpretation to problems of historiography; from the attempt to talk about modes of production” (Jameson xxix).

Fredric Jameson revived the dialectical tradition concentrating on the logic of form. The logic of form is an expression of the dialectical law of form determining the main content of his work. Marx has given the key concepts such as allegory, utopia, reification, and history. Jameson commented thus in connection with his logic of content, “The content of a work of art stands judged by its form and...It is the realized form of the work which offers the surest key to the vital possibilities of that determinate social moment from which it springs” (*Marxism and Form* 55).

He focused his attention on the themes of political liberalism and logical positivism in his book *Marxism and Form*. These issues are the foundation of American culture and society. Jameson “calls it the critique of this tradition which makes up the tendentious part of my book, which its political and philosophical cutting edge” (x). In *Marxism and Form*, Jameson discusses the currents and trends popular in America. He expresses his deep concern for the ideological function of such discourses, “The method of such thinking, in its various forms and guises, consists in separating reality into airtight compartments, carefully distinguishing the political from the economic, the legal from the political, the sociological from the historical”, he further added this statement as, “so that the full implications of any given problem can never come into view, and in limiting all statements to the discrete and the immediately verifiable, to rule out any speculative and totalizing though which might lead to a vision of social life as a whole” (368).

Jameson explored the idealistic and visionary ideas of Hegel who had faith in “dialectical thought”. Jameson explored the concept of totality through the dialectical method. No wonder, all his works are based on the root of totality. The conspicuous feature of *Marxism and Form* is dialectical thinking. Jameson argues that the dialectical method is “nothing more or less than the elaboration of dialectical sentences” (xii). He argued that his text is not the critique of the content but it is its form that is unique. The dialectical method has the unique power to comprehend empirical and positivistic thought; it “draws unavoidable conclusions on the political

level” (*Marxism and Form* xi). Jameson believes that a Marxian has to “come to terms with the shape of the individual sentences themselves, to give an account of the origin and formation” (xii). Terry Eagleton in his *Against the Grain: Essays 1975-1985*, observed that Jameson has used “magisterial, busily metaphorical sentences in his *Marxism and Form*. (66). The conspicuous feature of Jameson’s style according to Eagleton is “polite silence or with a shyly admiring phrase” (*Against the Grain* 66). Jameson employs the Hegelian technique of thesis, anti-thesis, and synthesis in *Marxism and Form*; the dialectical method is employed to resolve contradictions. The dialectical method has the inner logic to resolve contradictions through “a systematic internal experience of the gradual construction of a system according to its inner necessity” (*Marxism and Form* xi). Precisely stated, dialectical thinking leads to scientific thought, and in this respect, Hegel’s book on *Phenomenology of Spirit* is a standard model.

Fredric Jameson’s *Marxism and Form* begins with his investigation of the Marxian ideas of Theodor Adorno who presents a challenge for Jameson through his dialectical acrobatics embarking for the totality of thought. Adorno emerges as a negative hermeneutical thinker and a dialectical deconstructionist. Jameson’s analysis of “Adorno’s dialectical system is very effective; it is a poetic object in its own right” (7). Jameson is much charmed by the style of Adorno, “What happens is...that for a fleeting instant we catch a glimpse of a unified world, of a universe in which discontinuous realities are nonetheless somehow implicated with each other and intertwined, no matter how remote they may at first have seemed” (*Marxism and Form* 8).

In the text of the book, Jameson holds the concept of “fleeting instant” and “unified world” presenting “fragmented reality.” In each sentence of the book Jameson depicts the dialectical method of Hegel; he moves from disparate to the unified, from part to the whole. Jameson says: “convert the problem itself into the solution” (*Marxism and Form* 34). Jameson believes that Adorno’s text has the power to transmute contingency into a necessity. His style has been described as a style “of enactment.” The basic story of the dialectic is its systematic and rational thought. The dialectical reversal is “that paradoxical turning around of a phenomenon into its

opposite of which the transformation of quantity into quality is only one of the better-known manifestations” (309). Jameson observes talks of limits: “of the reversal of limits, of the transformation from negative to positive, and is a diachronic process” (*Marxism and Form* 309). To explain the process in simple language, he gives the example of the French Revolution. Society was torn between two phases; terror and counterrevolution. Jameson praises the original approach of Herbert Marcuse who reinterpreted the philosophical ideas of Hegel, Marx, Freud, and Schiller: in “the light of the utterly new socio-economic environment of postindustrial capitalism which began to emerge at the end of World War II” (*Marxism and Form* 107).

Jameson observed that the life of Adorno was devoted to solving the economic problems and resolving the contradictions of Marxism. He devoted a major portion of his book to analyzing the Marxist dialectical tradition followed by Theodor Adorno who offered him a formidable challenge. Jameson couldn't digest the totalitarian theory of Adorno which he believed against the liberal tradition of America. Sartre also had rejected the totalitarian theory advocated by Marx. Jameson observed that the concept of totality is an illusion leading to disastrous consequences. He concluded that Adorno is a negative hermeneutical thinker. Adorno is the most ingenious thinker for Jameson who uses the dialectical method to support his concept of totality. Jameson highlights the intellectual energy and ability thus:

It is to this ultimate squaring of the circle that Adorno came in his two last and most systematic, most technically philosophical works, *Negative Dialectics* and *Aesthetic Theory*. Indeed, as the title of the former suggests, these works are designed to offer a theory of the untheorizable, to show why dialectical thinking is at the same time both indispensable and impossible, to keep the idea of the system itself alive while intransigently dispelling the pretensions of any of the contingent and already realized systems to validity and even to existence. ... negative dialectic has no choice but to affirm the notion and value of an ultimate synthesis, while negating its possibility and reality in every concrete case that comes before it. Negative dialectics does not result in an empty formalism, but rather in a thoroughgoing

critique of forms, in painstaking and well-nigh permanent destruction of every hypostasis of the various moments of thinking itself. (Jameson, *Marxism and Form* 54-56)

Jameson repudiates virulently the deconstructionist strategies of Adorno and he warns the intellectuals of the threats from Adorno. He discusses the liberal views of Jacques Derrida and Paul de Man who oppose the concept of totality since such strategies “must be accompanied by some initial appearance of continuity, some ideology of unification already in place, which it is their mission to rebuke and to shatter” (Jameson, *Marxism and Form* 53).

Adorno was concerned about “the division of labor, the fragmentation of intellectual energies” (Jameson, *Marxism and Form* 14). Jameson at the very out of his essay on Adorno talks about his life and achievements and his pessimism about the “crisis of Marxism” Jameson praised Adorno for his dialectical method borrowed from Hegel and Kant. He finds that there is a tension between form and content. Jameson continued his search for Marxism suitable for modern American society by way of rereading Adorno. He attacked the concept of “totality”.

Twenty years ago, when the works of Adorno were not available in English, Jameson wrote an essay on Adorno in the first chapter of *Marxism and Form*. He was greatly influenced by the methodology of Adorno and this marks the beginning of a period of post-structuralism in America. Jameson discussed two concepts “postmodernism” and “late capitalism” in this essay; what was of “no great help in the previous periods may turn out to be just what we need today” (58). Jameson’s essay on Adorno offers a case study of Adorno’s Marxism. He praised Adorno for his contribution to new Marxism and his “new dialectical objectivity” (34). Jameson reviewed Adorno’s *Late Marxism* and *Negative Dialectics* in his essay. Jameson discussed the tension between form and content. The tension between form and content is highlighted by Jameson, “The fundamental problem of the dialectical writer is precisely that of continuity. He who has no intense feeling for the massive continuity of history itself is somehow paralyzed by that very awareness, as in some overloading of perception too physical to be any longer commensurable with language” (*Marxism and Form* 51).

Adorno and Form

Jameson opines that the essays of Adorno are important not because of the form and the content but because he has innovated a unique style to blend the form and content. The problem of continuity persists in all his essays. He observes that “Marxism is a way of understanding the objective dimension of history from the outside existentialism a way of understanding subjective individual experience” (*Marxism and Form* 208). In his work on postmodernism, Jameson moved away from the dialectical mode of thought and followed a new concept what he called “transcoding” He discusses this notion in detail in this, “What is implied here...is the notion that a certain level of concreteness the thing itself or what we will later call it is existential reality-may be rearticulated in any one of many different dimensions: as literary structure, as the lived truth of a determinate social organization as a certain type of subject-object relationship” (*Marxism and Form* 354).

Jameson suggests that form is nothing less than “the working out of content in the realm of the superstructure, the evolution of forms. In other words, literary change is “essentially a function of content seeking its adequate expression of the form” (*Marxism and Form* 328). He further added that, “Content, through its inner logic, generates those categories in terms of which it organizes itself in a formal structure, and in terms of which it is, therefore, best studied” (*Marxism and Form* 335).

Jameson reviewed the “negative dialectic of Adorno in his essay. Jameson is not comfortable with his deconstructionist strategies and political impotence. He does not like the poststructuralist stance of Adorno. Jameson comments thus, “Negative dialectics does not result in an empty formalism, but rather in a through-going critique of forms, in painstaking and well-nigh permanent destruction of every hypostasis of the various moments of thinking itself” (*Marxism and Form* 55).

Jameson’s critique of Adorno is a valuable contribution to the history of modern criticism. He discovered in Adorno a fine analysis of the conception of form and the significance of content. Jameson observes that Marxism is not a systematic body of knowledge, “It is perfectly consistent with the spirit of Marxism; with the principle that thought reflects its concrete social situation; that there should exist

several different Marxism in the world today, each answering the specific needs and problems of its socio-economic system" (*Marxism and Form* 18).

Benjamin and Allegory

Jameson is dissatisfied with the hermeneutic ideas of Adorno but he feels delighted when he reviews the works of Benjamin, Marcuse, and Bloch. He finds "a theoretical mechanism in their works which offers hope and generates praxis in the present moment of the historical process. This hope and praxis are promoted and sustained by a nostalgia conscious of itself, a lucid and remorseless dissatisfaction with the present on the grounds of some remembered plenitude" (*Marxism and Form* 82). Benjamin's conception of nostalgic utopianism appears revolutionary to Jameson. He feels free from the wretched pessimism of Adorno. Jameson rejected the late monopoly capitalism fast-growing in America. Jameson argues that if human beings follow the Marxist ideas of Adorno the future of the human community would be in danger. Such societies present no stories but rather "only a series of experiences of equal weight whose order is indiscriminately reversible" (*Marxism and Form* 79). Jameson investigates "the concept of desire and the reification process growing in late monopoly capitalism. The concept of desire constitutes the central component of freedom" (79). His notion of desire has a political dimension that promises access to a revolution negating the present order. The notion of desire is an activity of freedom forming the center of Jameson's Marxist hermeneutics. Jameson states thus:

For hermeneutics, traditionally a technique whereby religions recuperated the texts and spiritual activities of cultures resistant to them, is also a political discipline and provides the means for maintaining contact with the very sources of revolutionary energy during a stagnant time or preserving the concept of freedom itself, underground, during geological ages of repression. Indeed, it is the concept of freedom which proves to be the privileged instrument of a political hermeneutic, and which, in turn, is perhaps itself best understood as an interpretive device rather than a philosophical essence or idea. (*Marxism and Form* 84)

Jameson has intelligently used the mechanism to link the notions of desire, freedom, and narrative. Jameson writes thus while discussing André Breton's *Manifesto*:

It is not too much to say that for Surrealism a genuine plot, a genuine narrative, is that which can stand as the very *figure* of Desire itself: and this not only because in the Freudian sense pure physiological desire is inaccessible as such to consciousness, but also because in the socio-economic context, genuine desire risks being dissolved and lost in the vast network of pseudo-satisfactions which makes up the market system. (*Marxism and Form* 100-101)

Jameson further added that, “In that sense, desire is the form taken by freedom in the new commercial environment, by freedom we do not even realize we have lost unless we think of it in terms, not only of the stilling but also of the awakening, of Desire in general” (*Marxism and Form* 100-101). Jameson continues his investigation of the Marxism of Lukacs. The prime focus in this part of the book is on the concept of totality. He maintains that dialectical thinking is based on the totality concept of Adorno. This glimpse of totality is complex but it forms the basis of Marxian ideology. Jameson explores the meaning of desire and freedom thus, “The primary energy of revolutionary activity derives from this memory of pre-historic happiness which the individual can regain only through its externalization, through its re-establishment for society as a whole” (*Marxism and Form* 113-14). He further added that, “The loss or repression of the very sense of such concepts as freedom and desire takes, therefore, the form of a kind of amnesia or forgetful-ness, which the hermeneutic activity, the stimulation of memory as the negation of here and now, as the projection of Utopia, has as its function to dispel, restoring to us the original clarity and force of our own most vital drives and wishes” (*Marxism and Form* 113-114).

In his second essay on Walter Benjamin, Jameson explores the role of allegory in his writings. He talks of depression, distress, and the awareness of the political and historical nightmares experienced by Benjamin. Jameson talks about “a vision of a

world of ruins and fragments and ancient chaos” (*Marxism and Form* 43) found in the writings of Benjamin. Jameson discusses the value of allegory in his analysis of the works of Benjamin, “Benjamin’s thought is best grasped as an allegorical one, as a set of parallel discontinuous levels of meditation which are not without resemblance to that ultimate model of the allegorical composition described by Dante” (*Marxism and Form* 60).

Jameson finds four important levels in the works of Dante; the literal, the moral, the allegorical representing four categories; the psychological, the moral, social and political. The eternal value of Dante’s works is explored by Jameson in his analysis of Benjamin who investigated the depth of the works of Dante. Jameson believes that Dante’s ideas are significant so that “the human race finds its salvation not in eternity, but in history itself” (*Marxism and Form* 61). Jameson avers, “Allegory is precisely the dominant mode of expression of a world in which things have been for whatever reason utterly sundered from meanings, from spirit, from genuine human existence” (*Marxism and Form* 71).

Fredric Jameson gives preference to symbol over allegory. Jameson says: “for the distinction between symbol and allegory is that between a complete reconciliation between object and spirit and a mere will to such reconciliation” (*Marxism and Form* 72). Benjamin described “allegory as the privileged mode of our own life in time, a clumsy deciphering of meaning from moment to moment, the painful attempt to restore continuity to heterogeneous, disconnected instants” (*Marxism and Form* 72). In the essay on Benjamin, Jameson explores the main philosophical ideas and his experiments in language.

Jameson’s Review of the Marxian Ideas of Marcuse and Schiller: The critique of Freedom

In the third essay, Jameson discusses the concept of “Utopia” stating that “the concept of Utopia is “about how we would live and what kind of a world we would live in if we could do just that” (Levitas 1). Ruth Levitas in her book *The Concept of Utopia* (1990) examines the Utopian view of the world. She believes that all visions of the

future are for the betterment of society. Thomas More's *Utopia* gives an indictment of the current society. William Morris expressed his vision of the future of society in *News from Nowhere* providing the classical vision of the future of capitalism. He explored the relations between man and society; between the labor and capitalist. He envisaged community as a projection of the "collective consciousness" of modern society. Jameson expresses the "Utopian impulse" searching out the need for a new hermeneutic. He praised Marcuse for his "political discipline" and "providing the means for maintaining contact with the very sources of revolutionary energy during the stagnant time, of preserving the concept of freedom itself" (*Marxism and Form* 84). Jameson opines that the concept of freedom is an expression of an "interpretative device rather than a philosophical idea" (*Marxism and Form* 84). He states thus while reviewing the works of Schiller and Marcuse, "For wherever the concept of freedom is once more understood, it always comes as the awakening of satisfaction in the midst of all that is-at one, in that, with the birth of the negative itself: never a state that is enjoyed, or a mental structure that is contemplated but rather an ontological impatience in which the constraining situation itself is for the first time perceived in the very moment in which it is refused" (*Marxism and Form* 84).

Jameson explores the elements and the fundamental nature of freedom described by Marx. He has emphasized the social aspect; for Marx, not an individual but society is important. Jameson has shifted from Marxian ideas and he propounded new theories of Marxism in the light of postmodern developments. Schiller and Marcuse also elucidated the concept of freedom. Jameson discusses the models of Schiller and Herbert Marcuse who have divergent views on freedom. Jameson praises Schiller who brought Cultural Revolution. Schiller talks of an "ideal presupposition" or "ideal harmony" (*Marxism and Form* 87). Schiller's "ideal harmony" reflects the "state of nature" and this concept has two features; *Stofftrieb* and *Formtrieb*. The *Stofftrieb* means material passions and appetites. *Formtrieb* reflects the Reason; the individual is no longer an isolated being but he becomes a part of society. When the two drives are in equilibrium the result is harmony in the society. Schiller describes the drive thus, "Such a drive is the *Stofftrieb*, the impulsive to play, which underlies artistic activity in general, and in which both the appetite for form and that for matter are satisfied" (*Marxism and Form* 89).

Freedom is described as “nothing more than the mutual neutralization of these two powerful drives” (*Marxism and Form* 89) and Jameson suggests that freedom provides a “practical apprenticeship for the real political and social freedom to come” (*Marxism and Form* 90). Jameson observes that the real significance of the theory of Schiller lies in his analysis of freedom and the importance of the identity of the individual. Jameson discussed the ideas of Schiller and his views of Romanticism. Schiller expressed his opinions about Romantic art and the different forms of poetry. Jameson observes that Romanticism could not solve the problems of Schiller; he described Romanticism as a reaction against the forces of materialism and greed for money. Romanticism acted as a “defense mechanism” (*Marxism and Form* 95) to confront the growing materialism and greed of the people. The Surrealists represented a direct challenge to the “middle-class business world” (*Marxism and Form* 96) Jameson discusses in detail the dualism of Schiller. In the modern commercialized world, it is not possible to enjoy freedom according to Schiller. Jameson discusses the concept of freedom of Schiller in Freudian terms. Real freedom can be realized only through the pleasure principle. Jameson comments thus, “Desire is the form taken by freedom in the new commercial environment we do not even realize we have lost unless we think of it in terms, not only of the stilling but also of the awakening, of Desire in general” (*Marxism and Form* 101).

Jameson explores the distinction between the desire of the lower-class people and the desires of the rich capitalists. Jameson has investigated all forms of desire invoking the Freudian theory of libido explained in Freud’s *Essays on Sexuality*. He also discusses Freud’s concept of desire as Eros discussed in *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*. Jameson’s journey begins from Schiller and he continues discussing the impact of Surrealism. Jameson intensively studied the ideas of Freud and Marcuse before he reinterpreted the Marxian philosophy. Jameson analyzes the works of Marcuse in detail observing that Marcuse provides a contemporary rethinking of the contradiction inherent between freedom and desire. By the 1960s the scientific Utopia had disappeared and a wave of pessimism and nihilism had set in and under these circumstances, Marcuse attempted a new strategy of liberation. Jameson comments thus: “The happier we are, the surer we are given over, without even big aware of it,

into the power of the socio-economic system, itself” (*Marxism and Form* 108). Jameson believes that. “a genuinely human existence can be achieved through the process of negation” (*Marxism and Form* 108). Marcuse gave the concept of “repressive desublimation” and this leads to fragmentation and disorientation, “The society of sexual abundance encourages overt but specialized sexual activity as a way of reducing conscious unhappiness within the system of foreclosing conscious dissatisfaction with the system, while at the same time compensating for the necessarily increased impoverishment of the environment from an emotional to the libidinal point of view” (*Marxism and Form* 110).

Marcuse investigates the causes of revolution in the society as he believes that the weak class struggle in the society negates the whole system as a whole. Freedom of the individual leads to his happiness. Jameson argues: “As the symbolic negation of all that is, it replaces the role of art in Schiller as the blueprint for a future society, embodying the newest version of a hermeneutics of freedom” (*Marxism and Form* 111). Marcuse discusses the impact of repression in life as he says, “The loss or repression of the very sense of such concepts as freedom and desire takes, therefore, the form of a kind of amnesia or forgetful numbness, which the hermeneutic activity”, he further adds that, “the stimulation of memory as the negation of the here and now, as the projection of Utopia, has its function to dispel, restoring to us original clarity and force of our own most vital drives and wishes” (*Marxism and Form* 113).

Ernest Bloch's Utopian Impulse

Jameson analyzes the ideas of Ernest Bloch in his *Marxism and Form*; his main focus is on the revolutionary ideas of Bloch. In all Marxist literature reaction and revolution are common elements. The Marxists are interested in changing the world; the radicals wish to move beyond “Being” investigating the contradictions. Ernest Bloch explored the elements of reactionary literature in his writings. “A conservative or reactionary literature as that which does not wish to draw attention to its own political and ideological situation is to define it as just literature itself” (Bloch 48). Jameson observes that great literature is reactionary”. Jameson detects the features of reactionary literature in the works of Ernest Bloch. A positive hermeneutic seeks to

restore order and find meaning in life. Bloch believes that a positive hermeneutic is restorative and achieves the ideal of “Utopian impulse.” Bloch defines Utopia to achieve a just and ideal for the future. Bloch has included the writings of Ruth Levitas depicting the themes of myth, sea voyages, and fairy tales. Levitas has created the atmosphere of the romantic medieval world...His writings “constitute dream of a better life.” Jameson holds that the narratives just do not contain dreams of a better life and observes that “everything in the world becomes a version of some primal figure, a manifestation of that primordial movement toward the future and toward ultimate identity with a transfigured world which is Utopia” (*Marxism and Form* 120). Jameson believes that memory plays a vital role, “The loss of repression of the very sense of such concepts as freedom and desire takes, therefore, the form of a kind of amnesia or forgetful numbness, which the hermeneutic activity, the stimulation of memory as a negation of the here and now, so the projection of Utopia, has its function to dispel, restoring to us original clarity and force of our most vital drives and wishes” (*Marxism and Form* 113).

Bloch gives the concept of *Spuren* or traces defining: “its authenticity is certified, before any conscious intellectual interpretation, by the sheer fact of the astonishment with which we pause before these glowing emblems in which some urgent yet utterly personal secret seems to be concealed” (*Marxism and Form* 122). Bloch argues that there is always something hidden in the stories of childhood, some hidden traces of everyday life. Bloch Being is incomplete in itself as it is always in the process of Becoming. Bloch has given the concept of “Astonishment” to explain the process of “Being and Becoming” and Jameson opines, “it is one of the most concrete possible modes of our being in the world” (*Marxism and Form* 122). The “essence of Bloch’s conception of Utopia is anticipatory consciousness” (22). Bloch gives the phrase “Not yet” meaning that the Being in the process of Becoming. Jameson explores the whole philosophy of Bloch thus: “It is thus actively bound up in the process of the world’s becoming as an anticipation of the future and, through its effects on human purpose and action, as a catalyst of the future” (*Marxism and Form* 122). Bloch’s Utopia is an idealistic picture of society; he makes a distinction between the “abstract “and the “concrete.” The main task of “cultural criticism is to reveal

elements from the dross of contingent and compensatory elements which Utopia is dressed up in particular historical circumstances” (111). The whole concept of Utopian thought is explained by Jameson thus:

Bloch’s transition from philosophy to hermeneutic consists in a changing of valences, a transition from negative to positive, which suggests the deeper underlying principle that every negative in some fashion implies a positive which is ontologically before it: indeed, that every negative may therefore serve as a means of access to that positive which it conceals. (*Marxism and Form* 133)

Georg Lukacs: Reification and Class Consciousness

In the last section of his *Marxism and Form*, Fredric Jameson investigates the theory of “reification of Lukacs and “class consciousness” the foundation of Marxian ideology. His book *Marxism and Form* is not much concerned about Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit* but gives an insight into the ideas contained in *History and Class Consciousness*. Jameson believes that “Lukacs is not merely a theoretician of “Realism, but rather of totality and mediation” (*Marxism and Form* 184). Marxism is often read as an ideology dealing with class struggle and means of production. But Jameson contends that “Marxism is a theory of collective class self-interests” (184). He defines class consciousness as “the a priori limits or advantages conferred by affiliation with the bourgeoisie or the proletariat upon the mind’s capacity to apprehend external reality” (*Marxism and Form* 182). In his *The Antinomies of Bourgeois Thought* Georg Lukacs expresses his modern views thus, “The contradiction that appears between subjectivity and objectivity in modern rationalist formal system, the entanglements and equivocations hidden in their concepts of subject and object, the conflict between their nature as systems created by “us” and their fatalistic necessity distant from and alien to man is nothing but the logical and systematic formulation of the modern state of society” (Lukacs 128).

Lukacs argues that Marx used the idealistic theory of Hegel to formulate his theory of economic determinism based on the scientific rationalism devoid of any

idealism. The approach of Hegel is an idealist but the Marxian approach is based on the economic forces of the society. Jameson reviewed the theory of Lukacs thus, “Lukacs’s originality is to have returned this abstract philosophical problem to its concrete situation in social reality itself: and to have posed the question of the relationships between universality on the epistemological level and the class affiliation of the individual thinker himself” (*Marxism and Form* 184). Lukacs rejects Marx’s theory of reflection as it contains duality. Martin Jay observes that Hegel had the power to resolve the contradiction between thought and existence. The central concept discussed in his *History and Class Consciousness* is the concept of reification. Jameson discusses the concept of reification thus:

The transformation of the commodity relation into a thing of ghostly objectivity cannot, therefore, content itself with the reduction of all objects for the gratification of human needs to commodities. It stamps its imprint upon the whole consciousness of man; his qualities and abilities are no longer an organic part of his personality; they are things which he can own or dispose of like the various objects of the external world. And there is no natural form in which human relations can be cast, no way in which man can bring his physical and psychic qualities into play without their being subjected increasingly to this reifying process. (Lukacs 100)

Jameson’s Review of Sartre’s Dialectics

In the last section of his book, Jameson reviews the dialectical theory of Jean-Paul Sartre (1984). Jameson observes that the value of the *Critique* of Sartre lies in “the way it poses the problem of mediation” (xiv). He has discussed the process of how life moves from one level of social life to another. The main function of “Sartre’s *Critique* is to provide a theory about the collectives in and through which our individual lives are pursued” (209). Jameson finds Sartre deviating from Marxism’s economic determinism. Jameson sums up Sartre’s view of history thus:

There are many difficulties with Sartre's model; not least that, in his desire to redress the balance of the Marxian theory of history with a reassertion of agency, a reciprocal over-estimation of the role of individual actors and their historical consciousness has taken place. There is also the problem of social class. Sartre's account may be exemplary but it is. In effect precludes that fundamental Marxian category of social class as an actor in history. (*Marxism and Form* 256)

Hegel, Marx and Marxism

In the concluding section of his book *Marxism and Form*, Jameson gives a detailed analysis of dialectical criticism. He affirms the primacy of Marxist analysis and his theory of class consciousness. Jameson says that Marxism includes Hegelianism. Hegel's approach was idealistic but Marx re-grounded the dialectic in concrete reality. Jameson "sees the ultimate object of all dialectical thought which the concrete itself is" (*Marxism and Form* 309). Jameson argues thus, "The Marxist dialectic, on the other hand, the self-consciousness aimed at is the awareness of the thinker's position in society and in history itself and the limits imposed on this awareness by his class position; in short of the ideological and sensational of all thought and the initial intervention of the problems themselves" (*Marxism and Form* 340).

Marxian dialectic is based on economic determinism. Marx uses the historical process to explain his concept of class struggle. Marx is concerned with the forces of production and the means of economic determinism. He also talks about the class struggle in the stages of history. Hegel "retained a position outside history and was to that extent unable to grasp the notion of being-in-situation in its most paradoxical dimensions" (*Marxism and Form* 365). Jameson has summed the issue thus, "Such dialectical judgments enable us to realize a momentary synthesis of the inside and the outside, of intrinsic and extrinsic, of existence and history: but it is a synthesis which we pay for by an objective historical judgment on ourselves" (*Marxism and Form* 348).

Jameson explored the historical process rejecting the approach of Marx and he stated that it is a process of "specification" and "rectification." No society can ignore the significance of the historical process as all institutions are impacted by historical forces. Jameson had great faith in the movements of history but rejected the idea of Marx that supported totality against individuality. Marx uses history as a tool to suppress the freedom of individuals. But Jameson came under the influence of Sartre who believed in liberalism. Jameson comments thus, "The notion of historical necessity is, therefore, something like a historical trope, the very temporal figure of the process of historical understanding, and presupposes an ever-closer approximation of the concrete, an ever-greater enlargement of the context of the historical meditation", he further added that, "such that the alternative feeling of chance is not so much disproven as it is rendered inconceivable and meaningless" (*Marxism and Form* 361).

Jameson has explored the causes of revolution in the society reviewing all the ideas of Karl Marx from alienation to reification of the labor and the causes of discontentment. Jameson characterizes "mental operation of as a kind of inner permanent revolution" (*Marxism and Form* 362). He comments thus, "Insofar as Marxism is a critical rather than a systematic philosophy, we would expect the materialism of Man to be not a coherent position in itself but rather a correction of other positions - a rectification in the dialectical fashion of some the preexisting phenomenon, rather than a doctrine of a positivistic variety existing in its own right" (*Marxism and Form* 365).

The basis of Marxist criticism is sociological and historical. Jameson says the class struggle is fundamental in Marxian ideology and his approach is for the welfare of the labor class. Jameson doesn't agree with Marx that force and revolution are essential elements for the peace and justice of society. Jameson comments thus: "Marxist criticism is not simply a gratuitous act to enable critics to talk about external issues but 'an enlargement structurally inherent in such criticism, as an intrinsic and indispensable moment in Marxist literary criticism seen as a form of understanding rather the situation of that class, or, in short, class conflict'" (*Marxism and Form* 381-

2). Jameson discusses the historical approach thus, “History is indeed precisely this obligation to multiply the horizons in which the object is maintained, to multiply the perspectives from which it is seen” (*Marxism and Form* 390).

To conclude, Fredric Jameson’s book *Marxism and Form* is a classic example of the critique of Marxism. Jameson has reviewed all the prominent Marxian thinkers in detail and has highlighted the main ideas of the learned Marxian philosophers such as Adorno, Sartre, Bloch, Lukacs, and Marcuse. The book is significant as Jameson explores the Marxian ideology and the reaction of the Marxian thinkers through the turbulent period of history. He has discussed the “crisis of Marxism” and the notion of class consciousness of Georg Lukacs from the modern perspective. In this chapter, all the main ideas discussed in Jameson’s *Marxism and Form* have been critically investigated to understand the Marxian philosophy and its relevance in modern times.

Chapter 4

Re-Reading of Fredric Jameson's *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*

Fredric Jameson resembles Karl Marx who started his intellectual journey with the writings of Hegel and Feuerbach. Marx wrote his famous *Das Capital* to repudiate the ideas of Adam Smith, Ricardo, and the other bourgeois thinkers. Jameson became an international celebrity like Karl Marx when he gave his postmodern theories in his essay *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1991). The intellectual thinkers of the world recognized the reactive and inventive style of Jameson who launched a crusade against traditional Marxism. He stated that: "Marxism is a critical rather than a systematic philosophy. As such it presents a correction of other positions... rather than a doctrine of a positivistic variety existing in its own right" (*Postmodernism* 12). In his three essays on postmodernism, Jameson developed new cultural theories for contemporary America. In the opening of the essay, Jameson talks of the gradual decline of the old values and the trends of new cultural values, "As the word itself suggests, this break is most often related to notions of the waning or extinction of the hundred-year-old modern movement (or to its ideological or aesthetic repudiation)". He further added that, "Thus, abstract expressionism in painting, existentialism in philosophy, the final forms of representation in the novel, the films of the great auteurs, or the modernist school of poetry all are now seen as the final, extraordinary flowering of a high-modernist impulse which is spent and exhausted with them" (*Postmodernism* 1).

Jameson uses the phrase "exhausted" to highlight the gradual decline of the old values of modernism. Jameson gives a critique of Marxist philosophy based on the theory of postmodernism. Jameson gives a critique of the various movements of contemporary thought analyzing the concept of totality advocated by the Marxists. The title of the essay was borrowed by Jameson from Walter Benjamin and this title effectively highlights the wave of cultural transformation and mass media. Jameson's essay on postmodernism reveals his ability to represent the social and cultural "to

grasp the design of history as such” Benjamin used the metaphor postmodernism “to demonstrate through example that only Marxism can apply high philology to the texts of the past century” (*Postmodernism* 123). Following the spirit of Benjamin, Jameson defends the role of late capitalism. Jameson argues that the world has changed with the massive growth of science and technology and mass media. He is of the firm view that a correct and meaningful understanding of the cultural changes is not possible without the proper knowledge of the postmodern culture of late capitalism. Jameson reviews the anti-historicist tendencies in modern history. He gives a critical analysis of all aspects of postmodernism stressing the social, political, and cultural aspects. He agrees with Marx that all moments are over determined and no thinker can deny the role of the historical process. Jameson uses his phrase of *postmodernism* in a multidimensional way, “The conception of postmodernism outlined here is a historical rather than a merely stylistic one. I cannot stress too greatly the radical distinction between a view for which the postmodern is one (optional) style among many others available, and one which seeks to grasp it as the cultural dominant of the logic of late capitalism” (*Postmodernism* 85).

Conner observes that in the 1970s and 1980s there were new developments as the process of cultural transformation and the growth of the capitalist economy gained momentum. In this section of the book, Jameson investigates the operation of the consumer society. He investigates the ideas of Daniel Bella and Jean Baudrillard concerning consumer culture. Charles Jenks was “issuing his powerful manifestoes on behalf of architectural postmodernism and Ihab Hassan was characterizing a new sensibility in postwar writing” (Conner 2). Lyotard discussed the emergence of new styles of architecture and planning in the initial phase of postmodernism. Baudrillard was not interested in the Marxian ideology but he expressed his interest in the consumer aesthetics in culture. But Jameson brought a total revolution in Marxist thoughts. Jameson reviewed the social and political trends of the society and keenly investigated the new economic forces that dominated America. He concluded that the nature of postmodernism culture is both cultural and aesthetic. His essay on *Postmodernism* (1991) excited great interest in the reviewers and the critics of art, culture, and philosophy. The essay for the first time was published in *New Left Review* and later on, he expanded it in the form of a book. Jameson’s book *Postmodernism*

was part of a series of analyses of postmodernism from the dialectical perspective. Jameson “outlines four major themes in his essay: interpretation, Utopia, survivals of the modern, and returns of the repressed of historicity” (15). In his *The Politics of Theory*, Jameson explores his new vision of history thus:

Indeed, the most important thing in the postmodern society is the growth of consumer culture and mass media. Our social system needs intensive understanding and fresh interpretation deviating from traditional Marxian thoughts and application. There are radical structural differences in Marxian capitalism and postmodernist culture. (*The Politics of Theory* 103)

Jameson viewed the postmodern “skepticism towards meta-narrative” expressing it as a mode of experience. In his book, Jameson explored the new cultural production in an age of late capitalism. A major part of his book *Postmodernism* is devoted to the dialectical analysis of art and architecture from what Jameson calls “high modernism and postmodern works. There are seven chapters and ends with a 130 pages conclusion allowing Jameson considerable revisionary space in which he reframed the issues. Jameson explores “an entire range of postmodern cultural production including, architecture, visual arts, economic and literary theory giving his distinct brand of formal and historical analysis” (*Postmodernism* 63). David Harvey in his book *The Condition of Postmodernity* observes that “the problems with categorizing postmodernism modernist sentiments may have been undermined, deconstructed, surpassed, or bypassed, but there is little certitude as to the coherence or meaning of the systems of thought that may have replaced” (Harvey 42). Jameson argues that postmodernism functions as “a cultural dominant, postmodernism is the product of a historical process; the consumption of sheer commodification as a process” (Jameson 163). The decline of modernism was the result of historical forces as Jameson states, “Thus, abstract expressionism in painting, existentialism in philosophy, the final forms of representation in the novel, ...the modernist school of poetry of Wallace Stevens, all are now seen as the final, extraordinary flowering of a high-modernist impulse which is spent and exhausted with them” (*Postmodernism* 11).

Jameson enumerates a list of the modern trends of art, music, and painting, and pop culture; Andy Warhol and his pop art, photorealism, new expressionism, the classical styles of John Cage—all declined and became outdated. The trends toward postmodernist were first visible in the domain of architecture as Jameson states, “Many innovations were made in the realm of architecture after World War II. Modifications in architecture are visible, and this led to the evolution of postmodern ideas and philosophy. The architectural debates propagated the conception of Postmodernism” (Jameson 11).

Jameson averred that “all of these forms emerged as specific reactions against the established forms of high modernism against this or that dominant high modernism that conquered the university, the museum, the art gallery network, and the foundations” (*Postmodernism* 111). The old generation had considered high-modernism as shocking and scandalous. The new generation regarded it as “the establishment and the enemy—dead, stifling, canonical, the reified monument one has to destroy to do anything new” (*Postmodernism* 112). Jameson broadens his vision of cultural history and talks of present history giving “a genuinely dialectical attempt to think our present time in History” (*Postmodernism* 23). In his *The Politics of Theory*, he “expands the phrase postmodernism to read a present of time and of history in which we exist and struggle” (Jameson 62). He demonstrates that the totality concept of Karl Marx is dangerous for the fast-growing contemporary societies of late capitalism. He attempted to give a clear view of totality, political liberalism, empiricism, and logical positivism known as Anglo-American philosophy. Jameson observes thus, “The anti-speculative bias of that tradition, its emphasis on the individual fact or item at the expense of the network of relationships in which that item may be embedded, continue to encourage submission to what is by preventing its followers from making connections, and in particular from drawing the otherwise unavoidable conclusions on the political level” (x).

Jameson’s “concept of totality accommodates heterogeneity and difference, the rifts, gaps, and aporias disclosed by deconstruction but not at the expense of the idea it’s all connected Idea” (*Postmodernism* 13). It is pertinent to note that “the idea that it’s all connected is the cornerstone of his political theory. The Western countries

used dialectical methods to explore the answers to the economic questions. The growing economic inequality was considered a threat to social stability. The Marxist thinkers continued believing in the Marxist ideology but Jameson comments thus, “The method of such thinking, in its various forms and guises, consists in separating reality into airtight compartments, carefully distinguishing the political from the economic, the legal from the political, the sociological from the historical, so that the full implications of any given problem can never come into view”, he further added that, “in limiting all statements to the discrete and the immediately verifiable, to rule out any speculative and totalizing thought which might lead to a vision of social life as a whole” (*Postmodernism* 367).

In the later section of the book, he develops his theory of liberal humanism believing that the economic order is closely linked with the political setup. He carefully distinguished the political form of the economy. Jameson emerges as a radical thinker who overhauls the Marxian economic ideas. Jameson reviewed the theory of reification in his book *Signatures of the Visible* (1990), “The theory of reification (here strongly overlaid with Max Weber's analysis of rationalization) denotes how, under capitalism, the older traditional forms of human activity are instrumentally and ‘tailored,’ analytically fragmented and reconstructed according to various rational models of efficiency, and essentially restructured along the lines of differentiation between means and ends” (Jameson 14).

Jameson closely investigated the changes in art and architecture, mass media, the Television industry, and the computer age. He investigated all major forms of human growth. He studied the new emerging trends of the consumer culture spreading in America. He closely investigated the nature of class antagonism and the rise of the proletariats. He was deeply concerned about the virus of the capitalist system and the need to check the oppressive policies of capitalism. In the opening section of the essay, he pointed out the changing environment of the global order thus, “Postmodernism in architecture will then logically enough stage itself as a kind of aesthetic populism, as the very title of Venturi's influential manifesto, learning from Las Vegas, suggests” (Jameson 2). He further added that, “However we may ultimately wish to evaluate this populist rhetoric, it has at least the merit of drawing

our attention to one fundamental feature of all the Post-modernism enumerated above: namely, the effacement in them of the older(essentially high-modernist) frontier between high culture and so-called mass or commercial culture” (2), he further added that, “the emergence of new kinds of texts infused with the forms, categories, and contents of that very culture industry so passionately denounced by all the ideologues of the modern, from Leavis and the American New Criticism to Adorno and the Frankfurt School” (Jameson 2).

Jameson develops the concept of ‘Late Capitalism’ for the first time in his essay on postmodernism and contends that the growth of architecture, movies, rock music, literature, cultural phenomena are manifestations of late capitalism. Douglas Kellner (1989) observes thus, “The culmination of a series of historical and theoretical studies which provide part of the methodology, framework, and theoretical analyses requisite for a theory of contemporary society which Jameson conceptualizes as a product of a specific historical trajectory: the transition from a discrete national system of state/monopoly capitalism” (Kellner 3). Fredric seriously considered the situation of “late capitalism” and explored the elements of postmodernism in his essay *Postmodernism*. He talks of postindustrial society, the class structure, and the fragmentation of the family. Jameson summed all the main issues of the postmodern society thus:

In existential terms, what this means is that our experience is no longer whole: we are no longer able to make any felt connection between the concerns of private life, as it follows its course within the walls and confines of the affluent society, and the structural projections of the system in the outside world, in the form of neocolonialism, oppression, and counter-insurgency warfare. In psychological terms, we may say that as a service economy we are henceforth so far removed from the realities of production and work on the world that we inhabit a dream world of artificial stimuli and televised experience: never in any previous civilization have the great metaphysical preoccupations, the fundamental questions of being and of the meaning of life, seemed so utterly remote and pointless. (*Marxism and Form* xvii)

Jameson observed that “Multinational capital has succeeded in perhaps “a new and historically original penetration and colonization of Nature and the Unconscious by advertising and mass media” (*Postmodernism* 63). In this respect, he was influenced by Ernest Mendel who wrote *Late Capitalism* (1975). Jameson argued that “Postmodernism is what you have when the modernization process is complete and nature is gone for good”. The critics “discerned a shift in the art and culture of these societies from a distinctively modernist to a distinctively post-modernist phase” (Conner 2). Jameson’s seminal work provides a detailed analysis of the social and political implications of postmodernism. The ideas and philosophy and predictions of Jameson are validated in Sherry (1995) Turkle’s book *Life on the Screen*. Jameson emphasizes analysis and abstraction as he says, “My thoughts on postmodernism are therefore to be understood as an attempt to theorize the specific logic of the cultural production of that third stage of capitalism, and not as yet another disembodied culture critique or diagnosis of the spirit of the age” (*Postmodernism* 400).

Interestingly, postmodernism as a theory began in architecture but entered into the domain of sculpture, films, literature, and other liberal arts. The postmodern thinkers rejected the foundationalist discourse of the 18th and 19th centuries. Lyotard refers to them as “Grand Narratives” in his book *The Postmodern Condition: A Report of Knowledge* (1979). He argued that “the grand narrative has lost its credibility, regardless of what mode of unification it uses, regardless of whether it is a speculative narrative or narrative of emancipation” (Lyotard 37). He attributes “the decline of the grand narratives to other developments in the history of Western nations like the blossoming of techniques since the Second World War” (37). Postmodernism is predicated on the assumption that modernism has ended: “Postmodernism is normally conceived of as a condition beset by a sense of ending” (Waugh 3). Jameson was seriously concerned with the problem of postmodernism in political and aesthetic forms. He observed thus, “Indeed, the very enabling premise of the debate turns on an initial strategic, presupposition about our social system: to grant some historic originality to a postmodernist culture is also implicitly to affirm some radical structural difference between what is sometimes called consumer society and earlier moments of capitalism from which it emerged” (*The Politics of Theory* 103).

Thomson argues that Arnold Toynbee in the eighth volume of the book *A Study of History* (1934) uses the term “post-modern age” and Jameson brought new changes in the concept and elaborated the concept in detail from the contemporary society. Habermas observes that “these forward groupings, this anticipation of an undefined future and the cut of the new mean, in fact, the exaltation of the present” (Habermas 5). He further suggests that it was a “new time consciousness” (5) that tried to do more than just express the pace of change and movement in history. Jameson brought forward his ideas initiating critical discussion about Modernism and Postmodernism from the perspective of American cultural production in the age of capitalism. Jameson analyzes the works of art and architecture from the point of view of high modernism and postmodernism. His approach is utopian. LaCapra opines that Jameson gives a dominant critique of Marxism: “it has been un-dialectically one-sided in attempting to demystify ideologies without seeing their necessity and their well-nigh gravitational force of attraction” (LaCapra 229). LaCapra further argues that “the Marxist critic being motivated by a commitment to fostering social justice, having dreams as well as nightmares about history” (LaCapra 55). LaCapra deplored Jameson what he calls the shift in Jameson “from a critique of ideology and utopia to an apology for ideology and Utopia in a manner reminiscent of Durkheim at his most exalted” (LaCapra 239). Hayden White has commented on the work of Jameson thus, “The main thrust of Jameson is to redeem Marxism purging out all the old and traditional assumptions. He has given a new shape and life to Marxism he has taken a new view of the historical process rejecting the traditional view of history adopted by Marx” (White 155).

Jameson tried to fix up the dates of the beginning of postmodernism in his essay *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*. He opines that Mendel's periodization of late capitalism begins after the Second World War. Jameson sought to clarify the situation this situation, “Thus, the economic preparation of postmodernism or late capitalism began in the 1950s, after the wartime shortages of consumer goods and spare parts had been made up, and new products and new technologies could be pioneered”. He further added that, “On the other hand, the psychic habits of the new age demands the absolute break, straightened by a generational rupture, achieved more properly in the 1960s” (*Introduction XX*).

Jameson eschews passing any judgment on postmodernism; the latest form of cultural degeneration. He hails postmodernism as a positive step towards understanding and interpretation of new culture and New Left Marxism. Jameson thus in his book *The Politics of Theory*, “The point is that we are within the culture of postmodernism to that point where its facile reputation is as impossible as any equally facile celebration of it is complacent and corrupt...”. He further added that, “it seems more appropriate to assess the new cultural production within the working hypothesis of a general modification of culture itself within the social restructuring of late capitalism as a system” (*The Politics of Theory* 111).

The main concern of Jameson in his essay is to explore the postmodernist culture and to explain the pervasive vogue of cultural production. He also wants to know postmodernism is culturally dominant. Jameson has investigated the dialectical relationship between new capitalism and cultural production. Jameson discussed the features of postmodernism in his essay *Postmodernism and Consumer Society*. He asserted that postmodernism is a concept that serves to “correlate the emergence of new economic order” (*Postmodernism* 113). The main features of the new “economic order of Jameson is modernization, postindustrial or consumer society, the society of the media or multinational capitalism” (*Postmodernism* 113). Jean Baudrillard (1988) also discussed the features of consumer society. In his postmodernism, the terms “high art” “Mass media” and “popular culture” are frequently used features of postmodernism. Jameson dreams of a society “without hierarchy, a society of free people, a society that has at once repudiated the economic mechanism of the market” (Jameson 355). Jameson argues that traditional Marxist ideology “cannot give a plausible answer to utopian society of postmodern based on freedom and democratic principles. He sees Marxian failures as a crisis in Marxist ideology” (Jameson 355). Marxist ideology needs “total transformation to generate a vision of the future that grips the masses, an image of Utopia” (Jameson 255). He reiterated that “the needed utopian ideology must be not only economic but also social and cultural” (Jameson 355). He wants an ideology that fulfills the emotional and spiritual needs of the people. He observes thus, “The point is that we are *within* the culture of postmodernism to the point where its facile repudiation is as impossible as any

equally facile celebration of it is complacent and corrupt". He further added that, "It seems more appropriate to assess the new cultural production within the working hypothesis of a general modification of culture itself within the social restructuration of late capitalism as a system" (Jameson 11).

Jameson observes that "with one signal exception. Capitalism itself which is organized around an economic mechanism, there has never existed a cohesive form of human society that was not based on some form of transcendence or religion" (355). Jameson has outlined three phases of the development of capitalism; market capitalism coinciding with realism in art; imperial capitalism coinciding with modernism, and post-capitalism called cultural dominant postmodernism. It is not a style but the prevailing mode of experiencing contemporary life. Jameson defines postmodernism thus to clear all doubts about the concept, "We have paid a high enough price for the nostalgia of the whole and the one, for the reconciliation of the concept and the sensible, of the transparent and the communicable experience. Under the general demand for the slackening and appeasement, we can hear the mutterings of the desire for a return of terror, for the realization of the fantasy to seize reality" (82). He further added that, "The answer is: let us wage a war on totality; let us be witness to the unrepresentable let us activate the differences and save the honor of the name" (*Postmodern Condition* 82).

Jameson is very particular to take up the holistic view of history. He has discussed in his essay E.L. Doctorow, the epic poet of the American radical past. Jameson like Doctorow wishes to restore a sense of history, he insists, "Postmodernism is merely a cultural dominant and to describe it in terms of cultural hegemony is not to suggest some massive and uniform cultural hegemony of the social field but very precisely to imply its coexistence with other resistant and heterogeneous forces which it had a vocation to sublime and incorporate" (Jameson 159). Jameson has investigated the nature and forms of postmodern culture taking into consideration the growth of industry, technology, mass media, and computer. He also investigated the forces of capitalism and their impact on the life of the common man. He observed the powerful growth of the power structure of the oppressive capitalist

institutions which bulldozed the individuality and identity of the Americans. He defined the postmodern culture thus:

Culture itself falls into the world, and the result is not its disappearance but its prodigious expansion, to the point where culture becomes coterminous with social life in general: now all the levels become 'acculturated,' and in the society of the spectacle, the image, or the simulacrum, everything has at length become cultural, from the superstructures down into the mechanism of the infrastructure itself. (*Postmodernism* 111)

Rejecting Totality: Postmodernism

With the emergence of postmodernism, the concept of totality is rejected in the common life of human beings. Totality has vanished these days and it is not possible to think of totality because of the popularity of liberty and democratic principles. The loss of totality is painful; in the universities, students are still taught to have a feeling of wholeness. Jameson argues that the loss of totality is a good thing because the concept of totality was an illusion. Totality leads to conformity and the Nazis wanted to rule the world through the ideology of totality and conformity. The only honest way to encounter reality is to forget about seeking totality. Differences in culture, values, and lifestyles are natural and inevitable and people who value totality and wholeness above everything begin believing in a dictatorship. It happened during World War II under the Nazis who scrapped liberty and propagated conformity. Postmodern thinkers repudiate the concept of totality. They have explored the social relevance of the "master narrative." The function of a master narrative is to unlock the intricacies like a master key and to tell the truth. The psychological theories of Sigmund Freud psychological theories are also master narratives as they reveal the truth about the nature and behaviour of human beings. Postmodern capitalism is also a master narrative as it explores man's consumer behaviour and his relationship in society. A master narrative "easily leads to us against them mentality. We who believe the story is totally good; you who don't believe it are evil." (*Postmodernism* 127). The arguments of Jameson against the role of totalization depend on an

estrangement from the daily life and adoption of what he calls the outsider principle, “The conditions of thinking a new reality and articulating a new reality and articulating a new paradigm for it...seem to demand...a certain strategic distance from that new reality, which tends to overwhelm those immersed in it” (*Postmodernism* 405).

Marxism and Totality Culture: Attack of Fredric Jameson

Fredric Jameson reinterprets the master narrative of Karl Marx from the postmodern perspective. He has brought transformation in the Marxist theory to solve the “crisis of Marxism.” In his historical essay on Postmodernism, he has given his fresh ideas about the relevance of Marxism in the contemporary situation. He has investigated the concept of the totality of Marx and has argued that it is dangerous for the healthy growth of civilization and culture. He argues that if we try to unite all the pieces together, we will never succeed. Knowledge gives power and learning is a constant process. The more we make sense out of our world. The capitalists are materially comfortable but most of the people in the world are poor suffering in various physical and emotional ways. They are quite powerless to do anything. Jameson assumes that the majority of people in the world aspire to be independent and don’t like the interference of others. Jameson argues that in a democratic set up the role of freedom has increased. Jameson is against the concept of the totality of Karl Marx as it leads to dictatorship and the loss of freedom. It is not at all possible to see the “big picture”, human beings can never understand it entirely. The concept of totality is an illusion and a master narrative is an abstraction. It is fictional and Jameson argues that “there is only one something otherwise often known as a mode of production” (*Postmodernism* 403). Jameson begins his analysis of Marxism with the basic principle that the modes of production shape the lives of people. Human beings act as producers and consumers. They enjoy real power when they control the mode of production. They have the power to produce things they want; they can decide the ways and the methods. They have means in the society working together. Jameson is against the prevalence of inequality, injustice, and oppression in society. Unfortunately, Marx is in favour of totality and the concentration of powers. This has led to injustice and inequality and totality. Power is concentrated in a few hands that

control everything. Human beings cannot see the totality of “the big picture”. The majority of people remain powerless and ignorant in society. Jameson has researched the operation of the mode of productions in a society. He argues that each society has its own culture and hence modes of production differ. Marx has set a fixed law for every society and this approach is totalistic and hence dangerous for the freedom of human beings. Jameson argues that modes of production shape the culture of a society and condition the lifestyles of people. Religion and other cultural matters are also conditioned by the modes of production. There is a shift from modernism to postmodernism. Before World War I and World War II the society was dominated by monopoly capitalism. Now the trends have changed with the growth of democratic principles in the world. There was a time when a few big companies controlled the means of production but today the competition has increased. The hegemony of the big companies has been dismantled. Colonization and imperialism were the forms of monopoly capitalism. Jameson traces the history of totality and power of the multinational corporations that destroyed the liberty and individuality of the people. The age of computers, mass media, electricity machines encouraged the hegemony of corporations. There is a remarkable and revolutionary shift from monopoly capitalism to free trade and to "multinational" or "late" capitalism. Postmodernism is the culture of multinational late capitalism. Jameson explores the merits and demerits of late capitalism and postmodernism. They are destructive as they limit the freedom and happiness of individuals. Jameson supports postmodernism as it promotes the free flow of goods and services and ultimately leads to the greatest happiness of the greatest numbers. The best way to understand postmodernism is to explore the link between late capitalism and postmodernism. The society and culture of late capitalism before the World Wars were different but since the modes of production and challenges have emerged, the structure of the society also has changed.

New Depthlessness and Postmodernism

Theoretic deficiency in his arguments is quite apparent as he asserts that Yuppies are the leading class-fraction of postmodernism” (*Postmodernism* 407). He has talked of “a new depthlessness and the emergence of a new culture of the image or simulacrum; a consequent weakening of history in the bewildering new world of late multinational

capital” (58). The conspicuous feature of postmodernism according to Jameson is depthlessness. Jameson has given his serious comments on modern art and culture. It is very difficult to find out the exact meaning of a modern painting as the interpretations may vary. A modern painting is the real depiction of the consciousness of postmodern society. Depthlessness is a new kind of superficiality. He has given two major examples to explain the concept of depthlessness. *A Pair of Shoes* written by Van Gogh represents high modernism and *Diamond Dust Shoes* of Andy Warhol is another example of depthlessness. He quotes Heidegger’s comment on Van Gogh’s work who described it as a reconstruction of a whole peasant world. Jameson argues that when we look at Warhol’s work different interpretations are possible. Nothing on the postmodern work allows a lead into a hermeneutic step. Jameson refers to the works of Warhol intending to define postmodern depthlessness. Warhol has contributed to the growing commercialization of culture in the modern world and late capitalism. Jameson observes that in the postmodern world the aesthetic productions have degenerated into the general production of commodities.

Jameson observes that a modern painting expresses multiple experiences epitomizing the modern experience of anxiety and alienation. A modern painting is a model of inside and outside; an expression of the inner world and the outside world. Jameson examines the postmodern painting Warhol’s Marilyn of Warhol and observes that postmodernism rejects traditional models of depth. In the postmodern age, consumerism has become powerful with the rise of the global economy. In the 19th century, the subject was considered a monad and it was a capitalistic bourgeois notion. With the rise of the global economy, the trader and consumer have been reduced to statistical numbers. Jameson notices that the crisis of anxiety and alienation gave way to the fragmentation of the subject or “death of the subject.” Unfortunately, postmodern man has lost his active sense of creation and this has badly affected his cultural production and what he produces is nothing but random and eclectic “piles of fragments”. Jameson argues thus, “I would add that consumerism can be seen as fitting into the “depthless” culture of the simulacrum in that consumerism offers substitutes for the real thing, substitutes that do not satisfy desire but rather create an unending itch for more” (*Postmodernism* 381).

Jameson argues that “the yuppies are representative postmodern people and their cultural practices and values, they're ideological, have articulated a useful dominant ideological and cultural paradigm for the stage of capital” (*Postmodernism* 381). Jameson further argues that the postmodern period is mainly shaped by “Yuppie” values such as determining “the main chance” making money, recognizing the market, and so on” (*Postmodernism* 408). The collapse of distinctions between “high” and “popular” as Jameson says: “complexity and ambiguity of language, irony, the concrete universal, and the constitution of elaborate symbol systems, all of which appeal to an elite audience in the know, all are absent in postmodern literary art” (Jameson 44). Jameson argues thus, “The fundamental level on which political struggle is waged is that of the legitimacy of concepts...at least right now and in our current situation. In future times, politics will take more activist forms from that, just as it has done in the past” (*Postmodernism* 264).

Art loses its power to protest and there is no privileged audience and this situation is characterized as “new depthlessness” in postmodern philosophy. Jameson has given the phrase “cognitive mapping” to make his ideas clear. Jameson contends that the time has come when Marxism has to be reinterpreted in the postmodern perspective as new culture has emerged. Postmodernism needs to be as Jameson say, “Other features are negative (the loss of a sense of history, for example). All in all, these developments have to be confronted as a historical situation rather than as something one morally deplors or simply celebrates” (Fredric Jameson, *Regarding Postmodernism* 33).

Loss of Meaning in Postmodern Culture

Jameson describes “his master narrative as a kind of myth” (*Postmodernism* 95). He gives an insight into the historical development tracing the stages of representation. The first stage of the cultural transformation was the emergence of modernity. But the fact remains that the modern signs do not reflect reality and, ironically, the postmodern artist is not worried about the cultural crisis. The main image in the modern world is simulacra; copies of the originals created to make money. The list of cultural artefacts given by Jameson is very interesting. He has illustrated the

significance of newspapers, skyscrapers, commercial garments, songs, books, and films. All these cultural artefacts are not static as they are subject to change as fashion changes rapidly. Cartoon characters, for example, often say things like: "I'm only a cartoon character" or "I love living in comic book time." When the audiences go to see the film Aladdin, the presence of genie in the film we are not interested to know the cultural significance of the old ages but we watch the film as the production of the consumer postmodern society. The audiences are least bothered about the role of the old eastern culture. Jameson comments thus, "Postmodern artefacts display an absolute and random pluralism...a coexistence not even of multiple and alternate worlds so much as of unrelated fuzzy sets and semiautonomous subsystems" (*Postmodernism* 372).

Diversity and fragmentation are the core elements of postmodernism. There is multiplicity in the postmodern narratives. The postmodern society is divided into subsystems as there is no unified system. Each article published in the journal has its code and own image. Jameson comments thus: "We set about measuring what is sayable and thinkable in each of these codes and compare that to the conceptual possibilities of its competitors" (*Postmodernism* 394). The endless diversity in art and literature is a conspicuous feature of postmodernism.

Role of Television and Mass Media to the Growth of Postmodernism

Fredric Jameson argues that television is the backbone of mass media culture and its popularity has brought about Cultural Revolution. Jameson has given special importance to Video which played a vital role in the formation of late capitalism. He has also discussed the comprehensive role of television which documents the ceaseless flow of kaleidoscopic images. The viewers are not interested to know the depth of reality depicted by the videos. The viewers are interested only to enjoy the entrainment supplied by the flow of images. The main focus is entertainment and not on depicting reality. The cutting image of postmodernism can be seen in "infotainment and infomercials" because the viewers are not sure whether they are watching a news or entertainment show. They are not worried about the content but their main focus is on entertainment. Jameson observes that:

The function of every TV show is to supply the flow of images to entertain the viewers. Television resists the question of meaning. When the viewers watch TV, they are not bothered about the meaning. For instance, the problem is that the TV culture has no set rules; the TV coverage of war events might be interrupted by a football player advertising a popular brand of beer. (*Postmodernism* 143)

War, football, and selling of beer are different items but people are not interested in the seriousness of the events and situations. They are in a mood to enjoy the thrill supplied by the images. In football matches, the spectators are over excited and millions of dollars are spent in organizing the events for the entertainment of the spectators. The mega-events reflect the growth of late capitalism. The viewers would also get confused to know the reality of the war news. But the postmodern people don't decode: they "transcode". It is not possible to integrate the images of football, beer, and war. In the early 1960s television arrived in America and every household in America had a television. In 1963, Kennedy was assassinated and this formative event was televised. People were not much concerned about the tragedy of Kennedy but television became a cultural icon in America as the popularity of television changed and transformed society. People love to copy the models that advertise on television. Television emerges as a great power of the media culture.

Pastiche and Schizophrenia

In his essay on *Postmodernism*, Fredric Jameson talks of ambiguity that surrounds postmodernism; a concept found in media literacy, visual and plastic arts and architecture music, films, and theatrical discourses". Jameson contended that postmodernism is a reaction against high modernism. Like Raymond Williams, Jameson cites a lack of division between high and low culture. Jameson fervently believes that two concepts, pastiche and schizophrenia link postmodernism to late capitalism. Pastiche is a parody without the comic element, it may be called "a form of blank parody". The idea of pastiche leads to the discussion of the theme of death of the subject. Individualism in the postmodern world is a myth. Modern art is dead as there is no originality and reality; pastiche "to speak through the masks and with the

voices of the styles in the imaginary museum". In modern literature, parody is used as a medium to ridicule and debunk society. But in postmodern literature pastiche is used as an effective tool to expose the evils of society. Parody retains its subversive voice". Jameson argues thus, "The classical nostalgia film while evading its present altogether registered its historical deficiency by losing itself in mesmerized fascination in lavish images of specific generational pasts" (*Postmodernism* 296).

In his essay on *Postmodernism*, Fredric Jameson observes that the schizophrenic lacks a personal identity. It is unable to differentiate between self and the world and it is also unable to experience continuity through time. He has outlined several reasons for the growth of schizophrenia with postmodernism and capitalism. "Paranoia and schizophrenia are different forms of knowledge or different ways of interpreting the world and viewing the self" (Flieger 87). Jameson is a postmodern thinker; he associates paranoia with modernism and schizophrenia with postmodernism. Television supplies the images of everyday culture and even shopping malls have become the center of advertisement and global events of fashion. Speed is controlling the life of the postmodern man. Jameson believes that paranoia is a reflection of modernity and schizophrenia is the reflection of the postmodern culture and conditions of late capitalism. Multiplicity is a conspicuous feature of postmodernism and it is noted that the novels of Thomas Pynchon give hundreds of characters. The nature of postmodern culture is fragmented and multiplicity is the conspicuous feature of postmodernism. Human beings today experience sensations, thoughts, and feelings as a ceaseless flow of disconnected images. The minds of the people have become televisions because of the addiction to television in the world. Each man in the postmodern world is impacted by television and media culture. Human beings living in the postmodern world and confront a meaningless existence. Life is meaningless to them and they remain confused and bewildered trapped in the abyss of darkness. Sensations, desires, and feelings have no meaning for them as if they are robots. In the postmodern world, values are fast changing with the emergence of greed and profit-making culture. Postmodernism is the product of the economic and socio-political forces of postmodern society. A new cultural form has developed in present-day capitalism. Postmodernism is an all-inclusive trend and its growth is

felt by everybody. Postmodernism is linked with cultural production; it is culturally dominant. No one in this world can remain outside the cultural development; postmodern art and literature and architecture are influenced by the forces of commercialism and capitalism.

Jameson has examined the cultural products and the issue of the commercialization of culture. Pastiche is an important feature of postmodern cultural production. It allowed for the artist as subject to the address of his consumer as a subject in modern times. He “borrowed the term from the architectural debate and he identifies the project of historicism; the random cannibalization of all the styles of the past, the play of random stylistic allusion, and in general...the increasing primacy of the neo,” (*Postmodernism* 18) with postmodern in general. Jameson has given the special characteristics pastiche as a substitute for modern parody. It is the imitation of a unique style as he talks of the unique style of Sartre. Pastiche lacks the intensity of parody. The problem with the postmodern artist is that he is reduced to pastiche because he lacks the imagination of Dante and Milton. According to Jameson “pastiche is a random cannibalism of past styles. This cannibalism, pastiche is now apparent in all spheres of cultural production and reaches its climax in the television of Hollywood culture.” (*Postmodernism* 123). Jameson asserts that “when the past is represented through pastiche the result is a loss of historicalness. The past is presented as a glimmering mirage” (*Postmodernism* 123). In the postmodern society, pop history has become very popular and effective, and pop images dominate art and literature. Culture has become commercial and mercantile. Jameson borrows the famous slogan of Guy Debord: “the image has become the final form of commodity reification.” Jameson seeks inspiration from the writings of Raymond Williams asserting that postmodernism is a cultural dominant theory. Postmodernism allows for “a wide range of very different, yet subordinate features” (*Postmodernism* 4). The conspicuous characteristics of postmodernism are deathlessness, fragmentation, dissonance, magic realism, intertextuality, metafiction and fragmentation, and pastiche. They question the notion of “high culture” as opposed to popular culture. In postmodern times the boundaries of high culture and low culture have been transgressed with kitsch and popular culture. Jameson observes that, “Postmodernism

and modernism remain utterly distinct in their meaning and social function owing to the very different positioning of postmodernism in the economic system of late capital and, beyond that, to the transformation of the very sphere of culture in contemporary society” (*Postmodernism* 8).

Fredric Jameson and Commodity Culture

Jameson argues that there is one common thing in the postmodern era; all watch television. Commodity culture has dominated society. People have no interest in history as their main motive is to buy commodities and sell commodities and to enjoy the material amenities of life. The common man in the postmodern society is least bothered to have an understanding of the historical process. Even the “the high culture” the literature of the fine arts is commercialized and open advertisements are given to promote art and literature. Jameson gives the example of toothpaste used by the people of the world. The concept of high and low culture is fast disappearing and cultural artefacts are sold like toothpaste today. In the open market, the culture is on sale today. The line between culture and commodity consumption is also fast vanishing. Today, Jameson argues that everything is on sale. People are not bothered to note the cultural or historical value; their goals are limited and they have no interest to know the classical or aesthetic value of goods. They love to enjoy and they buy to use and throw. The use and throw culture are typical postmodern according to Jameson. Capitalism is dominating the lives of people; it is turning the aspects of life into commodities. In the capital market, the cultural artefacts are bought and sold freely like other commodities. In Marxian terms, the market means the aggregate of all the processes of consumption and production operating in the world. In the postmodern world, market goods and commodities and cultural artefacts are fused and the whole market becomes one great market free for everybody to participate. The publishers of the giant multinational companies publish the works of great writers for profit. A writer is great if his book is sold and makes a profit. From pottery mugs to other big commodities; all are linked with the commodity culture. Jameson calls this new imperialism as the powerful nations use every possible method to control and dominate the means of production even by military force. As the colonization of the old age, modern imperialism is sophisticated as the multinational companies capture

the economy and market of small nations. The market today is dominated by consumption and not by production as Marx noted.

Market and Media

Jameson insists that postmodernism is a “cultural expression of the third machine age (*Postmodernism* 36). Postmodern man has a passion for high-tech media and there is a mushroom of technology parks in the cities. When they buy the latest DVD technology, they think about the latest films not for aesthetic pleasure but cheap entertainment. There is a craze to buy new DVDs available in the market to remain updated. Jameson observes thus, “A description of the structural exclusion of memory, then, and of critical distance, might well lead on into the impossible, namely, a theory of video itself how the thing blocks its theorization becoming a theory in its own right” (*Postmodernism* 71).

Postmodern society has changed as people are using new imagery of consumerism and mass media. Their life is conditioned by the forces of postmodern means of production as everything is measured in terms of money. The role of money culture after the World Wars has increased as people are busy accumulating dollars and buying material goods. They go to the market malls as if it is a ritual to visit them in weak ends and to buy cheap things for cheap entertainment to escape from the anxiety and tensions of life. Jameson argues that “video is the hegemonic cultural form today and is rigorously coterminous with postmodernism itself as a historical period” (*Postmodernism* 73). The real understanding of the culture of postmodernism can be understood through the significant role of media. Jameson argues that “the word processor replaces the assembly line in the collective mind’s eye” (*Postmodernism* 389). Jameson argues that video text doesn’t mean anything, “If interpretation is understood, in the thematic view, as the disengagement of a fundamental theme or meaning, then it seems clear that the postmodernist text-of which we have taken the videotape in question to be a privileged exemplar-is from that perspective defined as a structure or sign flow which resists meaning”, he further added that, “whose fundamental inner logic is the exclusion of the emergence of themes as such in that sense, and which therefore systematically sets to short-circuit

traditional interpretative temptations” (*Postmodernism* 92). Jameson has depicted the economic consciousness of the people. People in the postmodern world are crazy to spend money on computers, home theatres, cellular phones, and other countless electronic gadgets for their material comforts. There is no innovation at all, they do nothing but transfer data these media can transmit. They have no value or meaning but for them, all are images and have no meaning beyond them.

Fredric Jameson and the Postmodern Sublime

Postmodernism is inherently disparate, heterogeneous, and eclectic as insisted by Jameson. The conspicuous features of postmodernism are euphoria, intensity, and sexiness. In the postmodern sublime the focus is on sexuality, violence, and technological and scientific reality. Postmodern society is growing complex and its productions are also very subtle and full of intensity. In the postmodern set up human beings are lost in the abyss of uncertainty and randomness of the universe. These classical works represent reality different from contemporary reality. For example, Dante’s *Divine Comedy* and Milton’s *Paradise Lost* are eternal sources of sublime thoughts. In the old classical literature man’s main quest is for God and the sacred but in postmodern literature, it is pure nature and the unconscious mind. Works of culture are sublime when they are just and faithful representations of life and reality. These realities depicted in the old classical literature are “other”. Jameson argues that postmodern man is crazy to become a slave to brute materiality, “Capitalism, and the modern age, is a period in which, with the extinction of the sacred and the spiritual the deep underlying materiality of all things has finally risen and convulsive into the light of day” (*Postmodernism* 67).

Jameson argues that works of culture and art look sublime when they express the hopes and aspirations of people. Classical literature is sublime as human beings get the greatest pleasure from the deep emotion it creates. Jameson has observed that late capitalism is a reality and it leads to colonization of the human psyche. For Jameson, Postmodernism symbolizes the completion of the cycle of modernization. The attitude to nature has changed. In the old society, even the changes of culture were dominated by the seasons of nature. But in the postmodern society, even the

cultural changes are brought by the changes in commodity fashions. The network of TV and fashion shows is regulating the life of modern man; he is not worried about the aesthetic values of goods but is concerned about his material comfort. Jameson argues that the role of media in postmodern society is tremendous. Late capitalism dominates man's unconscious minds and media culture has a dominant role to play. The images haunt human beings and they have the kaleidoscopic qualities to explore the nature of means of production and their effect on the growth of capitalism. In the old ages the writers enjoyed inner dreams and fantasies and could seek inspiration from them but human beings today are leading a mechanical life and are not at all motivated by dreams and fantasy. Jameson argues that the real dreams of people living in the postmodern society are articulated by the television, mass media. Today man is lost in the global system of multinational corporations, and his life is influenced by the flow of mass media, advertisements. The growth of late capitalism is a unique characteristic of postmodernism. The multi-media network is spreading everywhere and the cities today have become smart and dazzling in their complexity. Jameson in his work *A Singular Modernity* (2002) says thus:

Late modernism is a product of the Cold War but in all kinds of complicated ways. Thus, the Cold War spelled the end of a whole era of social transformation and indeed of Utopian desires and anticipations... Politics must therefore now be carefully monitored, and new social impulses repressed or disciplined. These new forms of control are symbolically re-enacted in later modernism, which transforms the older modernist experimentation into an arsenal of tried-and-true techniques, no longer striving after aesthetic totality or the systemic and Utopian metamorphosis of forms. (*A Singular Modernity* 1)

It directs and regulates the life of the people and control the activities of people. Jameson observes that the evolution of late capitalism is the nucleus of postmodernism. The postmodern society is mechanical, artificial, and productive. Endless products are made today with a little helping hand. Ironically, man cannot

manage such amazing things. God and Nature are dead for postmodern man. The postmodern culture is the product of mass media, technology, computer, and television. Jameson argues that there is no wilderness in the postmodern world; with the growth of education and fashion people have become aware of their rights and liberty. They discard conformity and totality. Before World War II, even mining and agricultural production were dependent on late capitalism. There is a strong play of political and economic forces which change the psychology and the mindset of the people. Jameson argues that wilderness is a product of the culture of late capitalism and not an example of pure nature. When a man strolls through the shopping mall or watches television, he is consuming images of late capitalism and in this process, the aesthetic or sublime is lost. Jameson sums up the growth of late capitalism and the death of aesthetics thus, "The technology of contemporary society is therefore mesmerizing and fascinating not so much in its own right but because it seems to offer some privileged representational shorthand for grasping a network of power and control even more difficult for our minds and imaginations to grasp: the whole new de-centred global network of late capitalism" (*Postmodernism* 37).

Jameson contends that the postmodern sublime is political in nature. Politics is about power and powerful people feel productive when new technologies are invented. New technologies are launched in the market for profit. Consuming "the process of consumption is "a compensation for an economic impotence which is also an utter lack of any political power" (*Postmodernism* 316). The decadence of the sublime is because of the emergence of "Yuppies" culture. Competition is inevitable in the capital market; people lie and cheat in pursuit of profits. Herein lies the decline of the transcendental sublime of old art and literature. When a man consumes the process of consumption, he also consumes ideology. Man has started believing that the whole world is turning into one giant shopping mall. Jameson argues that people have become slaves to consumer goods. They are slaves to the flow of supply and demand. The big malls have appeared to cater to their material aspirations. Indeed, even "urban squalor can be a delight to the eyes...The alienation of daily life in the city can now be experienced in the form of a strange new hallucinatory exhilaration" (*Postmodernism* 33).

Politics and Utopia

Jameson has discussed in detail the rise of new technology and “Yankee culture” and the process of shared innovation and experimentation in his essay *Postmodernism*. Modern people are busy exploring new methods and technologies. “What is wanted is a great collective project in which an active majority of the population participates, as something belonging to it and constructed by its energies” (*Postmodernism* 278). Postmodern culture is focused on planning and is engaged to achieve the goals. In the classical age, the concept of utopia was different. It meant the totality and concentration of power as some of the thinkers believed that totality can solve the problems of society. Peace, harmony, and contentment are possible only in a totalitarian society. Marx also supported the concept of totality. The main argument was that all the pieces when joined together bring strength, solidarity, and harmony. The leaders advocated a strong center to fight disruptive tendencies. Political leaders have often used this hope to justify their power. In antiquity, the king was considered the representative of God and all hopes of people depended on him. The Christian Kings in the old Middle Ages claimed that they were the symbols of God. This Christian philosophy was propagated in the society to justify their rule and use of power. Jameson argues that in the modern world democracy is linked to utopia. Jameson believes that democratic principles alone can bring about world peace, harmony, and stability. The totalitarian states believed in the totality of power but the Nazis and the Fascists destroyed the liberty and the individuality of the people. Some people are fascinated by the idea of a utopian society and promises of salvation. They also expressed their doubts about the political hopes of democracy. Today people are losing faith in utopian promises or politics. Political leaders are also using utopian symbols to justify their power and to win elections. Jameson sums up his arguments thus, “The postmodern late capitalism they control, which seems to shut out any utopian images of the totality. The traditional utopia of integrated harmony will not work for us, and we cannot see what other kind of utopia might be possible. The tension between what is and what might be has disappeared” (*Postmodernism* 177).

In the modern political world of late capitalism, the capacity to explore, innovate and experiment is fully honoured. People go beyond their modern-centred

self as they would “create a new kind of identity which would be very precisely the non-centred subject that is part of an organic group or collective” (*Postmodernism* 345). People are dreaming of the emergence of utopia in contemporary society.

To conclude, Fredric Jameson’s essay *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* is revolutionary in the realm of cultural studies. Jameson has given a critique of Marxism investigating the crisis of Marxism in the late 1960s. His postmodernism “often means little more than the making of connections between various phenomena” (*Postmodernism* 403). The ideas of Jameson are shared by David Harvey who published his book *The Condition of Postmodernity* and by Edward Soja in his book *Postmodern Geographies*. Harvey and Soja agree with Jameson in the postmodern society structural transformation have taken place. There are drastic changes brought about by the new culture in America. Jameson sums up his arguments and gives a clear picture of the emergence of postmodernism:

Postmodernism is linked with the lifestyle and expression of consciousness. The main concern in modern society is the understanding of the nature of the petit bourgeoisie that dominates the society and holds means of production. Yuppies follow a different lifestyle and are part of postmodern society. (*Postmodernism* 407)

To conclude, Jameson’s essay *Postmodernism* is written in a unique critical style at once original and thought-provoking. Jameson makes extensive use of the new images and expressive phrases taken from the contemporary American culture. Terry Eagleton has described it as the “intense libidinal charge” (Eagleton 14) of Jameson’s prose is directed at “reversing the waning of effect” (*Postmodernism* 10) finds in the postmodern era. The essay of Jameson contains very valuable ideas about the postmodern culture, intertextuality, pastiche and schizophrenia, and the loss of transcendental sublime. Jameson traces the history of Marxian capitalism and the growth of late capitalism and the emergence of pop culture and the decline of aesthetics. His ideas greatly impacted contemporary writers such as John Updike, Thomas Pynchon, John Barth, and Kurt Vonnegut.

Chapter 5

Political Consciousness in Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*

Fredric Jameson published his book *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act* in 1981 using a wide range of theories including structuralism and deconstruction highlighting the significance of the political events in literature. Jameson's *The Political Unconscious* rejects the traditional view that literature can be created in isolation from its political context. He contends that political interpretation can be at the center of all reading and understanding of fiction. Jameson believes that political consciousness is a collective unconscious. He comments thus, "As in all previous history, whoever emerges as victor still anticipates in that triumph in which today's rulers march over the prostrate bodies of their victims". He further added that, "As is customary, the spoils are borne aloft in that triumphal parade. These are generally called the cultural heritage.... There has never been a document of culture which was not at one and at the same time a document of barbarism" (*The Political Unconscious* 281). Jameson doesn't want the political perspective as a supplementary method but rather as the absolute method of reading and interpreting the text. Jameson upholds the significance of the Marxist interpretative act, and uses the phrases "high yield" and "density." Jameson avers that Marxism is an "untransferable horizon" that subsumes antagonistic critical operations. Jameson subsumes all other approaches within Marxism recalling Hegel's theory of history. Jameson asserts thus:

History is therefore the experience of Necessity, and it is this alone which can forestall its thematization or reification as a mere object of representation or as one master code among many others. Necessity is not in that sense a type of content, but rather the inexorable *form* of events; it is, therefore, a narrative category in the enlarged sense of some properly narrative political unconscious which has been argued here, a re-textualization of History which does not propose the latter as some new representation or vision some new content, but as the formal

effects of what Althusser, following Spinoza, calls an absent cause.
(*The Political Unconscious* 81)

He further added in the same sequence that, “Conceived in this sense, History is what hurts, it is what refuses desire and sets inexorable limits to the individual as well as collective praxis, which its ruses turn into grisly and ironic reversals of their overt intention” (*The Political Unconscious* 102). He further emphasizes that, “But this History can be apprehended only through its effects, and never directly as some reified force. This is indeed the ultimate sense in which History as ground and untransferable horizon need no particular theoretical justification: we may be sure that its alienating necessities will not forget us, however much we might prefer to ignore them” (*The Political Unconscious* 102).

In his new book, he launched materialist cultural studies adapting “Late Marxism of Lukacs, Bloch and Adorno” relying on the impact of political and historical forces on literature. Terry Eagleton (1986) praised Fredric Jameson thus: “The idealism of American criticism, *The Political Unconscious* established Jameson as without question the foremost American Marxist critic, one of the leading literary theorists of the Anglophone world” (*The Political Unconscious* 57). In the United States, the book was quite influential but in Britain, the response was rather muted. In the USA the new interpretation of Marxism and the theories of postmodernism excited the scholars. James Kavanagh (1983) observed thus, “I want to mark this transformation, this reopening, of a field of theoretical and ideological practice as a nontrivial political accomplishment of which this special issue is but more result”. He further added that, “Yes, we must recognize the historical conditions of the possibility of the constant irruption of revolution from victim to Central America, the re-emergence of capitalism’s social and economic crisis” (Kavanagh 20).

Robert Young in his book *White Mythologies: Writing History and the West* (1990) identified three major aspects that changed the thinking of the radical thinkers of the New Left of America. Firstly, Jameson published his book at a time when the poetics of deconstruction was shelved Jameson had critical insight as he used Derrida’s insight in his analysis of Marxism. Jameson’s book led to “The Althusserian

Revolution” (*The Political Unconscious* 37) as Jameson announced that Althusser was a great discovery. His book gave impetus to the Althusserian reconstruction of Marxism and its impact on Marxian criticism. Once again Jameson puts faith in history and turned to Hegel who has described the various stages of history in his book *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807). Jameson comments thus, “Only Marxism can give us an adequate account of the essential mystery of the cultural past, which, like Tiresias drinking the blood, is momentarily returned to life and warmth and allowed once more to speak, and to deliver its long-forgotten message in surroundings utterly alien to it...”. He further added that, “These matters can recover their original urgency for us only if they are retold within the unity of a single great collective story; only if, in however disgusted and symbolic a form, they are seen as sharing a fundamental theme” (*The Political Unconscious* 19).

Jameson emphasized the continued role of the political unconscious in the creation of literature. In the first chapter, taking up almost half of the book, Jameson contends that Marxist critique must be the critical methodology that subsumes all other critical theories. He treads through post-war genres of literary criticism from Northrop Frye to Pierre Macherey and concludes that all narratives are the versions of class struggle and that the Marxist critique is the only significant methodology ready to take account of this in its totality. The Marxian methodology helps to explain the cultural productions thrown up by the capitalist system; the Marxian approach clears that it is the “political unconscious” of class struggle that lies submerged in the glossy surface of the texts. Jameson argues thus, “The preceding analysis entitles us to conclude that all class consciousness of whatever type is Utopian insofar as it expresses the unity of a collectivity, yet it must be added that this proposition is an allegorical one”. He further added that, “The achieved collectivity or organic groups of whatever kind-oppressors fully as much oppressed is Utopian not in itself, but only insofar as all such collectivities are themselves figures for the ultimate concrete collective life of an achieved Utopian or classless society” (*The Political Unconscious* 290).

In this book, Jameson has expanded the scope of Marxist critique, of matter and materiality. Jameson has discussed three stages of Marxist critique; the first stage

defines the class struggle as the “collective struggle” “to wrest a realm of freedom from the realm of necessity” (*The Political Unconscious* 19). Jameson expresses his solidarity with the struggles of the workers in a grander historical sweep of the struggles of all oppressed groups from a wider perspective. He doesn’t ‘take into consideration merely the ideal of better living conditions or human rights but rather concentrates on the value of freedom. Giorgio Agamben in his book *The State of Exception* (2006) talked of “this struggle to live the well-lived life” against the forces that constrain human subjects to bear life. Agamben talks of class struggle “as a power struggle by one group against a stronger one” implying the dominating force of the power structure. Michel Foucault had expressed the same ideas in his book *Power* (1984). Fredric Jameson gives the Marxian account in this new book considering the Foucauldian version of power. He was also influenced by Nietzsche in his discussion of consciousness and totalization. Jameson has great regard for history as he says that the “readings of the past are vitally dependent on our experience of the present” (x). His “totalizing impulse is seen quite clearly in his claim that this political hermeneutic approach is the absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation” (17). He states thus, “One of the essential themes of this book will be the contention that Marxism subsumes other interpretive modes or systems; or, to put it in methodological terms, that the limits of the latter can always be overcome, and their more positive findings retained, by a radical historicizing of their mental operations, such that not only the content of the analysis but the very method itself, along with the analyst, then comes to be reckoned into the text or phenomenon to be explained” (*The Political Unconscious* 47).

In this chapter, the main ideas of Fredric Jameson about his understanding of “Late Marxism” and “the ‘Crisis of Marxism’” are investigated through the mirror of Nietzsche and Foucault. In the last section of his book *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson circles again to Foucault “giving a remarkable insight into the role of power and the struggles of the proletariats to achieve freedom” (90). Jameson has explored the nature of the Marxian base from a new perspective. In his previous books such as *Marxism and Form* (1971), *Late Marxism: Adorno*, or *The Persistence of the Dialectic* (1990) he defined base as the whole system of capitalist exploitation, or

simply as capital. But in his book *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson discusses base as a form of materiality and matter. Jameson is now concerned about the matter and not materialism in this book and the issue of freedom of the working classes. He has interpreted the literary texts from the point of view of a political perspective and this is the ultimate goal of Marxian ideology. Jameson comments thus, “Only Marxism can give us an adequate account of the essential mystery of the cultural past, which, like Tiresias drinking blood, is momentarily returned to life and warmth and allowed once more to speak and to deliver its long-forgotten message in surroundings utterly alien to it” (*The Political Unconscious* 19-20). He further added that, “This mystery can be reenacted only if the human adventure is one ... These matters can recover their original urgency for us only if they are retold within the unity of a single great collective story; only if, in however disguised and symbolic form, they are seen as sharing a single fundamental theme” (*The Political Unconscious* 19-20), He further added that, “for Marxism, the collective struggle to wrest a realm of Freedom from a realm of Necessity; only if they are grasped as vital episodes in a single vast unfinished plot” (*The Political Unconscious* 19-20).

A text for Jameson is a “reflection of the contemporary issues” (*The Political Unconscious* 14). Jameson contends that only Marxism can help us “to understand the cultural past where the seasonal alternation of the economy of a primitive tribe, the passionate disputes about the nature of Trinity can be understood. In this sense, any form of culture is politicized ad the assertion of a political unconscious... leading to unmasking of cultural artefacts as socially symbolic acts” (*The Political Unconscious* 50). Class struggle is considered as a physical and sensuous experience and Jameson confronts classics dialectical materialism and the Foucauldian genealogy of power. In his interpretation, he contrasts, “The properly Marxian notion of an all-embracing and all-structuring mode of production...and non-Marxist versions of total systems in which the various elements or levels of social life are programmed in some increasingly constructive way” (*The Political Unconscious* 90).

Jameson discusses in detail the growth of socialism and says: “The total system of contemporary society reduces the options of resistance to the anarchist

gestures, and the sole remaining ultimate protests to the wildcat strike, terrorism, and death” (90). Jameson lashes at the fantasy of totalitarian culture and the tendencies of the world to colonize the “last remnants and survivals of human freedom” (*The Political Unconscious* 91). Jameson radically broadens the concept of Marxian “mode of production”, so that he projects an account of continuous cultural revolution” (*The Political Unconscious* 95). Jameson focuses on the engine of historical change leading to the Cultural Revolution in society. He has also re-interpreted culture in his book which designates to the sites where these modes of production become antagonistic and the literary texts that are traversed “by a variety of impulses from contradictory modes of cultural production all at once” (*The Political Unconscious* 95). In this text the struggle of the working class is evident and Jameson notes that; “the notion of overlapping modes of production has indeed the advantage of allowing us to short-circuit the false problem of the priority of the economic over the sexual, or of sexual oppression over that of social class” (*The Political Unconscious* 99). Jameson devoted himself to explore the working of the historical forces. He believes that Marx has given a positive description of the historical process but what is needed today is the review of the Marxian approach to history. He comments thus, “I have already noted postmodernism's perceived lack of historicity and its effacement through the practice of pastiche,...”, Jameson further adds that, “Jameson wants to propose something a little fundamental borrowing the term from the architectural debate, Jameson now identifies the project of ‘historicism’, ‘the random cannibalization of all the styles of the past, the play of random stylistic allusion, and in general ... the increasing primacy of the neo with postmodernism in general” (*The Political Unconscious* 18).

Jameson defines postmodernism borrowing the phrase cultural domination from Raymond Williams. He observes that “the value of such a definition is that it allows for a range of very different, yet subordinate, features” (*The Political Unconscious* 4). Jameson’s concept of postmodernism retains many features of modernism. Jameson writes thus, “Postmodernism and modernism remain utterly distinct in their meaning and social function, owing to the very different positioning of postmodernism in the economic system of late capital and, beyond that, to the transformation of the very sphere of culture in contemporary society” (*The Political Unconscious* 5).

At the very beginning of the book, Jameson gives the slogan: “Always historicize” and this punch phrase is the nucleus of the book: “not class struggle alone, but an endless cultural and social competition between modes of production, and hence between cultural forms” (*The Political Unconscious* 281). The political interpretation of a literary text involves exposure of the hidden role of the “political unconscious” and the critics observe that it is an adaption of the Freudian unconscious. It is the part of the mind of an individual that is conceived as the repository of repressed desires” (*The Political Unconscious* 63). Jameson changes “the analysis of this new economic order giving a list of epithets, modernization, postindustrial or consumer society, the society of the media or the spectacle, or multinational capitalism” (*The Political Unconscious* 177).

Baudrillard and Jameson: The Concept of Consumer Society

Jameson borrows the term “consumer society” from Baudrillard and investigates the features of the consumer society from the perspective of a new culture of postmodernism. Baudrillard argued that such a distinction is based on an anthropological conception of "need". But Jameson rejects the claim of Baudrillard and employs his strategies to understand the culture of contemporary consumer society. Baudrillard observes thus, “Consumption - as it is understood in "consumer societies" - is nothing to do with the satisfaction of needs but is rather an active mode of relations ... a systematic mode of activity and a global response on which our whole cultural system is founded” (Baudrillard 21).

Baudrillard further argues that the objects of consumption are not material goods but rather signs. Consumption in so far as it is meaningful “is a systematic act of the manipulation of signs” (Baudrillard 22). Baudrillard investigated the movement of the market forces and explored the human relations to the consumption of the products. He found a correlation between consumption and production. He argued that the only way to understand the market forces is to explore the commodity structure of consumer society. These ideas greatly impacted Jameson who investigated the culture of the consumer society of late capitalism. It is pertinent to note that Jameson doesn’t completely endorse the ideas of Jameson but he observes

that postmodernism represents the massive cultural transformation. He primarily focuses on the theme of the new world order and the emergence of Late Capitalism. He talks of postmodern pastiche describing it as “Nostalgia films.” The wide range of mega films, big-budget glossy productions are the features of the consumer culture, “The classical nostalgia film [according to Jameson] while evading its present altogether, registered its historicist deficiency by losing itself in mesmerized fascination in lavish images of specific generational pasts” (296).

Jameson borrowed many ideas from Baudrillard to explore the economic order of late capitalism. He believes that no political structure can be investigated without the proper knowledge of the economic order in the postmodern society. Baudrillard remarks thus, “Today, the entire system is fluctuating in indeterminacy, all of the reality absorbed by the hyperreality of the code and simulation. It is now a principle of simulation and not reality, that regulates social life” (Baudrillard 120). Baudrillard argues that economic forces govern the social and political life of human beings. Jameson took the cue from Baudrillard in his analysis of the consumer society and the role of economic forces conditioning the political setup. In his *The Ecstasy of Communication* (1994), Baudrillard writes:

All this does not mean that the domestic universe the home, its objects, etc. - is not still lived largely in a traditional way - social, psychological, differential etc. It means rather that the stakes are no longer there, that another arrangement or lifestyle is virtually in place, even if it is indicated only through a techno -logistical discourse which is often simply apolitical gadget. (Baudrillard 133)

Ernest Mandel and Jameson: The Theory of Late Capitalism

Jameson investigated the working of the market forces which generate employment and commodity production. The decline of investment and consequent unemployment create problems for political leaders. The result is the decline in investments leading to a financial breakdown. Jameson thoroughly investigates the market condition of an economy and the political crisis generated by the fall of employment and the

economic breakdown. Erosion of working conditions and the strikes and lock-outs lead to severe economic conditions. There can be a crisis of overproduction because of the new machinery and technology. All these economic factors are investigated by Jameson with the purpose to comprehend the relations between proletariat and bourgeoisie. In his *Late Capitalism* (1978) Mandel comments thus, “Under normal conditions of capitalist production, the values set free at the end of one to or 7-year cycle is certainly sufficient for the acquisition of more and more expensive machines than were in use at the outset of this cycle”. He further added that, “But they do not suffice for the acquisition of a fundamentally renewed productive technology, particularly in Departments , where such a renewal is generally linked to the creation of completely new productive installations” (Ernest Mandel, *Late Capitalism* 114).

Mandel discussed the nature of market cycles in the capitalist economy. He argues that “each long wave or cycle of extended reproduction begins with different machines than the previous one” (Mandel 110). Jameson talks of the first technological revolution and of the second wave which started with the emergence of late capitalism. Mandel writes, “Late capitalism is necessarily defined by intensified competition among large concerns and between these and the non-monopolized sectors of industry. But on the whole, of course, this process is not qualitatively different from that of classical monopoly capitalism” (199).

Jameson argues that the colonization and commodification of the third world are the forms of late capitalism. Jameson argues that the Marxist critique is faulty and is not suitable to cope up with the current historical situation. In his *Introduction* of the essay Postmodernism, Jameson clarifies the issue thus, “Thus, the economic preparation of postmodernism or late capitalism began in the 1950s, after the wartime shortages of consumer goods and spare parts had been made up, and new products and new technologies could be pioneered” (xx). He further added that, “On the other hand, the psychic *habits* of the new age demand the absolute break, strengthened by a generational rupture, achieved more properly in the 1960s” (xx).

Jameson argues that the economic crisis results in the cultural crisis generated by the oil crisis of 1973. He explores the role of imperialism and colonization in the

world. He investigated how the superpowers enslaved the poor people using their force to make huge profits and to sap the natural resources of the Third World. Jameson observes thus, “My thoughts on postmodernism are therefore to be understood as an attempt to theorize the specific logic of the cultural production of that the third stage of capitalism, and not as yet another disembodied culture critique or diagnosis of the spirit of the age” (*The Political Unconscious* 400).

Jameson also discusses the concept of totality in the second section of the book. His concept of totality is entirely different from that of Karl Marx. His totalizing is “often means little more than the making of connections between various phenomena” (*The Political Unconscious* 403). The defense of the concept of "totality" has created a serious problem for Jameson. It is an abstract concept. There are four “principal aspects of the totality concept of Jameson: Firstly, the thoughts of Lukacs; the ideas of Hegel; Sartre’s notion of totalization; thirdly Althusser’s view of history as an absent cause and finally Adorno’s negative critique of identity theory” (*The Political Unconscious* 134). Totality then “comes to imply the nightmare scenario of a Weberian total system” (*The Political Unconscious* 134). He says: “The crucial thing about the concept of totality, writes Jameson, is that there is only one something otherwise often known as a mode of production” (*The Political Unconscious* 403). Baudrillard observes thus, “Something has changed, and the Faustian, Promethean, (perhaps Oedipal) period of production and consumption gives way to the ‘proteic’ era of networks, to the narcissistic and protean era of connections, contact, contiguity, feedback, and generalized interface that goes with the universe of communication” (*The Political Unconscious* 127). He further added that, “With the television image - the television being the ultimate and perfect object for this new era - our own body and the whole surrounding universe become a control screen” (Baudrillard 127).

Linda Hutcheon (1909) gives her theory of the totality concept. In her seminal work *The Politics of Postmodernism*, she comments thus, “The function of the term totalizing, as I understand it, is to point to the *process* (hence the awkward ling' form) by which writers of history, fiction, or even theory render their materials coherent, continuous, unified – but always with an eye to the control and mastery of those materials, even at the risk of doing violence to them”. He further added that, “It is this

power link, as well as process, that the adjective 'totalizing' is meant to suggest, and it is as such that the term has been used to characterize everything from liberal humanist ideals to the aims of historiography” (Hutcheon 62).

In the first chapter, Jameson offers a strong defense of his Hegelian-Marxist approach. He gives a critical insight into the Marxist interpretation. His critical methodology remains one of inclusion and not of exclusion and rejection. The book *The Political Unconscious* proposes the primacy of Marxism from a global perspective the absolute horizon of all reading and interpretations” (17). Douglas Kellner argues that the concept of the totality of Jameson provides “continuity between his earlier work on dialectical and the later analysis of postmodernism” (399). In the first chapter of the book, Jameson has explored the relationship. Althusser comments thus, “Ideology acts or functions in such a way that it recruits” subjects among the individuals into subjects among the individuals (it recruits them all), or “transforms” the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called interpretation” (Althusser 301).

Jameson believes that the idea of Karl Marx can help the people to save democracy and to bring harmony between the bourgeoisie and the capitalists. The cultural problems can be solved if the Marxian ideology is reviewed in the context of the demands of Late Capitalism of America. He believes that all deep structures can be rewritten in the form of a narrative articulating the true vision of history. Jameson observes thus, “These matters (the evens of the past) can recover their original agency for us only if they are retold within the unity of a single great collective story...for Marxism, the collective struggle to wrest a realm of Freedom from a realm of Necessity, only if they are grasped as the vital episodes in a single vast unfinished plot” (*The Political Unconscious* 20).

The major problem before Jameson is how to integrate all the disparate elements into a coherent whole and this is the major project of *The Political Unconscious*. The book is an attempt to “restructure the problematic ideology; of the unconscious and desire, of representation of history and cultural production” (*The Political Unconscious* 13). It is not possible to confront a text immediately “in all it is

fresh new as a thing-in-itself because the texts are already interpreted. Jameson says that the text is not important but its interpretation is important which “we may attempt to confront and appropriate” (*The Political Unconscious* 10). Jameson claims that his approach is the “absolute horizon of all reading and all interpretation” (*The Political Unconscious* 17). This approach is revolutionary as it transcends all prevailing modes of interpreting texts. Jameson observes thus, “One of the essential themes of this book will be the contention that Marxism subsumes other interpretive modes or systems, or to pull it in methodological terms, that the limits of the latter can always be overcome, and their more positive findings retained, by a radical historicizing of their metal operations, such that not only the content of the analysis but the very method itself, along with the analyst, then comes to be reckoned into the text or phenomenon to be explained” (*The Political Unconscious* 47).

The political or historical interpretation of a text is not casual; it is a serious reading as everything is political and social and no text is written outside society and away from history. Political events are an inevitable part of life and society and the political nature of society is a reality of the modern world. Society is determined and regulated by the historical forces, “It is in detecting the traces of that uninterrupted narrative, in restoring to the surface of the text the repressed and the buried reality of this fundamental history, that the doctrine of a political unconscious finds its function and its necessity” (*The Political Unconscious* 20).

Jameson argues that the historical process is not an abstraction but a sound reality. He strongly opposes the Marxian theory of totality as it is against the spirit of democracy of America. He reviewed Marxism to cater to the needs of the democratic Americans. He is very conscious of the liberty of the people and wants the Marxian ideology to promote democratic principles. The opening up of the text to multiple meanings, to successive rewritings, and over writings which are generated as so many levels and so many supplementary interpretations (*The Political Unconscious* 29).

Interpretation of “a text is unavoidable and all the original philosophical systems or positions in recent times have in one way or another projected a hermeneutic which is specific to them” (*The Political Unconscious* 61). Jameson

believes that the task of interpreting a text is not easy but textual analysis is very helpful in understanding all the hidden issues of the text. The laborious interpretation of a text can only help to understand the hidden meanings; the symbolical significance of the images and stylistic techniques of a writer, “If not a conception of the unconscious itself, then at least some mechanism of mystification or repression in terms of which it would make sense to seek a latent meaning behind a manifest one, or to rewrite the surface categories of a text in the stronger language of a mere fundamental interpretative code” (*The Political Unconscious* 60).

Jameson argues that psychoanalysis of “the only new and original hermeneutic” (*The Political Unconscious* 61). Psychoanalysis is “not as the study of sexuality but the study of desire. Jameson insists on giving a detailed analysis of psychoanalysis, since the discovery of desire as the very dynamic of our being as individual subjects” (*The Political Unconscious* 65). Jameson’s political unconscious is different from Foucault’s psyche as he has substituted it for collective. He shifts from the study of the individual to the understanding of society as a whole. His interpretative system is different from Foucault’s. Northrop Frye is his model and understanding the images, allegories, and myths are very important to examine and investigate the text. Jameson “sees literature as the symbolic mediation on the destiny of the community” (*The Political Unconscious* 70). Jameson wishes to retain both the positive and the negative aspects of the Marxist tradition. He observes that “It ends up conveying the misleading impression that the fundamental target of critical theory was Marxism rather than capitalism. The non-identity between subject and object often means little more than a materialist and decentering approach to Knowledge” (*The Political Unconscious* 52).

In his *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson relies on the Freudian conception of the unconscious, Frye’s conception of coactive life, and Foucault’s conception of individual freedom. He evolved his system of interpretation drawing together these diverse systems of interpretation. Jameson gives the concept of “deterministic contradiction” as in his *Marxism and Form*, he gave the concept of the “dialectical stock”. In *The Political Unconscious*, the “deterministic contradiction” plays a vital role in synthesizing the ideas of Jameson who comments thus: “The methodological

requirement to articulate a text's fundamental contradiction may then be seen as a test of the completeness of the analysis" (*The Political Unconscious* 80). Jameson argues that language is a medium to articulate the contradictory positions of social classes, "Within this new horizon, then, the basic formal requirement of dialectical analyses is maintained, and its elements are still restructured in terms of contradiction...contradiction here appears in the form of the dialogical as the irreconcilable demands and positions of antagonistic classes" (*The Political Unconscious* 85).

Jameson creates ambiguity while confusing the text to the real expression of the social and political setup in the capitalist society. Jameson in the early part of the book discusses, class, class consciousness, the role of history in the life of individuals and society. He states thus, "We can effectively validate the horizon of the mode of production by showing the form contradiction takes on this level, and the relationship of the cultural object to it" (*The Political Unconscious* 94).

Jameson investigates the historical relationship and concludes that class relationship is determined using the production of a society. Edward Thomson in his book *The Making of the English Working Class* (1968) observes that Class consciousness designates "how these experiences are handled in cultural terms: embodied in traditions, value systems, ideas, and institutional forms" (Thomson 9). Jameson has explored the dialectical relationship between class ideologies with the social classes. The values, ideas, and traditions of social classes are an expression of historical processes. The "texts will be seen to be crisscrossed and intersected by a variety of impulses from contradictory modes of cultural production all at once" (*The Political Unconscious* 95). Jameson discusses in detail the concept of "Cultural Revolution" and its historical significance, "Cultural Revolution will therefore be a moment of non-synchronous development...a moment of overlap, of the struggle in coexistence between several modes of production at once" (*The Political Unconscious* 3).

The Western Enlightenment is the result of a long struggle of the people and is a part of the bourgeois Cultural Revolution. Through this long historical process,

people acquire new habits, new modes of life, the process of human consciousness. Jameson sees “the notion of Cultural Revolution opening up a whole new framework for the humanities” (*The Political Unconscious* 4). The cultural texts dramatize the various stages of class struggle, “The task of cultural and social analysis thus constructed within this final horizon will then clearly be the rewriting of its materials in such a way that this perpetual Cultural Revolution can be apprehended and read as the deeper and more permanent consecutive structure in which the empirical textual objects know intelligibility” (*The Political Unconscious* 97).

Jameson’s concept of the political unconscious is a “collective conscious” and an expression of the process of history and in the Jungian sense a reservoir of mythical archetypes. Jameson says, “As in all previous history, whoever emerges as victor still participates in that triumph in which today’s rulers march over the prostrate bodies of their victims. As is customary, the spoils are borne aloft in that triumphal parade. These are generally called the cultural heritage...”. He further added that, “There has never been a document of culture which was not at one and at the same time a document of barbarism”. (*The Political Unconscious* 248)

A key mechanism of Jameson is the Marxian category of reification: Jameson says: “the crisis of the social totality is the result of the same phenomena reification, social fragmentation, the division of labor, valorization” (*The Political Unconscious* 190). Jameson wants to evolve a comprehensive Marxian theory encompassing all other theories. He argues that Marxist theory effectively describes all of human life. The notion of all human life is investigated by Jameson via Lukacs’ concept of “totality.” He rejected the traditional concept of Marx’s base-superstructure.” Jameson opines that the “totality must be understood as constantly changing” (*The Political Unconscious* 56). Art is born from ideology. However, and “art makes us see in a detached way, the ideology form which it is born, in which it battles, from which it detaches itself as art, and to which it alludes” (*The Political Unconscious* 301).

Social fragmentation is the result of social totality and Jameson argues that there is no difference between reification and fragmentation and the division of labor. Reification is the outcome of historical processes of differentiation. Jameson uses “the

term repression and suggests that these traces have been repressed through the processes of commodity production” (*The Political Unconscious* 294). Jameson argues that “ideology represents the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (*The Political Unconscious* 294).

The critics have lashed at Jameson trying to devise a theory totality of interpretation. He contradicts himself with this project as he relies upon a code that can articulate all human experiences. But Jameson denies that his theory is not in any way transcendent but is openly ideological. Its nature is comprehensive and its ability to explain the working of capitalism and the modes of production. Jameson gives the task of reading symbols that is difficult. Jameson proposes in *The Political Unconscious* a three-part system of interpretation. The first is the “study of forms” arguing that works of literature grow out of changing social pressures. The purpose of each form of literature is to solve the contradictions enacted in social relations.

Jameson wants to rewrite Marxian ideology as it requires re-interpretation discarding all the traditional ideas of culture and consciousness. Only a rewriting can reveal the mystery of the intrinsic relation a text has with history. It can fit the text into its proper place in the total scheme of history and at the same time project it as an ultimate mechanism. The potential of a text can be explored through interpretation. In any literary product, the “rifts and discontinuities” in the text are symptoms of the repression by an ideology of the contradictions of history into the depths of the political unconscious. In Jameson’s view what the Marxist critic does is to “rewrite” in the mode of allegory. Jameson came under the influence of Louis Althusser and favors aligning Marxism with contemporary theories of poststructuralism and psychological analysis. He supports an interpretative critical approach in contrast to structuralist and poststructuralist criticism. He puts faith in the master code of Marxism. He notes that, “All class consciousness...including ruling class consciousness...is in its very nature utopian and adds that “the index of all class consciousness is to be found in the dawning sense of solidarity with other members of a particular group” (*The Political Unconscious* 290).

Jameson argues that the artists are not always conscious of what they are doing to imagine solutions to real problems of life and society. They create symbols in their

works to confront and depict social reality. This symbolic creation is a sort of collective consciousness that literature express. The second part of Jameson's scheme is the "study of ideologies." A reader will study the views of any particular text dealing with a particular class that has fixed relations to other social classes. Hence the social relations to which the symbolic pattern of the text responds are seen as conditioned by the writer. A work of art is not just a matter of individual experience but an expression of an ideology or his commitment or the social cause.

There is a consistent history of the struggle of art and in society, some classes exert ideological control and this adversely affects the approach of the artists. Jameson suggests that while the hegemonic process operates. It is this struggle that keeps the totality in flux as Jameson says: "One complex of social relations fades away, along with its hegemonic networks, while another comes into being" (*The Political Unconscious* 57). Forms produce meaning as he says: "the production of aesthetic narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act" (*The Political Unconscious* 79). The ideology of freedom promotes the belief that all are entitled to enjoy freedom. All have the inalienable right to enjoy freedom from a prince down to a pauper. But the freedom concept is deceptive as the dominating classes crush the liberty of others as they have the structure of power. The complexity of the modes of production creates complexity in the text. Jameson is answering the poststructuralists who do not give room for the distinction between text and reality by treating reality itself as a mere text. The pattern of symbols in a text performs a very positive role in interpreting social reality. Jameson has critically analyzed the role of symbols investigating the views of Northrop Frye. The writer is inspired and he often seeks inspiration from the old myths and cultural traditions and rituals. This process leads to the formation of symbolic patterns in a text. Jameson comments thus, "The symbolic act, therefore, begins by generating and producing its context in the same moment of emergence in which it steps back from it, taking its measure with a view toward its project of transformation" (*The Political Unconscious* 81).

Jameson's patterns regarding the "aesthetic" and "symbolic" acts invite comparison with Adorno's arguments on similar lines. Adorno uses the notion of "inherent functionality" to denote all the elements and forces operating within a work

of art at different levels. Adorno says that every work of art represents the social reality aiming to be identical with the ideal reality. Adorno comments thus, “A work of art is not a replica of the world. What a work of art does is that it offers the world what is being denied in the world. While doing this, a work of art rejects the external empirical mode of experiencing the world and it accepts its mode of experience” (Adorno 10).

Jameson shares the same ideas with Adorno. His concept of how the aesthetic act becomes a “symbolic act” corresponds with what Adorno says about the process of art’s taking shape. Adorno argues that a work of art adopts a definite relation with reality by stepping out of reality. Jameson borrows many ideas from Adorno describing the relation between art and reality. It is through this relationship that a work of art “salvages” within it what was once a concrete reality to the community. Thus, the tension in art has relations with the tensions in the community. Adorno says: “The fundamental layers of artistic experience are akin to the objective world from which art recoils” (Adorno 8). Jameson argues that there are always elements that resist integration in society. A writer should consider the elements of disintegration; he should identify them and retell them in the text. A writer should unearth the repressed history of society, “The assertion of a political unconscious proposes that we undertake just such a final analysis and explore the multiple paths that lead to the unmasking of cultural artefacts as socially symbolic acts”. He further added that, “It projects a rival hermeneutic to those already enumerated; but it does so, as we shall see, not so much by repudiating their findings as by arguing its ultimate philosophical and methodological priority over more specialized interpretative codes whose insight is strategically limited as much by their situational origins as by the narrow or local ways in which they constitute or construct their subjects of study” (*The Political Unconscious* 20).

The job of a writer is to unearth the repressed history to fit the symbolic act into the great plot of human history. The role of political interpretation cannot be underestimated. A work of art has to explore the traces of the repressed history which looks fractured and the art struggles to integrate to achieve collective reality. Jameson argues that “the cultural artefact is, then, reconstructed and rewritten by assimilating

the fractured and the repressed” (*The Political Unconscious* 20). The political interpretation of the text helps to uncover the unconscious dimension of the text. Often the text when it is read says something quite different from what it appears to be saying. As shifts and breaks of various kinds in the text are evidence of what is repressed in the silence of the text. The critic must find out the inner contradictions of the text, to explore the underlying disunity of the text beneath an apparent unity. Jameson argues that any aesthetic work is a socially symbolic act. For example, drama is a socially symbolic act as it is part of the “vast unfinished plot of human life.” Its causality is this life, and the repression of ideology makes it repressed history. It is not an isolated artefact, but an imitation of life. Art can create an illusion that it is an independent artefact but it cannot escape the fractures in it, which are caused by the contradictions of life. A.N. Jeffares says: “Drama is a communal act, the representation of crucial actions by living people on a stage in front of an audience” (Jeffares 3). These words bring out the basic function of art in society; it is a communal act. Jameson has mentioned three horizons in *The Political Unconscious* and each horizon produces a semantic enrichment of the literary work which is the main objective of Jameson. The three horizons that Jameson proposes as part of his interpretative method are the following, “First, of political history, in the narrow sense of a punctual event and a chronicle like the sequence of happenings in time; then of society, in the now already less diachronic and time-bound sense of a constitutive tension and struggle between social classes, and, ultimately, of history now conceived in its vastest sense of the modes of production and the succession and destiny of the various human formations, from prehistoric life to whatever far future history has in store for us” (*The Political Unconscious* 75).

Jameson has given his transcendent view of history, it is limited to events, different phases in struggles, and the rise and fall of political regimes, social fashions, customs, struggles between historical individuals, and the perceived crisis. In this part of his book, Jameson discusses the reading of myths of Claude-Levi-Strauss. He has written an essay, *The Structural Study of Myth* in which he has discussed the basic principle of myth-making. Jameson argues that the dominant class ideology will invent strategies to dominate the subjected class and also compel them to follow the

ideology, social and classes are caused by the material necessity; by the modes of production and relations of production.

As the modes of production and relations of production change, social relations and classes also change. The dominant class tries to retain the power in society but the lower-class people struggle to organize a revolution against them. In the texts, the plight of the workers is depicted by the writers and highlight through symbols their silence and marginalization. The purpose of the texts is to reconstruct the popular cultures from the fragments of folk tales, folk songs and create a collective culture. Jameson gives an example to illustrate thus, “In the seventeenth century English Revolution the various classes and class functions found themselves obliged to articulate their ideological struggles through the shared medium of a religious master code” (*The Political Unconscious* 88).

Jameson observes that the “sign system of several distinct modes of production can be registered and apprehended” (*The Political Unconscious* 98). The ideology of form assumes significance as all the contradictions are hidden in the form of the text. All the specific messages are emitted by the varied sign system by the text. The form is very important in the text as it informs content, and is in turn informed by content. Jameson discusses the various forms of ideology; its structure; alienation and reification. Jameson argues that “history is the ultimate ground as well as the untransferable limit of our understanding in general, and our understanding in general, and our textual interpretations in particular” (*The Political Unconscious* 100). The bourgeoisie class maintains control over all aspects of society including art and literature. “It is this struggle that keeps the totality in flux so that one complex of social relations fades away, along with its hegemonic networks, while another comes into being” (*The Political Unconscious* 7). Jameson suggests there is a continuous struggle going on between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie. The main “thrust of the bourgeoisie is to control the production of meaning. Meaning is produced through forms the production of aesthetic narrative form is to be seen as an ideological act” (*The Political Unconscious* 79).

Jameson has evolved a new theory of interpretation of the texts. He rejects the conventional way of interpretation and reviews the cultural interpretative tradition. Marxism is significant because for Marx history is a single collective narrative linking the past with the present. Jameson defends the Marxian approach to history and the significance of the historical process in understanding the growth of culture and the meaning of the means of production. Jameson argues that a work of art is “disguised and symbolic” in theme and form. It has a fundamental theme that is part of the history of mankind and struggles between different groups. Thus, literary works are “cardinal episodes in a single unfinished plot” (*The Political Unconscious* 20).

Fredric Jameson discusses his modern theory analyzing the works of many modern and postmodern writers such as Balzac, Conrad, James Joyce, D.H Lawrence, and Bakhtin. He maintains that on the initial level, “the individual work is grasped essentially as a symbolic act” In the concluding part of his book *Marxism and Form*, Jameson, claims that a text is a praxis (practice different from theory) but in his *The Political Unconscious*, he claims that a text has symbolic action to convey. He discusses the concept of “symbolic act” in detail in his Balzac section. Jameson explores the novels of Balzac to clarify the concept of “symbolic act.” He opines that often the plots of the novels of Balzac are read through the lens of the model of the myth of Levi Strauss. We can explore the hidden meaning of the novels of Balzac with the help of the “semiotic square” of A.J. Greimas, as an allegory of “the imaginary resolution of a real contradiction” The novels of Balzac are relevant today because of his deep interest in the historical forces. Balzac is a French novelist who opened the gates of realism in European literature and his fiction greatly impacted Emile Zola, Charles Dickens, Gustave Flaubert, and Henry James. His novels “evidently express mediation on history” paradigms, upon which the novel as a process works. In his chapter on George Gissing, Jameson explores the significance of naturalist fiction. Gissing is an English novelist who wrote 23 novels and followed the stylistic techniques of Michael Bakhtin such as carnival, carnivalesque and grotesque realism. Bakhtin’s concept of “dialogism” is a revolutionary tenet of Bakhtin challenging the oppositional system of rulers and their orthodox rigidity” (Bromley 2). In his *The Dialogic Imagination* Bakhtin observes that in the dialogic process

every “word is directed toward an answer and cannot escape the profound influence of the answering word that it anticipates” (280). In all his critical works Bakhtin turns again and again to the two concepts he calls *heteroglossia* and *polyphony*. He believes that the novel and drama became popular in Europe because of their power to reflect the multiple voices through words, and speeches of the characters. The novelists and the playwrights turned to history and literature and created interesting situations depicting existential reality. Jameson observes thus: “Gissing’s ideologemes function as “the raw material, the inherited narrative paradigms, upon which the novel as a process works and which it transforms into texts of a different order” (*The Political Unconscious* 185). In his response to Nancy Armstrong’s book *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (1987), Jameson argues thus, “Two strategic displacements were necessary to convert earlier narrative machinery which has been described here into that of Gissing’s greatest novels: the alienated intellectual becomes more locally specified as the writer so that the problems of *de Classement* raised above are immediately linked to the issue of earning money” (204). He further added that, “Meanwhile, the class conflict evoked in the earlier works is here largely rewritten in terms of sexual differentiation and the “woman question:” this allows the experimental situation we described to be staged within the more conventional novelistic framework of marriage, which thereby gains an unaccustomed class resonance” (*The Political Unconscious* 204).

For Jameson, Gissing is a great novelist because of three factors; he is depicting the class conflict touching upon the woman question in the 19th century; he is serious about “class resonance” evoking class consciousness and he is highlighting political consciousness. For Jameson, a text is important if it is interpreted as “an ideology of form” carrying out ideological messages to change the society “distinct from the ostensible or manifest content of the works” (*The Political Unconscious* 99). Form and content are understood as inseparable as the form is apprehended as content.

In the 5th chapter, Jameson explores the themes, form, and content of Joseph Conrad who became famous for his novel *Heart of Darkness*. Jameson eulogizes

Conrad's style as a response to the "concrete situation...of rationalization and reification in the late nineteenth century" (*The Political Unconscious* 225). Conrad is a great novelist because he took up the themes of imperialism and the cruelty of the European powers in plundering the natural resources of Africa and treating them as savages. Conrad's approach is historical and the purpose is to bring political awareness among the Africans. Jameson emphasizes the interpretation of the text from a socialistic and historical perspective. He calls interpretation "decoding the text." Jameson observes that unity is an important factor in a text, "a figuration on the level of textual form of the larger social totality." In the Conrad chapter, Jameson maintains in the modernist text, unity must be maintained and this is a crucial factor leading to the process of interpretation. Jameson borrows the phrase "rationalization" from Max Weber and "reification" from Georg Lukacs to interpret the modern texts. The power of Marxism lies in its ability to embrace several "different mediatory codes" for connecting different social and cultural trends, "Thus, rationalization and reification can be described as the analytical dismantling of the various traditional or natural unities into their parts with a view to their Taylorization that is their reorganization into more efficient systems which function according to an instrumental, or binary means/ends logic" (*The Political Unconscious* 227).

Jameson emphasizes rationalization and reification which are the major aspect of modern literature. In Marxian ideology, reification has special significance. The term means "making into a thing." Reification is the process by which social relations are understood as attributes of people involved in them or when a relationship is traded as a commodity. Later on, after ten years of the publication of his *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson gives the phrase "autonomy" as the supreme manifestation of modern texts. Jameson observes that reification is the most important key of Marxism. Reification refers to the objectification of that which ought to be concretized. Jameson's *The Political Unconscious* is a work that Zizek characterized as "simultaneously truly Marxist and truly Freudian; which is an indication of the strong influence of the latter's theory in Marxist hermeneutics. Freudian may be seen as a result of psychic fragmentation since the beginning of capitalism (Zizek 47).

In his *Signatures of the Invisible*, Jameson observes thus: “Even more significantly for our concerns, these “various kinds of autonomy now inscribe themselves in the very structure of individual works” (294). He observes that the process of atomization “can now be initially observed on two levels of the modernist work in general. The trend of modern literature is towards achieving autonomy and making innovations in the themes and styles. In both the books, *The Political Unconscious* and *Signatures of the Visible*, Jameson discusses the different aspects of modernist work.

In the chapter on “James Joyce”, he explores the “archetypal emblem of the process of episodization in modernism” Jameson discusses Ulysses from the historical perspective and he also wrote an essay *Ulysses in History* (1982) analyzing the famous Ithaca episodes; the two most boring chapters of *Ulysses*. Jameson raises a fundamental question: “Why do we need a narrative?” He found the materiality of the text and he emphasized the process of reification in *Ulysses*. Jameson emphasized that this process of “reification” occurred in the newly developing capitalist society. He contended that “what we have been calling boredom is not a failure of Joyce but rather his success” (139), Jameson stated thus, “There is here, however, a constitutive tension between the episode and the totality not necessarily present on the level of the sentence itself....It is this tension, or even contradiction, which probably accounts for the tenacious stereotype of the plotlessness of the modern novel: as though there were any non-narrative moments in *Ulysses*” (144). He further added that, “But the narrativity of Joyce and Virginia Woolf is that of the episode and not of the work as a whole, by which we probably mean the idea of the work, its concept what the single word title of Joyce’s book is supposed, for example, to convey” (Jameson 144).

Jameson argues that Joyce’s *Ulysses* is a great novel because it has an “organic unity as a symbolic act that requires the potential to harmonize all the heterogeneous narrative paradigms” (*The Political Unconscious* 144). Joyce’s symbolic act is a concept akin to the description of the dialogism, heteroglossia, and polyphony of the novel offered by Bakhtin. Marx’s analysis of production rewrites the entire history of the novel” (*The Political Unconscious* 57). Jameson discusses the contribution of Althusser who has formulated the concept of “semi-autonomy” giving

the feature of culture, ideology, law, and the economy and the mode of production (*The Political Unconscious* 37). Jameson insists that the text should relate to history. Within the specific histories of Marxism, Althusser's structuralism is the main feature of modernism. In the modern text, Jameson argues there is full-blown emergence of a new style evolved by modern writers. Terry Eagleton reviewed Jameson's book *The Political Unconscious* and observed that "Jameson's parody is remarkable in the text" (Eagleton 65). Jameson has joined the pantheon of theoretical giants including, Strauss, Lacan, Barthes, and Foucault. Jameson defines modernism highlighting the characteristics of modernism thus, "Modernism is itself an ideological expression of capitalism and in particular, of the latter's reification of daily life, maybe granted a local validity....", he further added that, "Viewed in this way, then, modernism can be seen as a late stage in the bourgeois cultural revolution, as a final and extremely specialized phase of that immense process of superstructural transformation whereby the inhabitants of older social formations are culturally and psychologically retained for life in the market system" (*The Political Unconscious* 236).

In his analysis of Nietzsche, Jameson expresses his views on ethics and he investigates the doctrine Eternal Recurrences to solve the problems of good and evil. Jameson observes thus, "Briefly, we can suggest that, as Nietzsche taught us, the judgmental habit of ethical thinking of ranging everything in the antagonistic categories of good and evil (or their binary equivalents) is not merely an error but is objectively rooted in the inevitable and inescapable centeredness of every individual consciousness or individual subject: what is good is what belongs to me, what is bad is what belongs to the Other...", he further added that, "The Nietzschean solution to this constitutional ethical habit of the individual subject-the Eternal Return is for most of us both intolerable in its rigour and unconvincingly ingenious in the prestidigitation with which it desperately squares its circle" (*The Political Unconscious* 234).

Jameson defends Nietzsche arguing that for Nietzsche all ethical discourse is a communal affair and the evolution of ethics is the outcome of a group response to historical forces. The bourgeois morality is not identical to the traditional Christian morality. When Nietzsche talks of Eternal Recurrence, he expresses his affirmation for life. Nietzsche like Marx holds that "going beyond" good and evil is not a

philosophical issue. Lukacs in his *Theory of the Novel* denounces the dialectical philosophy of Hegel. He says: Nietzsche proposes a different stance “from which to transcend the double bind of the merely ethical” (235). Jameson reads Hegel “through poststructuralist lenses in which the double bind of the merely ethical” (235). is a philosophical problem. The Marxist approach is ideological. Jameson also differs from Jacques Derrida who lays stress on “new reason” but Jameson lays emphasis on “new logic.” Derrida argues deconstructionist philosophy the best answer to the problems of life and existence but Jameson firmly believes in Marxism. His approach is historical and logical’ for the historical approach is capable of solving all the problems of society. Jameson concludes his discussion of Marx and Nietzsche thus, “It may be concluded that class consciousness is Utopian as it expresses the unity and totality of society. But this fact is allegorical; it is essential to understand the working of ruling class structure and ideology. The ruling class promotes and perpetuates class privilege and power destructive for the individuals” (Nietzsche 291).

To conclude, As Jameson puts it in the final pages of the book: “What is wanted here – and it is one of the most urgent tasks of Marxist theory today – is a whole new logic of collective dynamics with categories that escape the taint of some mere application of terms drawn from individual experience (in that sense, even the concept of praxis remains a suspect one)” (*The Political Unconscious* 294). He investigated violence and the evils prevalent in the society which creates political instability. Jameson investigated the historical situation described in the reification theory of Marx. In the final chapter of the book Jameson elucidates and discusses the concept of reification and its role in political society. He observes thus:

For the dynamic of *rationalization* - Weber's term, which Lukacs will strategically retranslate as *reification* in *History and Class Consciousness* is a complex one in which the traditional or "natural" unities, social forms, human relations, cultural events, even religious systems, are systematically broken up to be reconstructed more efficiently, in the form of new post-natural processes or mechanisms; but in which at the same time, these now isolated broken bits and pieces of older unities acquire a certain autonomy of their own, a semi-

autonomous coherence which not merely a reflex of capitalist reification and rationalization. Also, in some measure serves to compensate for the dehumanization of experience reification brings with it, and to rectify the otherwise intolerable effects of the new process. (62-63)

Thus, Jameson's book *The Political Unconscious* is a critique of the old Marxian ideology and an analysis of the culture of late capitalism. He has investigated the theories and ideas of all the major Marxists. Jameson uses a range of theories including structuralism, deconstruction, archetypal criticism, allegorical interpretations, and much more for critical interpretation of a literary text.

Chapter 6

Postmodernism in Fredric Jameson's *The Ancients and the Postmoderns*

This chapter explores the philosophical ideas of Fredric Jameson discussed in his book *The Ancients and the Postmoderns*. Jameson says that high modernism is now very far from us today as antiquity was for the Renaissance. Fredric Jameson's major new work investigates the role of a modern painting of Rubens and the music of Wagner and Mahler. He has recorded the history of postmodern experiments conducted in art, literature, and architecture. Jameson began his journey in 1991 when he published *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* and emerged as the august theorist of the postmodern with the publication of *Marxist and Form* and *Late Marxism* (1990). Jameson deeply investigated the Left-Marxian Crisis and even published the two-volume *Ideologies of Theory* (1988). Jameson continued his cultural exploration and critical thoughts and published his book *Late Marxism* (1990) and his Marxian approach and understanding reached their height when he published *The Cultural Turn* (1998). This book on postmodern culture and philosophy excited great interest among the critics and reviewers of Jameson. No wonder, Fredric Jameson established his name in the domain of cultural history and philosophy. His focus is on "historicizing" and the reinterpretation and reviewing of Marxism from the postmodern perspective. He delivered many lectures in Princeton, Cornell, Yale, California, Duke, and Columbia universities. Today, Fredric Jameson is regarded as the prominent cultural critic of America and the leading Marxist intellectual critic of America. The key themes running through the works of Jameson are modernism and post-moderns; the analysis of the contemporary cultural landscape and the operation of the materialist dialectic. In a sequence that begins with the book on Brecht and runs through *A Singular Modernity* (2002), *The Modernist Papers* (2007), and *The Ancients and the Postmoderns*, Jameson has given a series of thoughtful ideas about the dynamics of industrial and monopoly capitalism. The latest book of Fredric Jameson is the *Ancients and the Postmoderns*. The basis of all the books of Jameson has been Marxist in origin. Alex Callinicos's *Against Postmodernism* (1969) gives a

closer analysis of the political background to postmodernism. David Harvey's *Condition of Postmodernity* (1990) offers an analytical theory of economic interpretation of Fredric Jameson. Terry Eagleton's *Illusions of Postmodernism* (1966) tackles the impact of its ideological diffusion and Jameson took a keen interest in the assumptions of capitalism of Eagleton. The main purpose of all the books of Fredric Jameson is one unifying ambition inventing new forms that grasp a specific social or political totality. Jameson likes tackling large, mythical worlds commenting on the "electrifying slumber of Ruben and investigating the cultural significance of Richard's Wagner *Ring cycle*. His new book, *The Ancients and the Postmoderns* is a new masterpiece of cultural analysis. He reviews history and philosophy; art and culture in this book. He narrates the history of the Renaissance painters, Wagner, Hamlet, the symphonies of Mahler, and the contribution of American filmmakers such as Raymond Chandler, Robert Altman, and late modernist filmmakers such as Kieslowski, Angelopoulos, Sokurov. The book ends with a discussion of the culture and economics of the present late capitalism. In his new masterpiece of cultural analysis, Jameson gives an analysis of the aesthetic history of an age of overpopulation of art and culture.

Jameson is a prolific writer; the early Jameson has stood for "taking Continental theory seriously" and he insisted on historicizing but in the middle of his writing career he emerged as a serious cultural critic reviewing and interpreting the late Marxism to solve what he called the Marxian crisis. The later Jameson wrote on a variety of topics appearing as an opaque thinker investigating the historical and cultural process of social and economic formations. He hints at the roots of the Renaissance inventing its modernity out of cultural heritage. He raises many questions in his book *The Ancients and the Postmoderns*. Jameson's main concern is to find the answer to whether modernism confronts modern man to a ruined landscape on which he can dream. There is a body of texts available to him from the past and out of which he is supposed to construct a law, an ethos, and a new social contract to survive in modern society. The problem with modern man is to reconnect with his old classical ideas. Jameson has made serious efforts to find out a plausible connection with classicism, modernity, and postmodernity in his book. Jameson has used the term

postmodernism in three distinct ways. The first is the construction of an aesthetic or a poetics which is produced inductively from an empirical analysis of several texts. The second is beyond interdisciplinary histories and the shift is toward a fundamental historical transformation. Postmodernism thus becomes a concept which relates to a new economic, political and cultural totality. Etymologically the term postmodernism is associated with the fine arts, and the new trends and stylistic techniques employed by the writers. Jameson redefines the relationship between base and superstructure and observes that postmodernism is cultural logic borrowing the term late capitalism from Ernest Mandel (1978). He relied on the theoretical aspect of Mandel in his analysis of modernism and postmodernism. Mandel took inspiration from Marx who explored the forces of the capitalist market and investigated the crises of overproduction and under-consumption. Jameson argues that the market also experiences long-term tides in the capital market. There are three waves of capitalism; market capitalism; monopoly capitalism and late capitalism which grew after World War II.

Culture of Late Capitalism: The Process of Commodification

Jameson discussed his concept of late capitalism in many lectures and books recognizing the reciprocal and dialectical nature of culture and economic system. This unit may be called a commodity Culture. In the culture of late capitalism, there is a free play of economic forces; a process begins within which consumer goods can be manipulated to feed consumer society Jameson discusses the concept thus:

The development of postindustrial monopoly capitalism has brought with it an increasing occultation of the class structure through techniques of mystification practiced by the media and particularly by advertising in its enormous expansion since the onset of the Cold War. In existential terms, what this means is that our experience is no longer whole: we are no longer able to make any felt connection between the concerns of private life, as it follows its course within the walls and confines of the affluent society, and the structural projections of the system in the outside world, in the form of neocolonialism, oppression,

and counter-insurgency warfare. In psychological terms, we may say that as a service economy we are henceforth so far removed from the realities of production and work on the world that we inhabit a dream world of artificial stimuli and televised experience: never in any previous civilization have the great metaphysical preoccupations, the fundamental questions of being and of the meaning of life, seemed so utterly remote and pointless. (Jameson, *The Ancients and the Postmoderns* xvii-xviii)

The above quotation clearly defines the term postmodernism in clear and simple terms. He has discussed all the major characteristics of late capitalism. He has discussed the features of the postindustrial society; the class structure, and the conspicuous role of mass media, and the fragmentation of the old culture. Douglas Kellner (1989) comments thus, “The culmination of a series of historical and theoretical studies which provide part of the methodology, framework, and theoretical analyses requisite for a theory of contemporary society which Jameson conceptualizes as a product of a specific historical trajectory,” he further added that, “the transition from a discrete national system of state/monopoly capitalism to an interlocking system multinational corporate capitalism” (Kellner 2).

Andrews (2006) expresses his views of late capitalism thus “whether, in the guise of films, television, music, literary, or informational products, mass-mediated ‘cultural forms’ have thus become a ‘central focus and expression of economic activity (Andrews 90). Jameson argues that the pure form of capitalism is late capitalism because it “eliminates the enclaves of pre-capitalist organization it had hitherto tolerated and exploited in a tributary way” (*The Ancients* 36). Cultural critics such as Kellner, Andrews, and Mandel have pointed the symptoms of late capitalism. They include (1) global networks of capital, (2) industrial flexibility, (3) a reorganization of capital-state production models and marketing and advertising, Mandel and Jameson both attributed modernism to earlier forms of capitalism. Jameson ought tremendously to change in American society. “As art, culture, and capitalism evolved, elements first captured in postmodern art, for Jameson, became an indicator of the predominant structure of feeling” (Williams 61). Jameson observes

thus, “I have tried to suggest that the three historical stages of capital have each generated a type of space unique to it, even though these three stages of capitalist space are far more profoundly interrelated than are the spaces of other modes of production”. He further talks that, “The three types of space I have in mind are all the result of discontinuous expansions or quantum leaps in the enlargement of capital in the latter's penetration and colonization of hitherto uncommodified areas” (*The Ancients* 348).

Jameson explores the definition of production given by Marx who indicates “how “human beings are said to produce their own life, their consciousness, their world” (*The Ancients* 68). Henri Lefebvre (1991) investigates the definition of Karl Marx seeks to redefine it making a distinction between “production” and “creation” and the “product work.” Lefebvre believes that “a work is something irreplaceable and unique whilst a product 'can be, reproduced exactly, and is the result of repetitive acts and gestures” (Lefebvre 70). Jameson believes that production is the result of human beings which can impose order and repetition on aleatory processes. Human beings create works, do productive jobs and participate in the economic process. Lefebvre believes that “labor is secondary in the former and predominant in the latter. It is possible therefore to posit the notion of natural space, a primordial nature that is given and not produced” (Lefebvre 70). In his essay entitled: *Postmodernism and Consumer Society* (1982) Jameson observes thus, “The concept of postmodernism is not widely accepted or even understood today. Some of the resistance to it may come from the unfamiliarity of the works it covers, which can be found in all the arts”, he further adds that, “The poetry of John Ashbery, for instance, but also the much simpler talk poetry that carat out of the reaction against complex, ironic, academic modernist poetry in the 60s” (1). He further added that, “the reaction against modern architecture and in particular against the monumental buildings of the International Style, the pop buildings and decorated sheds celebrated by Robert Venturi in his manifesto, *Learning from Gas Vegas*; Andy Warhol and Pop art, but also the more recent Photorealism; in music, the moment of John Cage but also the later synthesis of classical and "popular" styles found in composers like Philip Glass and Terry Riley” (*The Ancients* 1).

In his analysis of the structure of late capitalism, Jameson gives the theory of history and space which excited many cultural critics. The purpose of Jameson is to give the symptoms of economic and cultural transformation. Lefebvre argues that space “is not a thing amongst other things but it subsumes things produced and encompasses their interrelationships” (70). Lefebvre writes thus: “space is neither a 'subject' nor an 'object' but rather a social reality- that is to say, a set of relations and forms” (Lefebvre 70). In his essay entitled *Postmodernism and Consumer Society* (1982), Jameson observed that, “The space of capitalist accumulation thus gradually came to life and began to be fitted out. This process of animation is admirably referred to as history, and its motor is sought in all kinds of factors: dynastic interests, ideologies, the ambitions of the mighty, the formation of nation-states, demographic pressures, and so on” (Lefebvre 274). He further added that, “This is the road to a ceaseless analysis of and searching for, dates and chains of events. Since space is the locus of all such chronologies, might it not constitute a principle of explanation at least as acceptable as any other?” (Lefebvre 274).

Postmodern thought posits a questioning of the philosophical assumptions of “modernity” rejecting the grand narratives and shifting to meta-narratives. Postmodernism emerged as a new movement and influenced a wide range of fields including art, literature, arts, music, and architecture. Postmodernism as the term described by Featherstone (1991) “is more strongly based on a negation of the modern” (Featherstone 3). Postmodern works differ entirely from modern ones. Modernism is characterized as a cultural project. It struggles to find other purposes, depths, and meanings. But postmodernism stresses disjunctions, surface, eclecticism, dispersal, fragmentation, exhaustion, and irony. The postmodernists believe that space should be shaped for special purposes. Space can be used as something independent, autonomous according to aesthetic aim and principles. Jameson also discusses the features of postmodernism concepts such as schizophrenia, pastiche, and self-referential reproduction. Schizophrenia is freely used in psychology, meaning the disorder of the mind. But in postmodern architecture, is suggestive of the aesthetic model of breaking down in the signifying chain. In the postmodernist view, “the old signifying chain is broken down and replaced-effect relationship from signifier to

signifier” (*The Ancients* 114). Pastiche means the imitation of a peculiar or unique neutral practice of mimicry without any ulterior motives. Some critics have started talking about “after-postmodernism”. Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin Van den have contended that there has been a development in society, one which has grown out of the values of both modernism and postmodernism. Vermeulen and Akker refer to this development as “Meta modernism”. The trend towards meta modernism is the result of the anxiety-driven economy; a desire to return to modern ideals of authenticity. Patricia Waugh (1994) commented thus on postmodernism, “Postmodern tendencies began to emerge from the sixties onwards with a variety of philosophical orientations” (Waugh 2). Postmodernism is held in a space of opposition to modernism. Peter Barry (2009) makes clear: “they are not two successive stages in the history of the arts, but two opposed modes of attitudes” (Barry 80). Brian McHale (1985) on the other hand observes that this locus of configuration as a branch of philosophy that “follows from modernism, in some sense, more than it follows after modernism” (McHale 5). Jameson has discussed the major tendencies of postmodernism relating to multiplicity, fragmentation, disassociation, disruption, and simulation, and all these characteristics are found in *The Waste Land* of T.S. Eliot. Bennett and Royle “argue that the reality which is presented in postmodernism is a reality without origin” (Royle 282). This notion is centered on the postmodern concern for simulation. Bennett and Royle further observe that simulation is nothing new. It was a concern for Plato as it is a concern for postmodern thinkers. Hugh J. Silverman suggests that “Plato would never let anyone forget that reality is somewhere other than appearance, that what appears is radically different from reality” (Silverman 43). Postmodernism differs from a simple binary between what is real and what is not real. In postmodernism, the presentation of reality, the simulation of it, is not based upon anything original at all. Baudrillard (1988) calls it the “hyperreal” as he says, “Simulation is no longer that of a territory, a referential, or substance. It is the generation by models of a real without origin or reality; a hyperreal.... Henceforth, it is the map that precedes the territory” (Baudrillard 166). Baudrillard believes that the world in which we live in an illusion of the real, so much so that the desert itself is not even a translation of the real origin of the world but a territory in and of itself. But

Jameson (1983) argues thus, “Postmodernism is a term through which the emergence of a rapidly changing social order can be reflected. This does not suggest that postmodernism is a reflection of consumerist society; instead, it is a gateway through which to observe the “inner truth of that newly emergent social order of late capitalism” (196).

Jameson maintains that postmodernism may historically be characterised as a phase in the manner that capitalism has periodically evolved. Postmodernism is linked to the consumer-capitalist society and interlinked. It presents an observational framework that details the social order of capitalism consumption. Modernism according to Jameson “functioned against its society” and postmodernism acts in a way which “replicates or reproduces; reinforces the logic of consumer capitalism” (*The Ancients* 197). Jameson claims that the origins of postmodernism are found in the confrontation of “the formerly oppositional modern movement as a set of dead classics” (*The Ancients* 4).

In the first chapter of the book *The Ancients and the Postmoderns* entitled “Natives Bodies: Rubens and History”, Fredric Jameson explores classicism and antiquity as he says: “I will myself begin with an outrageous assertion, namely that modernity begins with the Council offering in which case the Baroque becomes the first secular age” (*The Ancients* 3). He discusses religion; Protestantism, Luther, and old culture and repression. He discusses the moment of “the end of the religion” discussing “Hegelian model of the end of art” Jameson argues that “modernity begins with the Council of Trent in which case the word secularism became popular and a large number of extraordinary churches were built all over the world and which are fine specimens of religious art and modernism. Jameson states, “With modernity and secularization, religion falls into the realm of the social, the realm of differentiation. It becomes one world view among others, one specialization among many; an activity to be promoted and sold on the market” (*The Ancients* 3).

Jameson refers to Jose Antonio Maravall (1986) who published his famous book *Culture of the Baroque* recording the idea of the emergence of mass culture in Europe. The churches became commercial after the death of Luther as they started

advertising their products. Luther brought a revolution in religion and with the secularization religion became a private affair. Renaissance was a period of cultural revival but during this period there was no technical advancement; people were poor and backward and even “there was no bourgeoisie” (4). Jameson begins his journey with his views on the role of ancient religion which inspired and conditioned the lives of millions of people in the world. Jameson in the first chapter of his book states thus, “I’m sorry to say that this may not be as perverse a claim as it sounds at first: for if we inevitably associate the Baroque with the building of extraordinary churches all over the Christian world, and with an unparalleled efflorescence of religious art, there is an explanation ready to hand” (Jameson 1).

Jameson found that culture itself has become a commodity that is produced and consumed in the society of late capitalism. In American society of late capitalism, the distinct cultural and economic domains have collapsed forming a single entity generating the commercialization of culture and commercialization of the economy. The result of this collapse has been disastrous leading to the commodification of what Marx called superstructure. This included art, sport, and education, and the earlier phase of base vanishes. Culture is left to face the market conditions and just as the commodities are valued by the consumers, culture is valued according to the market conditions. Clint Burnham observed that Jameson sought inspiration from the development of the architecture and explored the impact of the growing capitalist economy. Commodities in the market are valued according to their use value. Paul Buhle argues that late-capitalist commodities are defined by their sign value. People value a cultural artefact based on its sign value; how it can increase prestige, social status. There is a craze today to buy the old antiques for the status value. Sign value has replaced use-value in the society of late capitalism. Althusser (1971) calls it an ideology; the representation of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence. Kukla (2002) argues that ideologies are “systems of ideas that function to culturally inscribe a naturalized understanding of some social phenomena that has its origins in a history of interests, human actions, and contingent social conditions” (Kukla 568). Althusser (1971) argue that social relations are the natural and objective reality. Andrews (2006) observes that late capitalism “whether in the

guise of films, television, music, literary, or international products, mass-mediated cultural forms have thus become a central focus and expressive of economic activity” (Andrews 90).

Nietzsche criticized the seventeenth century as poor in music and poor in instrumental sounds. Nietzsche uses the word “decadent” for the seventeenth century. But Jameson argues that with the emergence of impressionism of Manet modernism begins in the seventeenth century. The paintings of Manet, Rubens and Caravaggio represent true emotion in content. “In other words, Ruben’s brushstrokes are anticipations of modernism” (*The Ancients* 7). It was an age of innovation and experimentation; stories, folk tales, legends, and visual art came into existence with the emergence of consumer culture and economic demands. Jameson has traced the history of modernism touching upon the themes and styles and the moments of music, art, painting, and narrative arts. During this era, the body of Christ became a source of inspiration for the artists as scores of good paintings were created; the history of drama has roots in Miracles and Mysteries. Jameson states, “Let’s speak then of that peculiar and cultural heritage which is the concept of Christ’s body. The development of the visual arts in the West is unthinkable without the resources of this body from its birth to its agony and death” (*The Ancients* 8).

Jameson talks of Renaissance, Reformation and Elizabethan period, and the plays of Shakespeare. He says: “The Baroque is the supreme moment of theatricality, the Elizabethans only serving as the prelude to Spanish theatre and French Classicism” (*The Ancients* 4). Jameson spends half of the book in his exploration of “Our Classicism” containing three important essays dedicated to pre-twentieth century materials. The first chapter traces the history of tension developed in his book *Antinomies of Realism*. Jameson has looked at paintings of Caravaggio and Rubens as he talks of the monumental work *Samson and De Delilah* (1610) of Rubens. He talks of narrative painting as the painters have the power to “transform the bodies assembled here and lifts their conjuncture out of normal additive or linear temporality” (*The Ancients* 20). Jameson praises Rubens who discovers immanence as the figures represent their past and emblematic of their futures., “They are representative of their past and emblematic of their futures; but these temporal

dimensions are decanted into a living, palpable presence as painted icons. And to the Absolute emerges from just this immanence of the narrative body” (*The Ancients* 29).

Jameson examines Wagner’s *Ring* in the second chapter of his book *The Ancients and the Post-modernist* as his musical accomplishment of the highest order. Jameson eulogizes Wagner for his high quality of dramaturgy and theatrical allegory. Wagner was a great artist who could articulate the powerful emotions of jealousy, despair, betrayal, and love. Jameson states thus, “On a philosophical level, this problem traditionally confronts Feuerbach with Schopenhauer and meanwhile, in another of the forest, there lurks the question about the meaning of the ring itself and to what degree it may be said to represent capitalism as Shaw furiously argued” (*The Ancients* 31).

In the first chapter Jameson talks of the old classics and traces the historical facts which bring transformation in the society. He investigates the culture of the Renaissance and Reformation period and explores the evolution of the Baroque in this chapter of the book *The Ancients and the Moderns*. He observes that “The Baroque which opens with Shakespearean drama and concludes (stretching the notion of a century somewhat) with the building of Vierzehnheiligen (or maybe even with Bach’s elaboration of the tonal system)” (*The Ancients* 4). He continues his discussion of classical art and literature and opines that “The Baroque is the supreme moment of theatricality” (*The Ancients* 4).

Fredric Jameson on Theory of Realism; Modernism and Postmodernism

Jameson’s greatest contribution in the domain of cultural study is his radical and postmodern views on Realism, Modernism and Postmodernism discussed in the book *The Ancients and the Moderns*. He wrote an essay entitled, “The Politics of Theory: Ideological Positions in the Postmodern Debate” and expressed his view of history. In this book, Jameson also expressed his project of examination of the historical process:

I want to examine the historical conditions of possibility of such works; but first I will read into the record a famous, or indeed, notorious aesthetic generalization by Nietzsche, which may not on the

face of it seem the most obvious reference here, and indeed on the face of it would seem to result from the crossing of the wires of quite distinct interests. Indeed, this Nietzsche reference documents what I have been trying to theorize as to the emergence of effect in nineteenth-century literature, an emergence of which I see him both as a theorist and a symptom. His characterization of aesthetics as a physiological matter will have to suffice at this point, and the relevance of this typically nineteenth-century (or "decadent") view to the seventeenth century is what will have to be defended in a moment. (Jameson 5)

Jameson argues that Marx's greatest contribution is his faith in the historical process but he differs from Marx contending that Marx ignores many facts and takes up only those facts which are suitable for him to defend his totality concept. Jameson (1968) argues the only way to avoid the postmodern paradox: where all seemingly cultural positions turn out to be symbolic forms of political moralizing, except for the single overtly political note which suggests a slippage from politics back into culture again is to grasp the present as history" (Jameson 23). Christopher Pawling published *Popular Fiction and Social Change* observes that Jameson rejected the totality concept of Marx and propounded his liberal theory of social change. He believed that the new social and cultural forces have emerged and hence the old Marxian concepts are not workable. Jameson investigated the history of all periods beginning from the Greek to the postmodern world of American society suggesting that "I can best do this by suggesting three general stages that political literature has undergone" (*The Ancients* 23). He found three stages of development of history; the first was the emergence of realism of Balzac and Brecht. These writers depicted the currents of cultural changes of the Continental society. This was the period when the film industry was in the nascent stage. He comments thus, "This evolution in the movie industry parallels the movement in serious literature away from the fixed form of the nineteenth century towards the personally invented, style-conscious individual forms of the twentieth" (*The Ancients* 642).

Jameson investigates the growth of realism with the emergence of science and technology. In the age of Renaissance and with the writings of Francis Bacon and Henry Fielding the interest of the writers to achieve verisimilitude increased and realism became popular in literature. The rise of the film industry was a great moment of cultural transformation; fashion and entertainment of the masses. In his essay on “The Existence of Italy,” Jameson highly appreciates the contribution of the Italian film industry to the growth of culture and commodification of culture. Sexual themes and nudity were common factors in the film industry of Italy. Jameson has discussed the stages of this growth thus, “These stages are not to be grasped exclusively in terms of the stylistic descriptions from which they have been appropriated; rather, their nomenclature sets us the technical problem of constructing a mediation between a formal or aesthetic concept and a periodizing or historiographic one” (*The Ancients* 155).

Since antiquity, there has been discussion on the nature of realism. Each age had its concept of realism. In Renaissance realism was a mixture of wonder and romance as the Elizabethans liked sensational realism. The plays of Shakespeare give a true picture of human nature but in the play, there is a variety of tastes; comic and tragic elements are quite visible. Jameson observes thus: “We celebrate modernism, as an active aesthetic praxis and invention, whose excitement is demiurgic, along with its liberation from content; while realism is conventionally evoked in terms of passive reflection and copying, subordinate to some external reality” (*The Ancients* 162). Jameson comments thus, “At once confronts us with two fundamental methodological problems: what is the nature of the world thus produced by realism; and how, once we talk ourselves into a positive or productive concept of the realist aesthetic, are we to restore its negative and ideological dimension, its essential falseness and conventionality” (*The Ancients* 162).

Jameson contends that it is not easy to explore the mystery of realism. He derives the theoretical resolution from Karl Marx who states in his *Das Capital* that there is always a contradiction between falsehood and truth and the world faces a paradoxical situation. Marx’s analysis of contradiction and opposition is an interesting study given in the second chapter of *Capital*. To this analysis Jameson “simply adds

that the peculiar object of realism is the historically specific capitalist mode of production” (*The Ancients* 163). In the second stage, the dilemma is resolved as the term is substituted for representation. Jameson gives his views about narrative thus, “A narrative has the initial advantage of at once dispelling forever the temptations of the copy theory of art, and of problematizing beyond recognition many of the assumptions implicit in the notion of representation itself” (*The Ancients* 165).

Jameson believes that a Narrative is a fictional representation of the problems of society. In the act of retelling, the gap between fact and fancy and fiction and truth emerges. The act of narrating transforms the materials of the story. Jameson takes up the issue of social realism thus, “In a more general way, the relationship between art and its social context can be freed from inert conceptions of reflection by the proposition that the social context ... is to be grasped as the situation the problem, the dilemma, the contradiction, the question - to which the work of outcomes as an imaginary solution, resolution, or answer” (*The Ancients* 106).

Jameson argues that each aesthetic moment had its concept of realism. But each stage of the historical period is the result of the economic stage of development. Marx observes that social realism is the necessity of society. The growth of capitalism and materialism, greed, profit-making are realities in the world. The world has changed and with this change, the meaning of reality and truth has also changed as depicted in the modern narratives. Jameson makes the following observation to describe the relationship between truth and reality, “Thus, where the epistemological claim succeeds, it fails; and if realism validates its claim to be a corrector true representation of the world, it thereby ceases to be an *aesthetic* mode of representation and falls out of art altogether” (*The Ancients* 159).

From time to time alters the idea of realism, and its epistemological claim is unique. Regardless of what we claim as the substance of the truth, or the moment of truth, or of modernity, those interpretations of aesthetic truth do not involve a possibility of knowledge save in extremely indirect, complementary or mediated ways, as realism emphasizes. The historical events are very significant to understand the meaning of realism. In another way “realism is a historical phenomenon, rather

than eternal formal possibility” (160). Jack Anderson’s *The Origins of Postmodernity* (1998) observes that Jameson investigates all the historical forces which impacted the mind and sensibility of the contemporary Americans. The historical conditions must be depicted in a narrative for realism to emerge. In the narrative structure, the representation of society reflects realism. Jameson discusses in detail the relationship between cultural production and its relation with social realism thus:

But I can argue this more concretely by turning to the relationship between cultural production and social life generally. The older or classical modernism was an oppositional art; it emerged within the business society of the gilded age as scandalous and offensive to the middle-class public - ugly, dissonant, bohemian, sexually shocking. It was something to make fun of (when the police were not called in to seize the books or close the exhibitions): an offence to good taste and common sense, or, as Freud and Marcuse would have put it, a provocative challenge to the reigning reality and performance – principles of early 20th-century middle-class society. Modernism, in general, did not go well with overstuffed Victorian furniture, Victorian moral taboos, or the conventions of polite society. This is to say that whatever the explicit political content of the great high modernisms, the latter were always in some mostly implicit ways dangerous and explosive, subversive within the established order. (*The Ancients* 11)

In the Second Chapter of the book entitled, *Wagner as Dramatist and Allegorist*, Jameson investigated the elements of postmodernism in Wagner and his contribution to allegory. Wagner has depicted the themes of jealousy, despair, and betrayal in his works. Jameson affirms that Wagner’s *Ring* is a musical accomplishment but at the same time it is a masterpiece of dramaturgy. Wagner made many innovations in the form to depict the reality of human existence. He generates a problem at the molar level of form defining the moments of subjectivity combined “into the narrative fabric of the work of art” (*The Ancients* 41). He finds a gap between different moments of aesthetic development, “The first problem interpretation faces in this historical situation of nascent modernism is a gap between what sociological jargon calls the

macro and the micro: in other words, between overall form, the action or plot as a whole, and individual detail, here not merely language but also musical scoring” (*The Ancients* 32). He further added that, “It is suggestive, if not altogether correct, to think of this as an opposition between the project as a whole and its page-by-page execution” (*The Ancients* 32).

Nietzsche called Wagner a “great miniaturist and Jameson proceeds to analyze the “problem of Siegfried as a dramatic character” (*The Ancients* 32). Jameson’s theory of modernism is based on his study of Wagner and Mahler and Adorno. Jameson investigates the literature of the 19th and early 20th centuries exploring the trends from realism to modernism. In the world of music also many new forms were introduced which were modern as they revolt against the traditional forms. Jameson recognizes “the magic potions in Wagner” (*The Ancients* 31). Wagner is a modern artist because he deals with the multiple and coexisting realities. Beethoven, Rossini, and Verdi were also great as they made many innovations in classical forms. They catered to the tastes of the middle classes and introduced nationalistic, patriotic, and social themes for the sheer pleasure of the common people. Jameson traces the history of film and video and investigates the contribution made by Wagner and his place in the history of art. He observes thus:

My point in this obvious enumeration is twofold. Firstly, each of these levels, or arts, or media, has its specific history, and the event that was Wagner would have to find its unique position in each of them. This is to say that "Wagner" means multiple positions which are scarcely reducible to each other and which cannot be synthesized into a single history. (*The Ancients* 34)

Jameson believes that the story of the progress of history is very interesting and challenging. He talks of “the supposedly Hegelian or Marxian fashion of the progress of history itself” (*The Ancients* 34). Then Jameson turns to explore the works of Adorno. Like Althusser, Adorno was also a great Marxist who put his faith in the Marxian theory of history and social realism. Following Marx Adorno advocates the concept of totality believing that whole is more powerful and stable than parts. In the

early part of the book, Jameson has high praise for Adorno, “Adorno is a better guide, I think, for whom historical progression is not the movement from one victory to another, greater one: it is the movement of contradictions, which as they are worked on, dissolved, even forgotten or left to fester, themselves produce new contradictions and radically new situations” (*The Ancients* 34).

Wagner has explored the multiple dimensions of music and observes that it is “an art of transition, a fundamental phrase for all modernism ranging from the poets to Cezanne, and from Flaubert to Einstein” (*The Ancients* 41). Wagner is a modern artist because he “uses everyday life and his mood swings to characterize a technical musical problem” (*The Ancients* 41). Wagner is realistic like Flaubert and his focus is always on the problems of society. Wagner is a modern novelist as he dramatizes the sufferings of humanity. Jameson sees insight into Marxism in Wagner’s *The Ring*. The plot is a little primitive since it presents the “primitive giants who hard gold without turning it into capital” (*The Ancients* 45). Jameson gives his theory of history thus:

History is the temporality of the production of these new situations and new contradictions, and this is the sense in which the various levels I’ve evoked can be running at different speeds and different rhythms and tempos at the same time (the analogy with contemporary music, such as that of Pierre Boulez, is here irresistible). At certain moments, to be sure, these multiple histories and contradictions intersect: and so, it is that today the moment of the history of contemporary theory crosses paths with the chronological changes in operatic staging and direction. (*The Ancients* 34)

Jameson’s analysis of the works of Mahler demonstrates the extraordinary situation of a working conductor –composer found in modern times. Jameson talks of the use of “degraded” and “kitsch” while discussing Mahler. Jameson talks of the “movie music” of Mahler and the process of reification and cultural logic of capitalism. Jameson talks of critical hermeneutics of the dialectical and discusses the contribution of Adorno in developing the culture of modernism. Mahler has seriously investigated

the main cause of crushing the liberty of the individuals and the force of the economic constraints. The Mahlerian “present simply reflect this situation or is it a way of answering and redeeming it, lending transcendence to contingency as it were” (*The Ancients* 124). He discusses the “old idea of the objective correlative of T.S. Eliot condemning *Hamlet* of Shakespeare for his subjective disgust with the mother and her adultery. Eliot was critical of Shakespeare who couldn’t find an objective form to articulate the sentiments and the passions of the hero. Wagner is a modern artist who employs the technique of objective correlative in depicting words and action. In the opening of Wagner’s Ring, Wotan declares that the great project has been finished successfully and it is time to think of a new project. Hegel, Marx, and Sartre argue that when the project is completed it is externalized. The project ceases to belong to us. Jameson gives a fruitful philosophical analysis of externalization and “objectification all together in Wotan’s discovery that he can never really produce anything but himself” (*The Ancients* 48). He has highly praised the character of Siegfried who has an apocalyptic vision of the future of mankind: “he is positioned to bear the meaning of hope from the future and the resolution of the baleful effects of the ring and its cause” (*The Ancients* 50). He is a modern character of Wagner since his ideas are similar to that of Nietzsche. He hits at society for ignorance and rigidity. His quest is for freedom and individuality and to a great extent, he is inventing modern ideas. Jameson comments thus, “To be sure, the object of Nietzsche’s most fundamental disgust and disillusionment was the heavily pseudo-religious Parsifal. Siegfried does not seem to bear out that fundamental diagnosis of decadence Nietzsche passed on Wagner generally” (*The Ancients* 50).

Wagner has created a modern hero Siegfried who wants to bring drastic transformation to society. Jameson has created Siegfried giving the Wagnerian interpretation depicting the opposition between Feuerbach and Schopenhauer. Nietzsche wrote an essay *The Case of Wagner* commenting on Wagner’s dramatization of Wagner’s hero as the superman of the future, “How can one abolish the old society? Only by declaring war against “contracts” (tradition morality). The rise of the golden age, the twilight of the gods for the old morality-all ill has been abolished!” (*The Ancients* 51).

Nietzsche talks of superman presenting Zarathustrian prophecy and Jameson compares Wagner's hero Siegfried with Nietzsche's Zarathustra whose quest is for "will to power". On the other hand, Siegfried's quest is for love. The similarities between Wagner's Siegfried and Nietzsche's Zarathustra are apparent. Jameson comments thus:

Wagnerian opposition between power and love, because for Nietzsche here the far more subtle and unflinching "psychologist" (as he called himself)-love is itself, like everything else, a manifestation of the will to power. No, that feature of Nietzschean doctrine which will be of greater interest to us here is rather the doctrine of the eternal return. (*The Ancients* 52)

Great masters such as Blanchot, Klossowski and Deleuze. In the stages of Wotan's struggle, the existential problems of the modern man are portrayed. Briefly stated in this section, Jameson recognizes the modern vision of Wagner depicted in *The Ring*. In the third chapter entitled: "Transcendence and Movie Music in Mahler" Jameson traces the history of films and music and discusses the growth of the trends of late modernism in Film. He talks of "our classicism and late modernism" highlighting the contribution of Mahler. He discusses the growth and popularity of orchestra and its cultural significance. Jameson comments thus, "Like the theater, then, the symphony orchestra stands as a figure of the social totality itself, a social world in which the state and its functions also figure symbolically, and whose debates (of which for the theatre, we have a rich variety from those of the Paris Commune documented by Suven to the manifestoes of Artaud and Brecht" (*The Ancients* 70).

Jameson argues that like the theatre of Artaud and Brecht, the symphony orchestra also provides a transcendental vision of life and existence. There are social, political, and ideological topics inspiring people to change society. In this way orchestra also has modern elements like the plays of Brecht and Beckett. Jameson says, "They replay the various political philosophies and ideologies, the strategies, the constitutional and revolutionary crises, familiar in the extra-aesthetic life of the real world, of which they can so often be allegorical" (*The Ancients* 70).

Jameson talks of the stylistic techniques employed by the filmmakers and the musicians. People of all ages demand new inventions and styles. Like Spinzer and Sartre they are also conducting new experiments and “also function as historical limits on what a work can say and how it can be historically received” (*The Ancients* 72). Jameson argues that both Beethoven and Mahler have “distinctive styles” as they have brought many innovations to cater to the needs of their public. Their approach is modern as they deal with the current issues of society. Jameson praises the stylistic innovations of Beethoven thus, “But in the time of Beethoven, for example, innovation was still a matter of formal invention and the expansion of what could be done in the various musical genres. Beethoven certainly had a style, as registered in the shape of his themes, but it was still the raw material of his forms” (*The Ancients* 72).

Jameson has explored the cultural value of the music of Beethoven comparing him with the great writers of drama. He is called a social critic and his music reflects contemporary problems. His modern stylistic techniques are praised by Jameson observing that he contributed to the growth of modernism, “Beethoven’s style has cultural value and soon it became a fashion with the new musicians as he brought revolution “so much as it bears traces of a social culture which Barthes might have called Viennese. Beethoven like Mahler was a foreigner but with his cosmopolitan perception, he enthralled the world” (*The Ancients* 72).

In the concluding part of the section, Jameson discusses the works of Mahler; “the first powerful impulse of his music cannot be denied. Jameson compares his artistic depth with Baudelaire as his music touches upon all aspects of life; pain and pleasure and the problems confronting humanity. Jameson says, “Pleasure and pain, major and minor combined, the dissonance of instruments rather than notes and tones, “a green so delicious it hurts” (Baudelaire), the sour within the sweet, the raw, the cooked, and the rotten all at once these are the combinations Mahler was able to demand from his orchestra” (*The Ancients* 76).

Jameson refers to the book of Adorno on Mahler and testifies that he was not a great musician. Jameson differs from Adorno who gave a dark view of Mahler in his

book *Aesthetic Theory* (1997). Adorno comments thus, “Mahler was a poor yea-sayer. His voice cracks, like Nietzsche’s when he proclaims values, speak from mere conviction when he puts into practice the abhorrent notion of overcoming on which the thematic analysis capitalize, and makes music as if joy were already in the world” (T.W. Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory* 137).

In this chapter, Jameson has discussed in detail the contribution of Wagner as one of “our classics.” The lengthy Mahler essay deals with the modernization and postmodernism of art and music and films and their classical contribution eventually led to the growth of postmodern movements. No one can deny the originality and cosmic vision of Wagner’s theatricality. The approach of Jameson is intellectual, logical, and rational as he discussed his approach in *The Modernist Papers*. He has discussed the forces that led to the evolution of postmodernism. The critics observe that the methodological approach of his early books is missing in *The Ancients and Postmoderns*. The books of Jameson were reviewed by *New Left Review* and the *London Review of Books* marked by a chatty voice. The style of Jameson is superb and his understanding of the problems is marvelous. He emerges as a guide to the complexities of aesthetic form under the material conditions of capitalism.

In the chapter: “Angelopoulos and Collective Narrative” Jameson reviews the rise and growth of film culture and its contribution to the growth of cinema. He begins with Greek history and discusses the innovations made by Theo Angelopoulos who is regarded as the father of cinema. The Greeks were much advanced than most of the Western countries as he says: “Greece has gone through a collective experience of which most other modern nations have only known bits and pieces: revolution, fascism, occupation, civil war and foreign intervention” (*The Ancients* 131). Jameson sought inspiration from Andrew Horton’s book *The Last Modernist: The Films of Theo Angelopoulos* (1997). Andrew Horton has investigated the history of cinema and its contribution to the growth of film culture. Jameson expresses his satisfaction that the cinema has touched upon the contemporary issues:

Western imperialism, exile, parliamentary democracy, military dictatorship, and after the sixties a ringside seat at the horrendous

violence of the new Balkan wars, with their flood of refugees recalling Greece's own refuge experience after World War-I. (*The Ancients* 131)

The film industry did a great job in propagating through ideals and ideologies of Marxism through films. The reactionary policies of the Nazis and the growing class conflicts with the increase of capitalism in Europe and America had been very popular themes of the Hollywood film industry. Some of the films were epic and, in this section, Jameson discusses the epic ideas of Georg Lukacs and Walter Benjamin. He quotes Hegel who has already developed the theory of the epic as he says "Hegel (1975) had already suggested with his observation about "the variety of topics in the completely developed epic world" Georg Lukacs in his *Theory of the Novel* (1971) discusses the social value of the novel and epics relying on Marxian ideas of art and films. Jameson contends that *The Travelling Players* of Angelopoulos is epic and contains all the modern elements. Angelopoulos spent many months travelling around Greece to collect the data like a modern researcher. His approach is typically modern and he has contributed to the growth of modernism and postmodernism in cinema and art. Jameson says: "The traveling camera, to be sure, sets this materiality in motion, but within this motion there moves that other fundamental movement which is the frontal approach of the collective characters themselves" (*The Ancients* 139). Jameson discusses in detail the late trends of postmodernism in films in this chapter. In the next section: "History and Elegy in Sokurov", Jameson discusses the view of the history of Georg Lukacs and private life dominating the film industry of modern times. In these films, there is a different conception of private life and in a Freudian, language is a kind of "schizophrenic dissociation in which the great lapse back into a second childhood" (*The Ancients* 13). Jameson contends thus:

This is the private life of the so-called split subject, which never did exist as a full personality, a unified psychic reality, whether in public or in private. So, we observe them at lunch or a picnic, muttering idiotic jokes in their private language and occasionally stricken by the intermittent access of fury or dementia you do not want the public to know about. (*The Ancients* 134)

Fredric Jameson: Marxism and Totality

Jameson's search for postmodernism is quite different as he rejects totality since the totality has disappeared completely. We have no nostalgia for it or desire to regain it. The loss of totality is a little painful also but, in the university, and colleges, the idea of totality is no longer discussed. It is not possible to have an imaginary world where all pieces fit together. No wonder, the centrality is missing in the life of modern man. Jameson has traced the evolution of totality in his study of the ancient classics. He analyzes *The Weeping Meadow* (2004), and *The Dust of Time* (2008) to trace out the growth of modernism and the elements of totality connecting several themes and episodes. Modern thinkers believe that it is good that there is no totality and conformity in the postmodern society as both concepts are dangerous for the freedom of the individuals. The unity is an illusion and is a fantasy of the people. Totality promotes despotic rule and the individuals are not allowed to think and act freely. They cannot imagine and create new things in a society ruled by despotic rulers. The Nazis advocated totality of power and so did all the dictators of the world. Jameson argues thus, "If you want to live in a world where everything fits together like the pieces in a jigsaw puzzle, you will probably try to anyone who wants to live differently" (*The Ancients* 123). He further added, "Differences in culture, values, lifestyle just make it harder to get all the pieces to fit together. For people who value wholeness above everything else, the best form of society turns out to be a dictatorship" (*The Ancients* 123).

Jameson virulently attacked totality and he discussed the concept in many of his books such as *Late Marxism* (1990), *Postmodernism* (1991), *A Singular Modernity* (2002), *Archaeologies of the Future* (2005), *The Modernist Papers* (2007), *The Antinomies of Realism* (2013) and *The Ancients and Postmoderns* (2015). Jameson is a renowned Marxist who took the project to purge out the false assumptions in the theory of Marx. He has rejected the old theories and ideas of Marx and has changed them taking into consideration the challenges of modern society. Jameson changes the Marxist theory to bring it up to date and make it fit the postmodern world. He is very critical of the totality advocated by Marx. Modern man can never succeed to fit all the disparate elements of the world together. Knowledge is a source of power but the

world goes away. Rich led luxurious and comfortable life but most people in the world are poor and miserable. Jameson calls himself a Marxist thinker but he advocates that people should be given the freedom to grow, think and prosper. Jameson quotes Sokurov who commented thus, “My strongest belief is that the most complex and inconsistent circumstances which exist in anyone’s life are always dissolved in everyday life, because each morning we begin by brushing our teeth and at night just fall with our face on the pillow, without having learned better how to live” (*The Ancients* 132).

Jameson wants people to have full control over their lives and believes that people should be allowed to make their own decisions. Violation of the liberty of other individuals in a society is not progressive but regressive as it hampers the growth of the individuals. Jameson rejects the traditional idea of totality propounded by Marx. He calls the concept of master narrative an abstraction. The totality concept is dangerous for society. He argues that the life of human beings is shaped by the modes of production that exist in society. Jameson has defined the modes of production investigating the cultural impact on the mind and sensibility of people. Various tools, natural resources, technologies human labor used to produce goods and services are modes of production. They must be able to produce things they want. In the discussion of Marxism, for Jameson, the important thing is the study of modes of production and the producers are free to decide which tools they wish to employ to implement their decision. Jameson argues that people must be given the share of power for harmony and freedom. Jameson condemns the operation of inequality, oppression, and injustice in society. In his New Left Marxist ideology, he discarded totality and supported equality, liberty, and justice. Totality does not present a good picture of society; it promotes old age serfdom and slavery popular in Russia in antiquity. Jameson the real study of the mode of production also means the study of culture. Every mode of production lead to a change in fashion; thinking and outlook. Art, religion, lifestyle is conditioned by the modes of production. Modes of production in a society and cultural lifestyles change from time to time. The first sixty years of the 20th century were part of the modern period and after that new culture emerges after the 1950s bringing about postmodernism. In the early century, the mode

of production was based on monopoly capitalism. In each nation, a few big companies were the owners of the means of production and controlled the economy of the state. The government kept the system running and many evils such as slavery and the exploitation of the labor force appeared. The powerful countries controlled smaller countries and used army force to plunder their resources. This led to the age of imperialism and colonization and world wars. There was a tremendous growth of the multinational companies and these companies spread their power structure. The growth of mass culture; consumer culture and media culture are new things in postmodern life. In the postmodern age, electricity, computer, TV, and other electronic gadgets brought about the material society. Mass media, machines, and information technology changed the outlook of the people. They didn't produce goods but the machines were used to reproduce images and to collect data. No in the postmodern period the shift was from production to multinational capitalism.

Marxism of Jameson is unconventional as he has brought new changes in the Marxian ideology scrapping all the old rigid conventions. He worked on a dual hermeneutic of ideology and utopia and devoted himself to review postmodern cultural texts. He has also given a utopian vision of a society of a better world that provides perspectives from which to expose the evils of the existing society. Jameson argues that even conservative texts often project visions of a better world and thus criticize the organization of existing society and its values. Jameson came under the influence of Ernst Bloch who was a Marxist theorist who developed a hermeneutical and utopian version of Marxian cultural theory:

Both modernism and mass culture entertain relations of repression with the fundamental social anxieties and concerns, hopes and blind spots, ideological antinomies, and fantasies of disaster, which are their raw material; only where modernism tends to handle this material by producing compensatory structures of various kinds, mass culture represses them by the narrative construction of imaginary resolutions and by the projection of an optical illusion of social harmony (*The Ancients* 25).

Jameson explored science fiction; fantasy investigated forms of popular culture. Jameson was influenced by the realist texts also which provide knowledge and criticisms of the existing capitalist society. Georg Lukacs is a realist and his work on realism and on the historical novel strongly influenced Jameson. He borrowed the way to analyze literature from Lukacs and accepted the controversial criticism against modernism based on practical knowledge. He borrowed the idea of reification from Lukacs; his ideas of culture and history to interpret contemporary capitalism. Jameson concludes thus:

But in Lukacs's idea of history, the private life of the great public figures is still in some sense public: better still, they are defined by the unique identity of public and private in their persons, which is why until very recently scandalous revelations and the whole operation of debunking can be so disastrous for their reputations and their ultimate place in history. (*The Ancients* 150)

He investigated the different stages of history to contextualize the texts on Marxism. He discussed the various periods of history that influenced and changed the culture of human beings. In his *The Ideologies of Theory*, Jameson talks of a fundamental shift of emphasis in his works that he describes as,

There has been a shift from nuclear society to multiple societies at all levels; the focus of the intellectuals is from problems of interpretation to problems of historiography. They are interested to analyze the impact of the modes of production and the new pop culture that has grown with the advent of postmodernism (Jameson, *Ideologies* xxix).

Jameson has appropriated into his theory a wide range of positions, he borrowed from structuralism and psychoanalysis, from history and culture, and from science and philosophy to produce a high excellence brand of Marxian new postmodern cultural theory. He contended that Marxism remains a master narrative in the world and the right approach of this theory can benefit mankind. He took up the concept of Mendel's periodization in his book *Late Capitalism* (1975) and argued that, "Three fundamental moments in capitalism can be traced out; imperialism, industrialism,

multinational, and capitalism. All these stages have a dialectical expansion over the previous stage of imperialism” (Jameson 35).

Lyotard is seriously concerned about “a social bonding and calls the disintegration of social aggregates into a mass of individual atoms thrown into the absurdity of Brownian motion” (Lyotard 15). The trends towards the writing pseudo individualized narratives led to the evolution of consumerism to meet the demands of the postmodern population. The products are advertised and the consumer is structured towards a desire to own the latest gadgets which will serve as a fetish and give him the satisfaction of desire. In the postmodern world, each commodity allows the individual to become fully individualistic; such is the power of commodity fetishism. Jameson argues that with the death of old meta-narratives such as religion, progress, and the family people are following the new creed of late capitalism. M. Sarup (1996) observes in his book *Identity, Culture, and the Postmodern World* thus, “Just as rural populations were indoctrinated in the 19th century into industrial labor, the production sector, the masses are socialized in the 20th century into the consumption sector. In a consumer society, consumption has replaced production as the central mode of social behavior” (107). Sarup further adds that, “Consumption is a mode of being, a way of gaining an identity, meaning, and prestige in contemporary society”. (Sarup 107)

In the postmodern world, the main issue is the quest for happiness of the people. Jameson (1991) explains this dispassionate existence best in his analysis of happiness, “The misery of happiness, or at least contentment of Marcuse’s false happiness, the gratifications of the new car, the TV dinner and your favorite program on the sofa which are themselves secretly a misery, unhappiness that doesn’t know its name, that has no way of telling itself apart from genuine satisfaction and fulfillment since it has presumably never encountered” (280).

Jameson discusses the contribution of Sokurov in the domain of films and in depicting the plight of the people representing the unrepresentable. Sokurov’s concept of history is quite thought-provoking. His “recent work, the tetralogy of the dictators is a historical representation than anything he has done” (*The Ancients* 150). Jameson

compares Sokurov's view of history with that of Lukacs observing thus: "Lukacs taught us that there were two different ways of imagining history, distinct in content as well as in form. In the one, the historical drama and the other the historical novel" (*The Ancients* 150) but "the historical films of Sokurov fit neither of these categories" (*The Ancients* 150).

In the chapter: "Adaptations Experiment in the Postmodern" Jameson discusses the contribution of Coleridge and Wordsworth who evolved a new form of poetry using the tools of allegory and symbolism depicting their transcendental vision. Their narratives were grand romantic narratives depicting the romantic consciousness. But Altman's great film *Short Cut* (1993) is an epical description of the miseries of the American people. Jameson argues that the acceptance of totality is the root cause of suffering. Jameson observes thus, "Black folk, for example, are sent off on vacation at the very beginning of the film: this is not about them; they can write their literature or make their films, deal with their situations and identities" (*The Ancients* 206).

Jameson discusses the contribution made to modern American fiction by William Faulkner and Ernst Hemingway who got Nobel Prize in literature. Interestingly both were "opposites" (*The Ancients* 208). Both these classical novelists depicted two fundamental "tendencies in American literature, maximalism and minimalism respectively, terms we are perhaps more familiar with within music and painting than in literature" (*The Ancients* 208). Faulkner is unique in creating an imaginary country and his concern for the South. His characters are historical figures but Hemingway depicts the traumatic experiences of the war-afflicted soldiers. Both Faulkner and Hemmingway are modern writers as Jameson says:

The feelings and emotions of a great Hemingway story are intolerable but unspoken, and it is clear that this writer invented a kind of method, a systematic leaving out, a violent omission, and an aggressive refusal of speech, that is virtually the opposite of the great flood of Faulknerian evocation. If Faulkner s about History, Hemingway is about personal relations, particularly those of the couple. (*The Ancients* 208)

Jameson argues that Salman Rushdie and Gunter Grass were better novelists as they adopted the literary devices of magic realism and were the precursors of postmodernism. Jameson talks of Altman who wrote about lonely men, unhappy marriages, unemployment, drinking, and the urban culture of California. But the novels of Gibson are a microcosm of the totality. Jameson comments thus, "Gibson's novel too is a microcosm of the totality: a hacker, a female ninja, a bad man, a Rastafarian, a holographic illusionist, as well as a crazed army veteran whose schizophrenic mind has been possessed by the artificial intelligence who turns out to be the God in this particular complex machine" (*The Ancients* 238).

Gibson is also a precursor of postmodernism since he made many innovations in language and thematic analysis. He is a critic of society as he took up the contemporary issues in his films. Jameson wants the audience to look more closely "at the notion of cyberspace in Gibson, to see what it involves; he has reflected a new kind of historical novelty of information technology" (*The Ancients* 222). Jameson argued that, "If I called Gibson's novel critical, and an instrument of exploration which is also diagnostic, it is because of how he focuses on the combination of these two dimensions of dialectic globalization" (*The Ancients* 225).

To conclude, Jameson champions postmodernism as a source of new energies and cultural dynamism. He considers postmodernism as a synonym for late capitalism. He has affected another systematic modification of capitalism as he writes: "American postmodern culture is the internal and super-structural expression of a whole new wave of American military and economic domination throughout the world: in this sense, as throughout class history, the underside of culture is blood, torture, death, and terror" (*The Ancients* 123). At the end of the book *The Ancient and Postmoderns*, Jameson gives an analysis of architecture, music, films, and literature. Seeking inspiration from Lyotard, Jameson expresses his scepticism towards meta-narratives. He follows Baudrillard claiming that the postmodern is characterized by the rule of the third order of simulacrum. Baudrillard employs the term hyperreality in his analysis of the postmodern condition. Jameson was greatly impacted by Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Benjamin in his restructuring of New Left Marxism. He defines postmodernism as, dedifferentiation of the spheres of culture, the economy,

and the theory in general. He defines postmodernism art as characterized by eclecticism, the blurring of the boundary between high and popular culture, pastiche, intertextuality, hybridity, and schizophrenia resulting from the postmodern crisis of historicity. Jameson argues that postmodernism is the cultural expression of late capitalism. His view of the postmodern is ambivalent. He describes it as a freedom from the constraints of modernity and at the same time postmodernism is atrophy of sense and meaning. But the philosophical ideas of Jameson are largely debated but have been accepted by most of the cultural critics today.

Conclusion

This thesis entitled *Re-Reading Hegelian Dialectics: A Study of the Contemporary Writings of Fredric Jameson* explores the contribution of Fredric Jameson in the domain of art, culture, philosophy, and postmodernism. The first objective of this research is “to study the idea of Dialectic as given by GWF Hegel and evidenced in the writings of Fredric Jameson” and this objective is achieved in the first chapter of the thesis. In the first chapter: “Hegel and Evolution of Postmodern Theory of Fredric Jameson”, the journey of Fredric Jameson from modernism to postmodernism is traced. Jameson is primarily a Marxist but a postmodern Marxist since has purged out all the traditional ideas of Marxism in his study of New Marxism. He sought inspiration from Jean-Paul Sartre who visited America in the 1950s. Jameson was a Ph.D. student at that time as he wrote a dissertation on the topic: “Sartre: The Origins of a Style” which later was published in the form of a book written under the influence of his teacher Erich Auerbach in 1961. The book focused on the stylistic techniques of Sartre and, values and vision of the world. But this critical work encouraged Jameson to evolve a critical style and discard the modes of contemporary criticism. Jameson intensively explored the various critical trends and he studied Marxian literary theory of the 1960s being influenced by the New Left and anti-war movement. He has taught courses covering modernist literature and cinema, Marx and Freud, Nietzsche, Sartre, and Zizek and is closely linked with the Frankfurt School. He has introduced the postmodernist trends in the analysis of Marxist methodology.

Hegel is known for his “Dialectical Method” in the history of political thought and philosophy. There are two approaches to dialectic; Plato’s dialectical method is based on the solution of conflicting points of view and this was very famous in the Greek world. Immanuel Kant believed that the dialectical method is “a means to discover the truth as truth is the truth behind the appearances” (*Critique of Pure Reason*). In this book *Critique of Pure Reason*, Kant explores the nature of transcendental dialectic. The dialectic process of Hegel is the core idea to reach absolute reality. All concepts are full of limitations and have limited perspectives. Every concept in this universe has the opposite and defines the process of evolution. It thus generates its opposition and negation. Hegel has outlined three stages of the

dialectical process; thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Hegel explored Kant's theory of reality discussed in his *Critique of Reason* and argued that the approach of Kant is defective to explore reality. Kant argued that reason is supreme and reality is governed by reason because reason is the faculty of the soul. Reason forms a systematic structure of truth explaining principles, forms, and rules. Hegel attempts to fill the gap and he goes beyond Kant in his *Phenomenology of Spirit*. The approach of Kant is scientific and rationalistic but Hegel's approach is historical. Marxian concepts of Dialectical Materialism, Historical Materialism, and Marxist Economics are based on Hegel's Dialectical methods. Marx rejected Hegelian dialectic and his idealist views and developed Marxist dialectics and gave the materialist view of society. He argued that the economic forces govern the growth of human civilization. His theory of base and superstructure are the bases of his theory of economic determinism. In *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845), Marx defended his theory of "Dialectical Materialism" and rejected the language of the thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Marx holds that the world is material and materialism is "a realist philosophy of science" as all matter in the universe consists of matter of motion.

Fredric Jameson took up the project to bring transformation in Marxian ideology since he found it defective and not suitable in the postmodern age. He studied the ideas of Michel Foucault who systematically challenged historicism in his *The Order of Things* (1966). Foucault gave his view of history in his book *The Archeology of Knowledge* (1969). Deleuze and Guattari published *Anti-Oedipus* (1972) giving their views of history in the twentieth century. Jameson was greatly impacted by the ideas of Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and Georg Lukacs. They wrote many articles and reinterpreted Marxian materialism. Theodor Adorno's book *Late Marxism* (1990) is a sophisticated analysis of the Marxian ideology. Jameson wrote *The Political Unconscious* (1980) which is hailed as a critique of Marxism. Jameson gives a detailed analysis of the ideas and relevance of Marx's ideas. Jameson initiated the debate on Marxist post-structuralism by publishing his book *Marxism and Form* which generated huge interest in American readers. Jameson's *Postmodernism* and more recent works include *Valences of the Dialectics* (2009), *The Antinomies of Realism* (2013), and *The Ancients and the Postmoderns* (2015).

The second objective of the study is “to trace the emergence of the New Left in America” which is achieved in the second chapter entitled, “Evolution of New Marxism of Fredric Jameson in *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*”. In this chapter, the roots of postmodernism and the evolution of his typical style are explored. Fredric Jameson has a unique range of analysis that touches almost every field from architecture to science fiction, from philosophy to avant-garde art. His penetrating critical intelligence can be observed in his assessment of Marxian theories in the context of a new culture of America. He brought a renaissance of New Left Marxism in America and published half a dozen books providing a compact and comprehensible analysis of the ideas of Karl Marx. His writings had a deep impact on cultural studies. Fredric Jameson is an eminent American cultural critic because he became an exponent of the New Left of North America giving a fuller definition and discussion of Marxian ideology and its relevance in contemporary American society. Jameson’s two books, *The Political Unconscious* (1981), and *Postmodernism* (1984) provide powerful elaboration of Marxist literary criticism. His penetrating analyses of the postmodern are the elaboration of his lifelong Marxist attitudes. Jameson’s insights derive from and always relate to a left-wing perspective on culture and literature but Jameson is never doctrinaire. In all his writings he is flexible and never dogmatic in his ideas. In all his works the underlying thread of Hegelian Marxism runs throughout depicting his concern for the totality of thought. In the postmodern climate, this Hegelian passion of Jameson also creates difficulty in understanding his works but at the same time, the work gives a critical analysis of the study of New Left Marxism. Jameson likes to refer to art and intellectual work as a “mode of production”. Jameson published *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* (1961) expressing his faith in the new style evolved by Jean-Paul Sartre and his books and articles reveal a blend of Marxist ideas and the existential style of Sartre. Many writers came under the influence of Jameson. John Updike, Kurt Vonnegut, and Thomas Pynchon borrowed heavily from his postmodern ideas and experimented with postmodern culture. His first book provides an exposition of Jameson’s Hegelianism as Jameson explores Hegelian ideas and dialectical theory from the perspective of postmodern society. The intellectuals such as Herbert Marcuse, Ernst Bloch, Louis Althusser, Walter Benjamin, Georg Lukacs, and Theodor Adorno were the active thinkers and critics of

the New Left of America. Paul Buhle in his book *Marxism in the United States: Remapping the History of the American Left* keenly observed the rise of social and political movements such as Feminism, Black consciousness, civil rights. Jameson's main focus is on the "key areas such as questions of history and desire and subjectivity and the concepts of postmodernism" (Jameson 123). Jameson's main concerns depicted in his first book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style* express his concern for the style and political developments of America. The cult of the New Left swept all the major universities of America and students took an active role in propagating the Marxian ideology. New Left became "a privileged area of cultural politics and the university campuses became the center of political debates from which to start controversy across the land" (Jameson 123). He clearly and openly discussed the issue of the resurgence of Marxism. Like Dos Passos who was a radical novelist of America, Jameson highlighted the bourgeois domination of American society and the trends of young Americans towards democracy and equality. Adorno, Althusser, and Lukacs did not share the ideas of old classical writers such as Balzac, Conrad, and Flaubert. Jameson provides organizing principles in his writings and this process started in his first book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*. Douglas Kellner is of the view that Jameson's "original choice" for Sartre was his initial gesture to understand the existential situation of America. His interest in the philosophy and style of Sartre reveals his firm commitment to existentialism and liberalism. His existential ideas led to the growth of New Marxism. The new Marxian radicals shifted their focus from economic analysis to philosophy. Adorno, Sartre, and Marcuse were the second generation of thinkers. Jameson regarded Sartre as his role model expressing his radical intentions to change the face of traditional Marxism. Sartre was a radical thinker who sought to review and reinterpret Marxism in the light of modern political and economic developments. Sartre is certainly a pessimistic and nihilistic intellectual thinker known for pessimism and nihilism that impacted many Western thinkers. Jameson was confronted by the dilemma expressed in his first book *Sartre: The Origins of a Style*. As the title shows the title indicates Jameson's serious concern for the evolution of a particular style Jameson outrightly rejected the famous New Critical doctrine and he investigated the economic framework which provided Jameson with his analytical strategies. Jameson argued that Adorno's negative dialectic can serve

as a “corrective solvent” in the capitalist American world. Jameson investigated new cultural formations representing the new spirit of the age. Frank Lentricchia observes that the impact of Sartre on Jameson was just very small. Sartre had influenced Jameson in theoretical and political development. Jameson wrote *Marxism and Form* and, in this book, he devoted some pages to analyze the ideas of Sartre who had an enduring influence on the contemporary thinkers of his time in Europe and America. Sartre publicly spoke against forces of oppression of the Bolshevik Revolution of Russia. Sartre pointed out the barriers before accepting Marxism. The political developments in the Soviet Union were the reality of “existing socialism.” He also investigated the trials of the 1930s, because of the oppressive policies of Stalinism. There was a contradictory situation of the socialist organizations in France, the French working class “slavishly followed the dictates of the Soviet Union instead developing Marxist theory into a viable path of socialism in France” (11). From Sartre’s perspective, the role of individual liberty was a part of the historical process but the oppressive policies of Stalin destroyed the very spirit of Marxism. He tried to resolve the contradictions in Marxism in his book *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. He developed a “politics which acknowledged the role of the situation – social forces, the economy, political alliances in the play of individual freedom” through the notion of the “group infusion” (quoted in Poster 13–14). He took inspiration from Friedrich Schiller and Herbert Marcuse and he envisaged a society where people enjoyed freedom. Jameson discarded the ideas of totality fostered by Marx contending that in the postmodern scenario the concept of totality and conformity are dangerous for the growth of individuals. CB Sudhakaran in his PhD thesis investigates that

What Jameson's historical analysis reveals is that history, though available only in textual form, cannot be reduced to textuality and the play of tropes and that only the political action of a social collective can wrest the realm of Freedom from the realm of Necessity. Jameson's theory, thus, successfully meets the challenges to provide a comprehensive critique of contemporary society and culture and to present an alternative model of social theory that reasserts the emancipatory potential of the Marxist narrative. The system is named. Text is displaced into counterhegemonic social discourse. (261)

The third objective of the study is “to examine the malaise in contemporary American Capitalism.” Which is achieved in the third chapter of the thesis, “Revision of Traditional Marxism in Fredric Jameson’s *Marxism and Form*”. Jameson rejected the traditional ideas of Marxism and gave a new impetus to the Marxian ideology seeking inspiration from many radical intellectuals of Europe who fled to America after World War II. Jameson is a prolific writer as he wrote a wide range of works analyzing and investigating contemporary Marxian thoughts and developing his own New Left Marxism. Jameson developed his unique position by reviewing the major concepts of Marxism applying the idealistic theories of Hegel and Feuerbach. He took the historical and cultural view and explored the contemporary relevance of Marxian philosophy in the context of changes sociological and political environment of America. When the ideas of Marxism are investigated through the lens of Fredric Jameson the period of the 1930s comes in the mind. It was a period the main burning issues were; anti-Nazism; the relationship between literature and the labor movement; the conflict between Stalin and Trotsky; Marxism and Anarchism. Jameson was influenced by the Frankfurt School, the Marxist scholars such as Kenneth Burke, Gyorgy Lukacs, Ernst Bloch, Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Herbert Marcuse, Louis Althusser. Jameson wrote more than twenty books, and many research articles and delivered scores of lectures on Marxian Theory; he rejected the orthodox Marxism Leninism and scrapped old and narrow view of historical materialism. Jameson and his followers firmly held that the right approach to study culture would be to follow the Hegelian concept of immanent critique. Jameson noted that the ideas of traditional Marxism were unfit to solve the problems of the new middle class of America exploited and oppressed by the capitalists. It was a time to reconsider and re-interpret the theories of Marxism appropriate to handle the new challenges faced in the industry, coal fields, and mines. The new generation of radicals was ignorant of the struggles of the past and the need to evolve new Marxian philosophy was widely felt. In his second famous book, *Marxism and Form* Jameson shared Sartre’s pessimism and disillusion. He admitted the challenges thus: “It would be idealistic to suppose the deficiencies in the abstract idea social class, and in particular in the Marxian conception of class struggle, can have been responsible for the emergence of what seem to be new non- class force” (Jameson 121). Fredric Jameson took the

challenge to study the nature of the class struggle in society; investigated the forces of history that change life, thoughts, and culture of human beings; examined the operation of means of production and their role in determining the class consciousness in his *Marxism and Form*. Jameson developed his own Left Marxism by bringing his Marxist critique taking into consideration the time and culture of postmodernism in his works. Jameson argued that Marxism presents a “correction of other positions rather than a doctrine of a positivistic variety existing in its own right” (121). Jameson’s *Marxism and Form* is a quite energetic and valuable critical treatise on Marxism criticism written to understand the veracity and fundamental truth hidden in *Das Capital*. The Marxian concepts of totality, historicism, universality, representation, transcendental critique and the centrality of the class were under the scanner of the European thinkers. The collapse of the Marxian ideology in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union further led to the Marxian crisis. This chapter elucidates the reformative spirit of Jameson to purge out the stereotyped ideas from Marxian ideology.

The fourth objective of the study is “to appraise the developments in New Marxism” which is achieved in the fourth chapter of the thesis entitled: “Re-Reading of Fredric Jameson’s *Postmodernism, or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism*”. This chapter is focused on the investigation of the postmodern culture of Fredric Jameson. This book of Jameson, describes his journey from modernism to postmodernism depicting all the characteristics of postmodern culture. Baudrillard talked of the emergence of consumer aesthetics in culture and Jameson brought a total revolution in Marxist thoughts. Jameson’s book *Postmodernism* was part of a series of analyses of postmodernism from the dialectical perspective. Jameson outlines four major themes in his essay: interpretation, Utopia, survivals of the modern, and returns of the repressed of historicity” (*Postmodernism* 15). Jameson viewed the postmodern “skepticism towards meta-narrative” expressing it as a mode of experience. Jameson argues that postmodernism functions as “a cultural dominant.” Postmodernism is the product of a historical process; the consumption of sheer commodification as a process. Fredric seriously considered the situation of “late capitalism” and explored the elements of postmodernism in his essay *Postmodernism*. He talks of postindustrial

society, the class structure, the fragmentation of the family, the global expansion of the capitalist system, and the dissolution of metaphysics. Jameson followed Ernest Mandel's economic model discussed in *Late Capitalism* (1975). Jameson describes three aspects of capitalism; market; monopoly and multinational culture. He asserted that "postmodernism doesn't designate a particular style but it is a concept which serves to correlate the emergence of new economic order" (Jameson 113). The only honest way to encounter reality is to forget about seeking totality. Differences in culture, values, and lifestyles are natural and inevitable and people who value totality and wholeness above everything begin believing in the dictatorship. It happened during World War II under the Nazis who scrapped liberty and propagated conformity. He argues that in postmodern society the main focus of people is to buy and sell goods. Fashions, TV, mass media, are characteristics of postmodern culture. There is a decisive shift from modern culture to postmodern pop culture. In the early 19th century, society was controlled by imperialism monopoly capitalism. Jameson traces the history of totality and power of the multinational corporations that destroyed the liberty and individuality of the people. The age of computers, mass media, electricity machines encouraged the hegemony of the corporations. He has talked of "a new depthlessness and the emergence of a new culture of the image or simulacrum; a consequent weakening of history in the bewildering new world of late multinational capital" (58). The conspicuous feature of postmodernism according to Jameson is depthlessness. Jameson argues that a modern painting invite is a symbol of postmodern commercial culture. Jameson notices that the crisis of anxiety and alienation led to the fragmentation of society and themes and the "death of the subject".

The fifth objective of the study is "to apply the theory of Postmodernism of Fredric Jameson on Western Marxism," which is achieved in the fifth chapter of the thesis entitled: "Political Consciousness in Fredric Jameson's *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act*". This chapter explores and highlights the significance of the political events in literature. Jameson's *The Political Unconscious* rejects the traditional view that literature can be created in isolation from its political context. He contends that political interpretation can be at the center of all

reading and understanding of fiction. Jameson re-interprets the late Marxism of Luckas and Althusser and Adorno in his new book. Jameson announced that Althusser was a great discovery. His book gave impetus to the Althusserian reconstruction of Marxism and its impacts on Marxian criticism. In this book, Jameson has expanded the scope of Marxist critique, of matter and materiality. Jameson has discussed three stages of Marxist critique; the first stage defines the class struggle as the “collective struggle” “to wrest a realm of freedom from the realm of necessity” (Jameson 19). Fredric Jameson gives the Marxian account in this new book considering the Foucauldian version of power. He was also influenced by Nietzsche in his discussion of consciousness and totalization. Jameson has great regard for history as he says that the “readings of the past are vitally dependent on our experience of the present” (x). The main ideas of Fredric Jameson about his understanding of “Late Marxism” and “the “Crisis of Marxism” are investigated through the mirror of Nietzsche and Foucault. In the last section of his book *The Political Unconscious*, Jameson circles again to Foucault “giving a remarkable insight into the role of power and the struggles of the proletariat to achieve freedom” (90). He has interpreted the literary texts from the point of view of a political perspective and this is the ultimate goal of Marxian ideology. A text for Jameson is a “reflection of the contemporary issues. Jameson contends that only Marxism can help us to understand the cultural past where” the seasonal alternation of the economy of a primitive tribe, the passionate disputes about the nature of Trinity can be understood. Class struggle is considered as a physical and sensuous experience and Jameson confronts classics dialectical materialism and the Foucauldian genealogy of power.

The fifth objective of the study, “to apply the theory of Postmodernism of Fredric Jameson on Western Marxism” also verifies the sixth chapter of this thesis entitled: “Postmodernism in Fredric Jameson’s *The Ancients and the Postmoderns*”. Jameson explores the difference between modernism and the shift from modernism to postmodernism. Jameson’s approach is historical as he traces the history of the socio-economic forces that brought about modernism with the advent of science and technology. His book *The Ancients and the Postmoderns* is divided into two parts; the growth of culture before the Victorian age and the growth of postmodernism after the

1960s. The vision of Jameson is cosmic and pervasive as Jameson touches upon all the aspects of art and literature including cinema and theatre. He has traced the history of cinema exploring its contribution to the growth of modernism and postmodernism. He has affected another systematic modification of capitalism as he writes: "American postmodern culture is the internal and super-structural expression of a whole new wave of American military and economic domination throughout the world: in this sense, as throughout class history, the underside of culture is blood, torture, death, and terror" (123). He discusses the concept of totality and finds it destructive for the liberty and individuality of people. Totality is dangerous as it destroys the liberty and the individuality of the people. In this book, Jameson discusses the contribution of the great ancient musicians to the growth of modernism. Jameson talks of the stylistic techniques employed by the filmmakers and the musicians. People of all ages demand new inventions and styles. Like Spinoza and Sartre they are also conducting new experiments and "also function as historical limits on what a work can say and how it can be historically received" (Jameson 72). Jameson argues that both Beethoven and Mahler have "distinctive styles" as they have brought many innovations to cater to the needs of their public. Their approach is modern as they deal with the current issues of society.

Totalization was mistakenly associated with totalitarianism. Jameson won't be spousing totalitarianism anywhere in his works to assert what's evident. His totalitarianism, on the contrary, acts as an additive to the idea of modes of production" which he utilises to analyse the many stages in the history of capitalism and to justify his postmodern theory. The notion of totalitarian totality is an ideological cognate and is a philosophical version of the mode of production concept. Totalizing is the process, we saw, of integrating the dual human perception and action processes. In Jameson's works, we see that the heterogeneity and pluralism of postmodernism are dialectically adapted in order to uncover the ambiguous connection of the distinct and varied parts. What takes place in these events is not a subsumption of little phenomena in massive ones, but a mediation in broader connection and social contexts of diverse and isolated phenomena. This is a relational act, that emphasizes the systemic connections of the relatively independent occurrences. The combination

of perception and action, theory and practice in human beings is what is called practice. Jameson's dedication to totalization is also seen in his rejection of the new social and micropolitical movements' molecular politics with its unique point agendas in favour of class politics that present a socialist alternative to the existing system of the capitalist class. Jameson knows that this is an easier proposal to say than to implement. The anti-utopian jubilation in the postmodern period of the end of the ideology, the end of history, the end of social and political onslaught and the widespread hyperspace that threatens to eliminate all kinds of mediation make things worse for radical and utopian vision. More than anything, the problem is spatial. This is why Jameson recommends a systematic and "cognitive mapping." solution. Jameson's systemic perspective is in essence a sort of resistance against capitalism's fragmentation and reification. In the present wave of deregulation, liberalisation and globalisation, what those on the Left can strategically do has to do, first, with a view to combating capitalist ideology and its market rhetoric, on a discursive level, of consumerism freedom and of legitimizing concepts like popular and participatory democracy, planning, welfare government and socialism. History reveals that these ideals once inspired the globe and contributed to the creation of state-civil synergy that contributed to nation-building in Europe after the Second World War and to the decolonization of the rest of the world. Jameson says, that this legitimizing endeavour on the discursive level should accompany the reinvention on the ground of the common project in which a good collective object is moored and is able to contend with the fragmenting consequences of global capitalism's concentrated power. Such a political effort, which expresses the wishes of the poor majority, will be the most effective challenge to the capitalist ideology in the current circumstances. This social collective has the theoretical potential to develop into a good collective subject, which may be an effective agent of social reform and hence the author of its destiny. There can be no question that this group has likewise been confronted with the inevitable boundaries of history. But the vast opportunities offered by this project for collective decision-making and collective empowerment, self-formation as well as the production of social capital make it a radical political initiative that has the ability to restore the fate of the deprived and to control its collective history. Jameson's criticism of postmodernism is nothing more than this same process of communal

practice. The Jamesonian text itself is a type of practice, and in the postmodern period it also serves as a guide for radical politics.

Fredric Jameson as a Radical Cultural Critic

This study establishes the fact that Jameson emerges as a radical cultural critic of America singing the song of postmodernism. He is the first American thinker who dared to review Marxism for the first time and purged out all the old, orthodox, and rigid ideas of Marx for the suitability of contemporary American capitalist society. Jameson uses a range of theories including structuralism, deconstruction, archetypal criticism, allegorical interpretations, and much more for critical interpretation of a literary text. Jameson coined new concepts such as postmodernism, New Left, Late Capitalism, Cultural Politics, and many others articulating his inventive genius and critical fecundity. Thus, all the objectives of the study outlined in the beginning of the thesis are achieved.

Social Relevance of the Study

The present study is focused on the writing of the postmodern writings of Fredric Jameson who brought a revolution in the domain of cultural criticism. He rejected the traditional ideas of modernism and propounded the theories of postmodernism. He argued that in the growing capitalist economy of America Marxism ideology is essentially workable but with certain drastic changes. He reviewed Marxism in the context of contemporary American capitalism based on liberty and freedom. He rejected the totalitarian theory of Karl Marx and advocated that in the postmodern society force and dictatorship have no place. This thesis explores the problems and challenges of the emerging capitalist society. The political leaders can take positive steps to bring harmony between the bourgeoisie and the proletariats. The political leaders ought to take care of the forces of a new capitalist economy based on greed and profit motive. In this study the contributions of Jameson in the domain of Marxist cultural studies since he reviewed the old and traditional Marxist ideology.

To conclude, Fredric Jameson is a prominent cultural critic of America who reinterpreted and restructured Marxism in the 1960s from the perspective of

postmodern society and the late capitalism of America. He wrote many books and research papers; attended many international conferences and emerged as an acclaimed cultural critic. Jameson was influenced by the Frankfurt School and the Marxist scholars such as Kenneth Burke, Gyorgy Lukacs, Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and Louis Althusser. Jameson departed the ideology of historical materialism held by Lenin and Marx. Jameson became an active Marxist like Raymond William and cofounded Marxist Literary Group in 1969 with several students of California University. Jameson rejected the orthodox and rigid view of Marxian ideology and contended that it is not always certain that the economic base determines the superstructure of society. The Western Marxists analyzed the growth of culture as a historical process. Jameson contends that culture must be understood in the context of the idealistic theories of Hegel. Jameson initiated the debate on Marxist post-structuralism by publishing his book *Marxism and Form* which generated huge interest in American readers. Jameson's *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (1990) is the bible of postmodernism as in this essay he has discussed in detail the characteristics of postmodernism. His more recent works include *Valences of the Dialectics* (2009), *The Antinomies of Realism* (2013), and *The Ancients and the Postmoderns* (2015). His book on *Postmodernism or The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* greatly impacted the writers such as Kurt Vonnegut, Vladimir Nabokov, John Updike, Thomas Pynchon, and John Barth. This thesis is a serious attempt to investigating the thoughts and ideas of Fredric Jameson. The study will inspire the scholars of cultural study to carry out further research relying on the theories of postmodernism explained in this thesis.

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