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İNGİLİZ DİLİ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI

THE POSTMODERN FULCRUM OF MARK RAVENHILL'S SOME

EXPLICIT POLAROIDS AND MARTIN CRIMP'S ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE

IN THE LIGHT OF ZYGMUNT BAUMAN'S SOCIOLOGY

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ETİK BEYANI

Tez Yazım Kurallarına uygun olarak hazırladığım "Zygmunt Bauman'ın Sosyolojisi Işığında Mark Ravenhill'in Some Explicit Polaroids ve Martin Crimp'in Attempts on Her Life adlı oyunlarının Postmodern Dayanak Noktası başlıklı tez çalışmasında; tez içinde sunduğum verileri, bilgileri ve dokümanları akademik ve etik kurallar çerçevesinde elde ettiğimi, tüm bilgi, belge, değerlendirme ve sonuçları bilimsel etik ve ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduğumu, tez çalışmasında yararlandığım eserlerin tümüne uygun atıfta bulunarak kaynak gösterdiğimi, kullanılan verilerde herhangi bir değişiklik yapmadığımı, bu tezde sunduğum çalışmanın özgün olduğunu, bildirir, aksi bir durumda aleyhime doğabilecek tüm hak kayıplarını kabullendiğimi beyan ederim.

YAREN ADA

ÖZET

İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

ZYGMUNT BAUMAN'IN SOSYOLOJİSİ IŞIĞINDA MARK RAVENHILL'İN 'SOME EXPLICIT POLAROIDS' VE MARTIN CRIMP'İN 'ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE' ADLI OYUNLARININ POSTMODERN DAYANAK NOKTASI

YAREN ADA

Bu çalışma, durmaksızın modernleşme gayesinin bir getirisi olarak postmodern parçalanmış bireye odaklanmış ve varolduğu atmosferi sosyal ve estetik açıdan analiz etme amacıyla 1990'ların İngiliz Tiyatrosundan iki çarpıcı oyunu incelemiştir: Martin Crimp'in *Yaşamı Üzerine Teşebbüsler* ve Mark Ravenhill'in *Bazı Açık Polaroidler*. Toplumsal düzene radikal bir başkaldırının getirisi kimlik bunalımının ve belirsizliğin zirvede olduğu her iki oyunu da incelemeden önce, tiyatro metinleri aracılığıyla iletilen imgelerin, toplumda karşılığını ve bu imaların arka planını anlamak için Zygmunt Bauman'ın akışkan modernite ve akışkan toplum kavramları başta olmak üzere toplum anlayışı araştırılmış ve Bauman sosyolojisinden faydalanılmıştır. Postmodern tasvirlerde, tüketim toplumu ve küreselleşme üzerine Baumancı tahlillere başvurulmuştur. Bu tahliller, modern bireyin hapsolduğu dünyada bir kaçış aradığını ortaya koymuştur. Bu kaçışın yarattığı kriz ise postmodern topluma zemin oluşturmuştur. Bunun yanı sıra, bu tiyatro eserlerini Bauman merceğinden incelemek, postmodernizm ile çağdaş toplumsal yapılar arasındaki karmaşık etkileşime dair içgörüler sağlamıştır. Postmodernite ve estetik bağlamında incelenen bu oyunlar, parçalanmış dünyaya ve bireye ayna niteliğinde olan tiyatronun önemini vurgulamıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Zygmunt Bauman, Postmodern Dönem, İngiliz Tiyatrosu, Ravenhill, Crimp

ABSTRACT

Department of English Language and Literature

MA Thesis

THE POSTMODERN FULCRUM OF MARK RAVENHILL'S 'SOME EXPLICIT POLAROIDS' AND MARTIN CRIMP'S 'ATTEMPTS ON HER LIFE' IN THE LIGHT OF ZYGMUNT BAUMAN'S SOCIOLOGY

YAREN ADA

This study focused on the postmodern fragmented individual as a result of the aim of constant modernization and examined two striking plays from the British Theatre of the 1990s with the objective of analyzing the atmosphere in which it exists from a social and aesthetic perspective: Martin Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life* and Mark Ravenhill's *Some Explicit Polaroids*. Before delving into the examination of these two plays, an exploration of societal understanding, utilizing concepts such as Zygmunt Bauman's liquid modernity and liquid society, was undertaken to comprehend the societal resonance of images conveyed through theatrical texts and the background of these implications. The sociological perspective of Bauman was employed in this regard. For the analysis of postmodern depictions, Bauman's insights on consumer society and globalization were referred to. These analyses revealed that in the world where the modern individual is confined, there is a quest for escape. The crisis created by this escape has paved the way for a postmodern society. Further, studying these theatrical works through Bauman's lens revealed perspectives on the complex interaction of postmodernism and contemporary social structures. When examined in the context of postmodernity and aesthetics, these plays emphasized the significance of theatre as a mirror for the fragmented world and individual.

Keywords: Zygmunt Bauman, Postmodern Period, British Theatre, Ravenhill, Crimp

ÖNSÖZ

In the midst of personal tragedy, I find myself standing here, ready to submit this thesis that represents not only my academic achievements but also a testament to my ability to overcome obstacles.

To my late mother, even though you are no longer physically present, your love and constant faith in my capabilities keep encouraging me. This thesis is a tribute to your memory and the eternal influence you have had on my life. Your spirit has become my guiding lights, inspiring me to keep going even in the face of terrible grief.

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To those who may read this thesis, I hope that you find inspiration and valuable insights that contribute to your academic journey and beyond.

İÇİNDEKİLER

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

> *...is postmodernity the pastime of an old man who scrounges in the garbage-heap of finality looking for leftovers, who brandishes unconsciousnesses, lapses, limits, confines, goulags, parataxes, non-senses, or paradoxes, and who turns this into the glory of his novelty, into his promise of change?(Lyotard, 1989, p.136).*

It is challenging to redefine the word in an age when the idea of value is being shattered and evolved in multiple ways. That age in a rough generalization, the postmodern era likewise rattles the security of the concept of value as a result of the turmoil it embodies. Value is a parameter that centers on a common theme and communal emotions, attitudes or experiences. Due to the inability to agree on mutual understanding as a result of globalization, postmodern period has been labeled as ambiguous, perplexing, or hybrid as being extremely enigmatic to describe. Following are the main different understandings of postmodernism, most of which are connected to particular concepts such as the blend of multiple ethnicities, decentralized with highly saturated and hyper-real, world media and mostly consumerist. Mentioning postmodernism to be an era of fragmentation and pluralism, Jean-François Lyotard stated postmodernity that "*simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity toward meta-narratives*"(1984, p.xxiv). Lyotard also claimed that grand narratives such history, civilization, enlightenment, freedom, and marxism are deception that put folks to sleep. As such, when postmodernism is addressed, one of the initial figures who springs to mind is Jean Baudrillard or so called the saint of postmodernism characterized the period differently in various ways which can be shown in Baldick's dictionary:

> *Postmodernity is said to be a culture of fragmentary sensations, eclectic nostalgia, disposable simulacra, and promiscuous superficiality, in which the traditionally valued qualities of depth, coherence, meaning, originality, and authenticity are evacuated or dissolved amid the random swirl of empty signals(2001, p.201).*

Also based on Baudrillard who implies a state of excess, where the initial thrill or excitement has dissipated, leaving a sense of saturation and emptiness, a more theoretical study of these postmodernist axis presumptions results in the following definition:

> *We are currently, therefore, in what Baudrillard calls 'the post-orgy state of things 'after everything is liberated, everything is possible, utopia is realized, everything can and has been done, and all we can do is to assemble the fractal pieces of our culture and proceed to its extremities(Best& Kellner, p.137).*

Postmodernity is uninhibited, or to put it more simply, incapable of being confined, due to the condition of immensity that results from disintegration. It implies the rupture of one connection or the final stage of all bonds rather than the continuity of modernism. As noticed following, this continuity can be refuted. Monocultural and unified identity modernism is replaced by liberated cultures, identities and alternative lifestyles. Multiple meanings and multiple realities have replaced a single truth and a single meaning. Modernism, in which the view of the past is vertical or progressive, is shallower than the next period. This indicates; the current reality is intertwined with and heavily reliant upon the past despite the modern era's priority for modern over traditional. However, the postmodern era does not form its underpinnings on this reality because it values the past as significant and emphasizes that it has its own reality together with the contra-verse ideas that the traditional is valuable and regains its legitimacy. Postmodernists seek, inter alia, to develop conceptions of social criticism which do not rely on traditional philosophical underpinnings(Seidman, 1994, p.244). Since the past exists in multiple realities, postmodernism is a phase that could produce different versions of the past. The fact that it contains a philosophy 'less is a bore' frames this period eclectic but it also requires chaos, turmoil and adverse ecstasy effect. In this chaos, the so-called 'other' gains legitimacy or is tolerated. Such idea is basically contrary to the 'everything modern is good' stance, since the modern one symbolizes a single culture, a single identity, and multiple parallels, that is, a whole. With deconstruction of this whole, it is highly possible that all those 'other' titles could be introduced during an unstable and less structured period. Thus, beyond order, control, and rule triangle, anarchy that started with the fall of the Enlightenment, reaches its zenith again on.

Postmodernism is a philosophical and cultural movement that emerged in the late 20th century as a reaction against modernism which emphasized rationality, progress, and the

pursuit of objective truth. The term postmodernism not only sounds unnatural and vulgar, but it also implies a desire to exceed or repress modernism itself. As a result, the phrase incorporates an enemy in it(Goodall, 1993, p.24). It is a complex and multi-faceted concept that can be difficult to define precisely, as it encompasses a wide range of ideas and practices. At its core, postmodernism is characterized by a skepticism towards grand narratives or meta-narratives, such as the idea of progress or the Enlightenment's belief in reason and objectivity. Postmodernists reject the notion that there is a single, objective truth, and instead emphasize the diversity of human experience and the role of subjective interpretation. Postmodernism also tends to reject the idea of a stable, unified self, and instead views identity as fragmented and constructed through language and social interactions. Some of the factors that contributed to the emergence of postmodernism include the rise of consumer culture, the increasing dominance of technology and mass media, and the growing awareness of social and political issues such as feminism, civil rights, and globalization. Postmodernism was also influenced by the work of critical theorists such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-Francois Lyotard, who challenged the traditional philosophical and epistemological assumptions of modernity that also have implications for fields such as philosophy, sociology, and cultural studies, where it has led to new ways of thinking about language, power, and identity. From another perspective, the postmodern condition resembles Kunt Vonnegut's (1998) 'granfalloon anxiety' as mentioned in *Cat's Cradle*. The connection between granfalloon and postmodernism lies in their shared critique of fixed, essentialist, or overly rigid concepts of identity and meaning. Both concepts highlight the idea that human identity and meaning can often be constructed or assigned arbitrarily, and that the boundaries between groups and categories are frequently more complex and fluid than they might initially seem. The work parodies (Miller, 2011) the Grand Narrative of absolute truth and the modern ideas of progress as well as religion, art and flaws in modern ethic. A 'granfalloon' is a phrase used to describe a meaningless or deceptive association of people in a society rather than a particular sort of society. It describes a group of people who, despite the arbitrary or weak nature of their relationship, think they have some sort of common identity or bond. A granfalloon in the context of a civilization could be any group or category that people connect with but for which there is no real or meaningful basis. Sports fan clubs, political parties founded on minor criteria, social media follower groups, and other institutions could come inside this category. The phrase emphasizes

how people frequently look for relations and ties to give their lives purpose, even when those relationships are simply meaningless. Vonnegut's idea of a granfalloon is frequently used to comment on how people tend to divide themselves into identities based on superficial characteristics and how these associations can give people a false sense of purpose and belonging. It serves as a means of criticizing the ways in which people create social identities and derive meaning from their lives by relying on fragile relationships. Another guide that works with postmodernism in a variety of ways provides a broad perspective. Delving into the cultural and aesthetic dimensions of postmodernism, David Harvey explored the fragmentation and diversification of identities and considers how identity politics emerge in response to these shifts as well as how they shape social and political dynamics. The following is his take of postmodernism, with which Harvey (1991) claimed to agree:

> *What appears on one level as the latest fad, advertising pitch and hollow spectacle is part of a slowly emerging cultural transformation in Western societies, a change in sensibility for which the term 'post-modern' is actually, at least for now, wholly adequate(p.39).*

Harvey also stated that the character and extent of this transformation are subject to debate, but it is undeniably a transformation. He tried to clarify that he was not suggesting a complete overhaul of cultural, social, and economic systems; such a statement would be an exaggerated interpretation(p.39). His work is part of a larger conversation within academia and social theory that seeks to understand the complexities of postmodern culture, economy, and society. Harvey, like other postmodern theorists, emphasized the postmodern condition's challenge to grand narratives or metanarratives such as "*Marxism, Freudianism and all forms of Enlightenment reason*"(1991, p.42). He considered that as a reaction to earlier ideologies' flaws as well as a realization of the complexity and variety of current cultures. Another critical theorist, Habermas, on the other hand, examines postmodernism controversially. Depicting the term "*Postmodernity definitely presents itself as Anti-modernity*"(1981, p.3), he contrasts between what he indicates modern rationality and what he regards as postmodernism's relativistic tendencies. It promotes a communicative, agreeable rationality that may support democratic discussion. Raising concerns about the potential consequences of certain postmodern tendencies, Habermas depicts the situation as "*the new value placed on the transitory, the elusive and the ephemeral, the very celebration of dynamism, discloses a longing for an undefiled,*

immaculate and stable present"(Taylor&Winquist, 1998, p.148). Christopher Butler also examined and made a diagnosis for the term postmodernism, which is not just limited to the aforementioned authors and theorists. Like Habermas, Butler discusses how postmodernism can be seen as a reaction to the disillusionment with modernist projects and the complexities of a globalized world. Also he explains that postmodernism is a complex and multifaceted movement that challenges traditional notions of reality, representation, and identity. He highlights postmodernism's skepticism towards grand narratives, its emphasis on intertextuality and pastiche, and its play with language and meaning. While Butler defines postmodernism; *"As I have argued throughout, postmodernism is a bit like a party manifesto"*(2003, p.122), he characterizes postmodernists with that explanation; *"The best that one can say here, and I am saying it, is that postmodernists are good critical deconstructors, and terrible constructors"*(2003, p.116). Often challenging some of the assumptions and tendencies within the postmodern movement, it is important to note that Terry Eagleton's engagement with postmodernism is not uniformly negative. He recognizes that postmodernism has brought attention to important issues, such as the instability of language and the multiplicity of meanings. Postmodernism, which Eagleton described as *"Nietzschean amnesia"*(Barbeito, 2000, p.35) can be understood as a response to the failures and disillusionment with certain modernist projects.

> *Post-structuralism, and then postmodernism, dismissed all attempts to reflect on human life as a whole as disreputably 'humanist –'or indeed as the kind of 'totalizing 'theory which led straight to the death camps of the totalitarian state. There was now no such thing as humanity or human life to be contemplated. There were simply differences, specific cultures, local situations(2008, p.20).*

Discussing how postmodernism challenges the certainties and stability associated with modernity, the fragmentation of culture, the questioning of authoritative structures, and the embrace of cultural diversity are all responses to the perceived limitations of modernist narratives. A different view of postmodernism has been also offered in the field of psychology. Stenner and Nichterlein (2024) examined postmodernism in two distinct phases, labeling the first as Pomo1, covering the years 1875 and beyond, and the second as Pomo2, spanning the interwar period in the 1900s. They expanded the concept across these temporal boundaries. According to this current study, an attempt is being made to restore the fundamental feeling of purpose that sparked the postmodern (pomo)

discussion. It is argued that this feeling of purpose has faded over time, maybe as a result of the belief that postmodernists, with their focus on linguistic relativism, are to blame for creating a society where 'post-truth' is a crisis as stated in the abstract of Stenner and Nichterlein's study. Treating postmodernism as a cultural style and postmodernity as a historical period(1996, p.vii), Eagleton prefers to discuss postmodernism throughout its entirety and believes this distinction to be useful. According to him, the cultural style referred to as postmodernism is also a collapse or failure in some ways.

> *Wherever else postmodernism may spring from 'postindustrial' society, the final discrediting of modernity, the recrudescence of the avant-garde, the commodification of culture, the emergence of vital new political forces, the collapse of certain classical ideologies of society and the subject it is also, and centrally, the upshot of a political failure which it has either thrust into oblivion, or with which it has never ceased to shadow-box(1996, p.21).*

Eagleton discusses how postmodernism's skepticism toward grand narratives can lead to a crisis of legitimation, where there's a lack of coherent societal identity and shared norms. He worries that this can undermine the basis for political and moral authority. Eagleton is critical of postmodernism's tendency towards extreme epistemic relativism, where all perspectives are considered equally valid. He argues that this can lead to a form of nihilism, where the rejection of objective truth undermines the possibility of meaningful ethical and political judgments. "*Postmodernism simply replaces God here with human beings. Reality is not any way in itself, just the way that we construct it to be*"(2008, p.73). Both Terry Eagleton and Slavoj Zizek are critical of the extreme epistemic relativism that can be associated with certain strands of postmodernism. They argue that an absolute rejection of objective truth and meaning can lead to a dangerous nihilism that undermines the basis for ethical judgment and political engagement. Addressing the potential loss of human agency in postmodernist thought, they are critical of perspectives reduce individuals to mere products of language and discourse, neglecting the role of human agency in shaping culture and society. "*Postmodernism' now effectively functioned as a new Master-Signifier introducing a new order of intelligibility into the confused multiplicity of historical experience*"(Zizek, 2009, p.52). Zizek proposes in Parallax, a method for dealing with a variety of perspectives and conducting philosophical-political analyses, that the same object or event can take on different meanings depending on the viewpoint from which it is seen. He addresses concerns like ideology, existence, and universality using philosophical notions and assesses these

concepts through a parallax lens. It also reflects on political ideologies, social paradoxes, and power relations while attempting to demonstrate how different perspectives produce different outcomes. Zizek, who employs the same technique to deal with postmodernism, metaphorizes it as follows: "*The elementary frame of so-called postmodernism can in fact be conceived as a network of three modes of inversion of Plato's allegory*"(2006, p.162). Later part of quote clears out the comparison. Zizek is likely highlighting the postmodern idea that our perceptions and interpretations are constructed through various discourses and are inherently subjective. This challenges the notion of a stable and universally valid reality, a key theme in postmodern thought. In essence, Zizek is inviting a reconsideration of our understanding of truth and reality in a way that resonates with postmodernist skepticism and deconstruction of grand narratives. Zizek also brings a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective to the allegory, discussing how the Real (the underlying, unrepresentable aspect of reality) disrupts the Symbolic (the realm of language and ideology). This disruption leads to a moment of awakening or realization, similar to the freed prisoner's experience in the allegory. Plato's Allegory of the Cave involves a critical examination of how ideologies and perspectives shape the understanding of reality, knowledge, and truth. Despite not being referred to as postmodernists, renowned for their contributions to the movement, Derrida and Heidegger question these contentious expressions that sound more like modernism's tenets of objectivity, rationality, and universalism. Also Post-modernists disregard key concepts like liberty, advance in society, and progress in science in favor of emphasizing that diversity should be celebrated rather than pushed into a single authority. Known by the paradoxical term deconstruction, Derrida explains it as: "*Deconstruction is formulated as an opposition to the method and the structure, since the structure is precisely something that neutralises and always favours an essential centre*"(1981, p.278-279). Although it appears to be connected to the philosophy of language-discourse, the way it operates is entirely postmodern because it is a chain of actions directed to transform, disrupt, or overturn the existing order and the order itself. Derrida's deconstruction often focuses on binary oppositions, such as presence/absence, speech/writing, male/female, and so on. He argues that these pairs are not opposites with clear boundaries but are interconnected and rely on each other for their meaning. Therefore, it is possible to deal with the postmodern and modern dichotomy with this content. "*The same happens for postmodernism when it justifies itself as the deconstruction of modernism*"(Ferraris&Segre, 1988, p.19). Being a

complex philosophical approach that challenges traditional assumptions about language and meaning, it resonates with postmodernism by undermining fixed truths, revealing the constructed nature of meaning, and emphasizing the importance of interpretation and perspective. With the deconstruction of meta-narratives which are overarching explanations that claim to provide universal truths about human history, progress, or meaning, postmodernism emphasizes that truths are often relative to the cultural, historical, and social context in which they emerge. Different cultures and societies may have distinct truths that reflect their unique perspectives and values. Relativism and pluralism, thus, challenges any single, dominant truth as well as celebrates hybridity and fragmentation, challenging the idea of unified and fixed identities. Also, in a postmodern society, the concept of fixed identities has been extensively questioned and challenged. Postmodernism deals with the idea that identities are stable, essential, and determined by fixed categories such as gender, race, nationality, or sexuality. Instead, it emphasizes the fluid, constructed, and complex nature of identities, suggesting that they are shaped by various cultural, social, and individual factors. Postmodern thought deconstructs binary oppositions such as male/female, black/white, and self/other. These binaries are seen as oversimplifications that ignore the complexities of human experience. This deconstruction opens up space for more nuanced and diverse understandings of identity. *"We enter postmodernism the moment we get rid of this perspective illusion: what appears, within modernism, as the limit impeding the subject's self-expression, is actually the subject himself"*(Zizek, 1992, p.137). Zizek argues that the modern subject's desire for identity is manipulated by ideology and engages with Lacanian psychoanalysis to explore how identities are constructed within the symbolic order, which encompasses language, culture, and social norms. Rather than attempting to define fixed identities, Zizek encourages embracing the uncertainty and instability of identity. He believes that by confronting the void at the core of identity and acknowledging its constructed nature, individuals can open up spaces for subversion and transformation. On the other hand, Lacan's concepts resonate with postmodernism's emphasis on the fluidity and fragmentation of identity. *"The Imaginary order"*(Julien, 1994, p.47), associated with self-image and images of others, highlights the role of images and representations in identity formation. Similar to postmodernism, it examines how identities are flexible, how they are shaped by outside images and discourse, and how they challenge simple classification. Likewise, Michel Foucault's work on identity construction underscores the

role of power, discourse, and social institutions in shaping how individuals understand themselves and their place in society. Fascinated by truth and discourse and conducts extensive research into it, Foucault injects the terms such as 'constructed', 'formed' or 'validated' into postmodernism. While the way he analyzes and scrutinizes history provides a distinct perspective on humanity's journey, it also leaps into the postmodern age, which is its destiny. Mark Poster, who defines Foucault as anti-historical historian, addresses the link between history and Foucault as follows: "*If Foucault is the Enfant terrible who would destroy the human sciences, he is also one of their most fascinating practitioners, reshaping their contours according to an original if most peculiar historical practice*"(Poster, 1982, p.116). History, according to Foucault, is predominantly a product of discourse, which consists of language, narratives, as well as belief systems. He contended that historical narratives are built through language and formed by dominant discourses of the particular era. These discourses determine what may be known, stated, and understood at any given time in history. Since the postmodern period can potentially be viewed as a continuation of history, it is apparent that it was created by this era's authorities. However, Foucault regarded history as not being a linear progression and instead emphasized the contingency and variability of historical processes, he was interested in how different historical periods produce and shape forms of subjectivity. In the nineteenth century, the study of History involved establishing connections between different organic structures in a chronological sequence. Over time, History extended its influence to shape the analysis of production, the study of organic entities, and ultimately, the examination of linguistic communities. Like the way Order paved the path for understanding consecutive similarities and distinctions, History introduces the concept of analogical organic structures(Foucault, 2002, p.236). Foucault is emphasizing the historical development and expansion of the study of organic structures, demonstrating how historical perspectives have influenced analyses across various domains, from production to linguistics. "*History gives place to analogical organic structures, just as Order opened the way to successive identities and differences*"(Foucault, 2002, p.237).

The discourses that historical accounts created implied what it means to be a particular identity such as a criminal, a mad person, or a sexual minority can change over time due to shifts in dominant discourses and power relations according to Foucault. Also, historical accounts and archives play a role in constructing and regulating identities by

defining what is considered normal, deviant, or acceptable behavior within a given society. *"....Foucault documents the formation of what he calls a "disciplinary society" -the primary goal of which is the creation of the individual- a reality fabricated by this specific technology of power that he has called discipline"*(Smith, 2006, p.127). When it relates to postmodern subject matter, the fact that Foucault is not a postmodern thinker but rather one of those who set the framework for such a phrase is significant. His assertions about identity construction and shift align with postmodern notions of fluid and multiple identities under the power concept can be clarified as follows:

> *And by domination I do not mean the brute fact of the domination of the one over the many, or of one group over another, but the multiple forms of domination that can be exercised in society; so, not the king in his central position, but subjects in their reciprocal relations; not sovereignty in its one edifice, but the multiple subjugations that take place and function within the social body(Foucault, 2003, p.49).*

It suggests that the legal system and the judicial sphere are not merely neutral or objective entities but are actively involved in shaping power dynamics within society(Foucault, 2003, p.49). According to Foucault's perspective, institutions such as the legal system are not solely concerned with justice but are also mechanisms through which social power is exercised and maintained.

Similar perspective that contains ideas such as identity split, pluralism or universal validity, regulation of society and simulation of reality can be observed in postmodernist understanding of Jean Baudrillard who was a French theorist known for his exploration of postmodernity, hyperreality, and the simulation. While the two theorists have distinct areas of focus, there are connections between their ideas, particularly in the context of biopolitics. Foucault's concept of 'biopolitics' relates to how modern nations and institutions impose control over individuals by controlling areas of life such as health, birth and sexuality. Such oversight reaches to population control, both at the individual and social levels. Foucault coined the term 'biopower' to refer to new power forms focusing on bodies and individual behavior. However, he occasionally differentiated between two specific forms(Braun, 2007, p.3). In advance of examining into the common ground between the two postmodern interpretations, as for the fundamental concept of biopolitics, the following has been stated:

> *He used the term 'anatomopolitics', for instance, for those disciplinary techniques that sought to maximize the body's forces and integrate it into efficient systems, such as through proper training, or through rationally organizing workplaces, armies and domestic economies. The term 'biopolitics', on the other hand, designated those political technologies that took the biological existence of the nation as their object, understood as a 'population' imbued with mechanisms of life(Braun, 2007, p.3).*

The medicalization and commercialization of life are discussed in Foucault's theories of bio-politics, where medical and scientific discourses govern what is considered normal or healthy. Baudrillard investigates how the medical and consumer sectors construct simulated realities, such as the medicalization of aging or the commodity of beauty, as forms of bio-political control. The bodies and identities in relation to power and society have been discussed by both Foucault and Baudrillard. While the thought of Foucault explores the ways in which institutions affect how we understand the body and identity, Baudrillard's theories on the hyperreal claim that identities themselves are likely to transform into performances or simulations. With the idea of the simulated body, Baudrillard explores the concept of hyperreality, which expresses that reality and simulations cannot be distinguished. The bodies themselves might be thought of in this perspective as simulations. In consumer culture, according to Baudrillard, our perceptions of our own bodies are shaped by a variety of images and symbols, which may result in the creation of an artificial sense of identity. The idea of an original is now completely disregarded; therefore, simulacra and models have been turned into reality and everything becomes an image, a sign, a spectacle, a trans-aesthetic, a trans-political, and a transsexual in the postmodern media and consumer society.(Habib, 2018, p.43). According to Baudrillard, the postmodern individual has become disconnected from the real world. Instead, knowledge and beliefs are shaped by media, advertising, and consumer culture as people live in a world of hyperreality. This loss of the real may trigger a feeling of alienation and disconnect from what was once referred to as the real world. Starting from this foundation, Baudrillard developed comprehensive theories about human society, rooted in the concept of "self-referentiality" as stated in Wolny's study (2007) and he referred to Baudrillard as follows:

> *His writing portrays societies always searching for a sense of meaning—or a total understanding of the world—that remains consistently elusive. In contrast to poststructuralism and Michel Foucault, for whom the formations of knowledge emerge only as the result of relations of power, Baudrillard developed theories in which the excessive, fruitless search for total knowledge leads almost inevitably to a kind of delusion(p.76).*

In the postmodern era, Baudrillard argued that there is a de-differentiation of categories and a fragmentation of identity. Traditional distinctions between the real and the unreal, the self and the other, or high culture and popular culture become blurred. This de-differentiation results in a sense of fluid and shifting identity. In accordance with Baudrillard, postmodern people frequently display narcissistic characteristics. In the hyperreal world, where identities are created based on appearances and personal simulations, people are encouraged to focus on themselves and their self-image. As people engage in self-presentation through photos, social media, and self-branding, the ego takes center stage. In the pursuit of identity, everyone endeavors to project a certain appearance. In a world where claiming significance based on one's existence is no longer feasible, the only option is to engage in a performative act without worrying about actual existence or being observed. This aligns with Baudrillard's perspective on the nature of contemporary society and the role of appearances.

> *So it is not: I exist, I am here! but rather: I am visible, I am an image - look! look! This is not even narcissism, merely an extraversion without depth, a sort of self-promoting ingenuousness whereby everyone becomes the manager of their own appearance(Baudrillard, 1993, p.23).*

This investigation of extreme egoism and self-absorption in the postmodern human is continued in The Transparency of Evil while The Consumer Society examines how consumerism may lead to egoism and narcissism as people develop their identities through purchasing and the pursuit of their own image. "*The body you dream of is your own*"(Baudrillard, 2017, p.211). In a society where appearances and personal simulations take primacy, the postmodern human may be consumed with developing and presenting their own image as well as may feel disconnected from what was once considered the real world. Therefore, Baudrillard suggests that individuals may become alienated from authentic experiences and genuine desires as they navigate the hyperreal world of consumerism. The preliminary idea is that the concept of consumption is a delusion and it is a remark about current society, the way our culture communicates to itself(Baudrillard, 2017, p.210). Consumption becomes a major cultural and economic

force in the consumer society. People are urged to define themselves by the products they buy. The purchase of things, services, and experiences has become an important aspect of how individuals form their identities. As Featherson stated (1990) "*depthless culture referring to the postmodern people, he also argued that consumerist culture was the late stage of capitalism*"(p.7). Consuming is a feature of both modernity and postmodernity, although the form of consuming differs. Consumption is linked to mass manufacturing of products in modernity. It is related with the consumption of signals, symbols, and experiences as much as actual objects in postmodernity. "*If there is one agreement between theorists of modernity and those of post-modernity, it is about the centrality of consumption to modern capitalism and contemporary culture*"(Trentmann, 2004, p.1). Theorists of post-modernity contend that consumption is a cultural and symbolic phenomenon as well as an economic one that results from modernity. Consumption during this time is strongly linked to the creation of identities, the dissemination of symbols, and the display of social status. The clearest situation of postmodern culture and love of consumption can be summarized with these words:

> *The puzzling question why contemporary human beings love to buy and to consume, and yet are so little attached to what they buy, finds its most significant answer in the marketing character phenomenon. The marketing characters' lack of attachment also makes them indifferent to things (Fromm, 2005, p.77).*

What holds significance might be the status or satisfaction derived from possessions, but the things themselves lack inherent substance. They are entirely replaceable, much like friends or lovers, as there is no profound connection binding one to any of them(Fromm, 2005, p. 77). Erich Fromm is conveying the idea that in contemporary society, material goods and interpersonal relationships have become interchangeable and lack enduring value or meaning. The emphasis is on the transient and replaceable nature of both possessions and personal connections.

Given that postmodernism is a multifaceted and sophisticated movement of thought, a deeper examination of this perspective is necessary for grasping and evaluating it. Understanding and combining methods from various disciplines and viewpoints from different academics is required for this. The overview above aims to organize this complexity and versatility while emphasizing the essential elements. Although the term has been discussed in a variety of contexts, it also contains one of the main distinctions

of the time. As eclectic as the society is, its art is also as miscellaneous. In the light of this, understanding postmodern theater is fundamental. For this reason, the significance of this thesis, which is a collaborative study, can be explained as follows: By providing an inclusive perspective on theater, which evolved under several headings in the 20th century, this thesis not only identified the two plays with different theater approaches, but also evaluated humanity sociologically in alignment with the insights of Zygmunt Bauman, a prolific author of the 20th and 21st centuries, by applying the plays as a tool to demonstrate this matter.

CHAPTER TWO

2. THE STUDY

2.1. Postmodern Theatre Understanding

Theatre first appeared as a stage performance art in the 500s BC and has been around ever since. For centuries, theatre has evolved into various genres and has been utilized for a variety of purposes. The theatre founded on primitive ceremonies was carried to a sophisticated extent in the early ages, with similarities and differences added in later eras. Each period's theater featured characteristics that reflected the preceding tradition and served as a reference for the next period. These transitions were not only rigid, but also at certain points ambiguous. Following Ancient Greek and Roman theatre, Medieval Theatre and subsequently Renaissance Theatre were both corresponding and polarizing in terms of form and content. There was a return to ancient times in the 17th and 18th centuries in drama. However, through the early twentieth century, theater that was unable to exceed a certain line for centuries had undergone a considerable transformation. Modernist theatre, which preceded postmodernism, was characterized by the rejection of traditional forms and the exploration of new techniques and themes. Modernist theater examined the complexity of the human experience and expanded the boundaries of what could be conveyed on stage, opening the way for further experimentation and the ultimate emergence of postmodern theatre in the second half of the century. The structure of modern theatre might not adhere to a typical beginning-middle-end pattern, and incidents may be presented out of chronological order, since it often involves non-linear and fragmented narratives.

> *….anti-theatricalism suggest that we can no longer take for granted that anti-theatricalism merely means an opposition to the theatre. If anti-theatricalism appears inside the theatre, what is being opposed cannot simply be everything that happens on the stage and for an audience. Rather, theatrical becomes an adjective that describes a condition or value rather than solely the essence of one art form(Puchner, 2006, p.15).*

Modern theatre is also crucial in understanding theater prior to the postmodern period since it comprises the first significant developments; however, it is not the only movement

that is a part of anti-theatricalism. Cardullo & Knopf (2001) indicated the following as the comprehension of theatre under the title of 'Theatre of the Avant-Garde' from 1890 to 1950:

> Franco-Russian Symbolism, Pataphysical Theater, Intimate Theater/Chamber Drama, Correspondences, Italian Futurism, German Expressionism, Dada, The Theater of Pure Form, French Surrealism, The Theater of Cruelty, Russian Oberiu, American Dada and Surrealism, The Theater of the Absurd(p.ix).

It is clear that the modern era is apart from dramatic theater if considering these theater forms as a whole, which are formed by numerous elements and prepare the way for postmodern theater. However, various of the theatrical notions that opened the way for postmodern theater have significantly influenced the postmodern theater concept, both in terms of content and processing. The first attempt at theater was Epic Theater, which was quickly followed by Theater of Cruelty. Following the preceding movements, The Theatre of the Absurd got underway with the Second World War and set the basis for the questioning of reality and language in postmodern theater. In the next breath, Theatre of Catastrophe, full of manifestos, is a sort of theater that incorporates becoming more poetic, where brutality merges with art, and which is predicated on not being simply cathartic for the first time. All of these understandings compiled and provided an entirely distinct concept of theater. The shift of drama into post-drama was facilitated by the post-modernization of the modern.

2.1.1. From modern to postmodern: Epic theatre and politic theatre

Epic Theatre, which embodies the idea of changing the world as the ultimate goal of the modern era, was developed by Bertolt Brecht with a progressive approach in the 1920s. The first attempt at dramatic theater was Brechtian theater. It is crucial to understand about Brechtian theater is that the audience thinks rather than feels. By disregarding Aristotle's idea of catharsis and recommending that viewers recognize the artificiality and illusion involved in theatrical production, Brecht presented that rather than responding in an emotional manner, they ought to rely on their capacity for analysis and obtain a grasp on the larger context that affects both the world and the individual. The second key argument is that theater exists to make people think and educate them, not to entertain them. Dialectical theater, another name for Epic theater, was centered on the target

audience criticism as opposed to identification. This form of theater attempted to increase people's awareness by addressing society and particularly its political direction. It also provided an opportunity for self-criticism and a separating view of humanity. "*It seemed important to him that there be a complete separation between the stage and the audience"(Hecht, 1961, p.43).* It was crucial to comprehend the idea of explaining scenes (verfremdungseffekt), which was unique to epic theater and referred to the wall between the audience and the actor. Instead of enabling an audience to participate emotionally in the performance, this idea aimed to help them develop an intellectual distance and critical perspective. Brecht intended to integrate the concept of more conscious actor and conscious audience to epic theater, which does not have empathy. With the technique of alienation effect, so called distancing effect or estrangement effect, "*the goals was to confound an audience's comfortable empathic identification with characters and story, as is encouraged by conventional realism"(Brooker, 2003, p.5).* In his article about Brecht's Epic Theatre, claiming that alienation is the minimizing of '*inner part of being*', Steer (1968) points a similar statement: "*Whereas for Hegel the drama portrays man attempting to reduce the alien world to the forms of his own subjectivity, for Brecht the technique of alienation is designed to point up the alienation of the world from man"*(p.640). Another point is that alienation effect is reinforced by the use of several components. Brecht gathered such components together under a single covering: *V-effects.* Meg Mumford (2009) provides these effects as follows:

> *Examples include: making the lighting apparatus, musicians and set changes visible so that human labour power is put on full display; interrupting the flow of action through the insertion of narration, songs and direct address which draw attention to the social causes of the events; and generating a split between the contemporary actor-demonstrator and the historical character which illuminates the historical and changeable nature of humankind(p.176).*

The sounds of music and song play a vital role in generating a distinct stage experience in Bertolt Brecht's Epic Theatre. Brecht applied pieces of music as essential components of his broader theatrical method, engaging the audience cognitively rather than emotionally. Brecht's plays regularly included popular music genres of the time. He expected to connect with the audience while also challenging them to examine the meaning and context of the songs in the theatrical setting through the use of clear tunes. That explains the reason in Brecht's drama, even music acquired a political dimension. It can be exemplified with the use of a satirical song from Brecht's collection of short plays,

in *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* which criticizes the rise of fascism in Germany. Mumford (2009) also enforces the examples by referencing other plays: the songs were separated from the action in *The Threepenny Opera*, which premiered in 1928, both in terms of substance and by formal measures such as darkening the stage so that only the singers, upstage orchestra, and barrel-organ were lighted. The text's musical treatment was similarly infused with the notion of separation and contrast. The simple melody of the renowned 'Mac the Knife' song, for example, is built on a C major triad and contrasts with the ballad's lyrics about the exploits of a Jack-the-Ripper style killer. While the melody contributes to the elegance and comforting solidity of Macheath's demeanor as a gentleman businessman, the other components emphasize his illegal actions as a pimp and burglar(p.85). Brecht used songs at unexpected times, breaking the narrative's normal flow. The song timing was planned and intended to keep the audience from becoming too interested in the plot. Interruptions provided opportunities for contemplation and analysis. The mix of Brecht's thought-provoking lyrics and clever musical arrangements added to Epic Theatre's differentiation. Also there were occasions when Brecht invited audience members to join in or react to songs. The goal of this collaborative component was to break the 'fourth wall' and include the audience in an even more critical interaction with the performance.

There is often a linear and chronological plot structure in dramatic theatre that the events unfold in a manner recalling of real-life time progress. Brecht's epic theater intentionally avoids a linear narrative structure. The incidents tend to be shown out of order of chronology, prompting the conventional order of time to be interrupted. This non-linear nature is meant to discourage emotional identification and promote logical thinking. Brecht also intended to educate the audience by manipulating their perception of time. Changing the time allows the audience to think about the causes and consequences of events with more extensively. Brecht frequently used an episodic structure, in which scenes or episodes are presented as distinct units rather than as part of a continuous, linear plots or the flow of action was deliberately interrupted by some techniques such as interacting the audience, asking or answering to involve them. Neglecting the Aristotelian linear structure, the episodic form of *Life of Galileo* of Brecht has been presented as follows:

> *When examined, it is obvious that the play is written in episodes that are not connected one after the other chronologically. For example, in the beginning of the first episode, the year is stated to be 1609 but in the third episode, the reader is noted that the story continues on January 10th, 1610. Similarly in the sixth episode, the story continues in 1616. As a play whose episodes portray different scenes from the famous scholar's life, Life of Galileo (1984) can be said to neglect Aristotelian, dramatic structure(Uştuk, 2015, p.27).*

Other aspect to disrupt the illusion of reality is the technique of using 'montage' that aims to manipulate the audience's perceptions. Brecht and montage practitioners were both influenced by dialectical thinking, which maintains that a mixture of opposing elements results in the creation of something new. This dialectical approach was used by Brecht to address the conflict of ideas within the play. "*The notion of the separation of elements is closely related to this concept of montage"(Mueller, 1987, p.485)*. Including fragmentation, disjunction, juxtaposition, the scenes or images were presented in montage to create contrast effect. Brecht aimed to break the narrative's flow, preventing the audience from becoming captivated in the characters. He used montage to create a sense of critical the distance, urging the audience to critically analyze the play's social and political messages. "*Montage became for him the modern, constructive, active, unmelancholy form of allegory, namely the ability to connect dissimilars in such a way as to 'shock' people into new recognitions and understandings"(Benjamin, 1998, p.xiii)*. In the same book, the author of the introduction session Stanley Mitchell followed his statement referring to montage by explaining: "*The ability to capture the infinite, sudden or subterranean connections of dissimilars, as the major constitutive principle of the artistic imagination in the age of technology"(p.xiii)*.

A further subject requires discussing is Brecht's perspective on character. Brecht aimed at portraying characters as historical figures rather than classic, universal figures. He expected to make the audience aware of the broader forces of society at work by emphasizing the historical and social conditions that influenced characters. Brecht distinguished epic from dramatic characters. Characters in dramatic theatre experience psychological growth and evolution throughout the play. Epic characters, on the other hand, are more fixed and serve as examples or archetypes, representing more expansive cultural factors which proved the fact that Brecht aligned with Marxist perspective, instead of focusing on individual protagonists. For example, Macheath in T*he Threepenny*

Opera represents the depraved people in the wake of Capitalism. This implication can be reinforced by the explanation of Willett in Brecht on Theatre (1964): "*The Threepenny Opera is concerned with bourgeois conceptions not as content, by representing them, but also through the manner in which it does so. It is a kind of report on life as any member of the audience would like to see it"(p.43).* Also, *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, an ironic metaphor about Hitler's ascent to supremacy focuses on a character who has unlimited political ambition. "*Character is not a unity but an ensemle*" according to Sokel (1971, p.177) and he stated that Brecht's characters are "*without qualities or rather equipped with changeable, exchangeable and mutually contradictory traits"(p.178).* In order to improve a better understanding of epic theater, the following comparison is anticipated to be essential. While dramatic theatre "*communicates experiences and events move in a straight line, epic theatre communicates insights and events in irregular curves*" and also the audience in dramatic theatre says "*Yes, I have felt that too*" on the contrary of epic theatre's audience who says "*I wouldn't have thought that"(Brecht&Anderson, 1961, p.20).* It is attempted to explain that epic theater is not a drama in the Aristotelian sense; rather, it originated with the intention of a separation and a metamorphosis into theater and also it is certain that this theatrical aesthetic intends to innovate in terms of subjects, performing, historical context and furthermore, tectonic techniques. Broad overview of Brechtian theatre can be summarized as Patterson (2003) addressed:

> *The primary intention of what Brecht himself called his 'pedagogy 'was not to reflect reality but to challenge it: 'Reality has to be altered by being turned into art so that it can be seen as alterable and treated as such. By attempting to show reality in a new and truer light, he could claim to be a true realist. (p.19).*

Patterson also explained that all of Brecht's techniques are aimed at challenging how we perceive reality and redefining the purpose of theater. Traditional 'Aristotelian' theater supposedly presents conflicts on stage and resolves them there. Spectators react passively, and their emotions are drained. In Brecht's non-Aristotelian theater, he encourages spectators to assess and make decisions, engaging in a critical dialogue with the stage action. This active response stimulates their emotions. Consequently, Brecht believed that his methods were best suited for fostering political awareness(2003, p.19). The impact of Brecht extended beyond his own writings. His theories and methods have been essential in forming the larger field of political theater. Numerous political theater practitioners,

especially throughout the mid-1900s were inspired by Brecht's approach. Epic theatre was explicitly designed as a political tool. Brecht aimed to create a form of theatre that would not only entertain but also educate and engage audiences in political and social issues. However, a broader declaration for performing for a particular political goal is political theater. It often includes an invitation for action and direct political activity. Provoking social change, increasing awareness, and motivating audiences to engage in political processes are the objectives of political theater which was advanced by Erwin Piscator. "*During the 1920s in Germany, Erwin Piscator established a reputation as an innovative director capable of moving the masses with his spectacular scenic effects and political activism*"(Bly, 1980, p.129). The nature of political theater is didactic. It seeks to communicate a certain message or messages about social and political issues. The productions can address ethical or moral concerns that challenge the audience to think about the impact of different course of action and social institutions. Kirby (1975) mentioned the term political theatre in his article:

> *Theatre is political if it is concerned with the state or takes sides in politics. This allows us to define "political theatre" in a way that distinguishes it from other kinds of theatre: it is a performance that is intentionally concerned with government, that is intentionally engaged in or consciously takes sides in politics(p.129).*

Piscator thought that theater had political potential. He tried to raise audience awareness and encourage participation by addressing existing issues in his productions. Similar to Epic Theatre, this form aimed to provoke critical thinking rather than emotional engagement, often using techniques such as breaking the fourth wall, projections and montage. Together, Piscator and Brecht worked on multiple performances that combined Brecht's epic theater ideas with Piscator's experimental staging methods. Their collaboration made a substantial contribution to the growth of theatrical works that were both politically and intellectually demanding during an unstable period in European history. Kerz (1968) mentioned these two theorists in his article as follows:

> *Piscator was after theatre; total theatre. A theatre of awareness that could comment and communicate beyond the linear progression and fragmentary story of the page-play itself. Brecht agreed with him. Piscator felt strongly that the theatre was a forum that could and should deal with questions that were politically tabu(p.264).*

Piscator was one of the pioneers of digital components in his productions. To enhance the theatrical experience, he applied film projections, photographs, and other visual media. The incorporation of technology was not for show, but to provide a more comprehensive and organized representation of the complex social and political issues explored in his works. Piscator's performances frequently adopted a documentary-style approach, relying on real-life events and documentary footage to create a sense of reliability and relevance. This approach blurred the lines between fiction and reality, emphasizing the momentary nature and excitement of the issues on stage. Stating that Piscator was interested in film footage and that political discourse shape theatre, Irmer (2006) expressed Piscator's technique by telling that Piscator's ideas for theater were quite experimental for the time as follows:

> *A portion of his experiments carried over in a more reflective, perhaps even purified and definitely more analytical way into the documentary theatre of the 1960s. One of Piscator's most disputed techniques was his use of leading political figures as characters onstage(p.18).*

Piscator regarded projection and film as tools for expanding the boundaries of time and space on stage. As dramatic action, real documentary, and film merge into an organic whole, the boundaries of time and space were expanded. Piscator's purpose in using projection was to keep his audience from engaging in a 'mere act of viewing'. In fact, Piscator presented evidence to the audience, basing the play on documents so that the audience was able to observe it for themselves. Many of the practices introduced to theater by Brecht and Piscator have served as inspiration for other theaters. Therefore, Epic and Political theater serve as suitable starting points for effects such as digitality in performing arts, film and projection used in postmodern plays, and the blurring of reality and fiction.

2.1.2. Theatre of cruelty

Today, theater continues to perform more than just entertain the audience; it is also trembling and deeply affecting them. The Theatre of Cruelty, a radical theater approach developed by the French performer, poet, writer and director Antonin Artaud in the mid-20th century, was a significant milestone in this evolution. Naomi Greene (1967) described this revolution through the article in detail by referencing both Camus and

Artaud by stating that according to Camus, there are two types of revolution, and these are referred to as metaphysical and political.

> *A metaphysical revolutionary rebels against the limitations placed upon him by the very nature of human existence, against the laws governing life and death. Unlike a political revolutionary, involved with the problems of society, he concerns himself with only the most universal and unchanging aspects of human life. His quest is absolute, for he demands not a new or better society, but a radical change in life itself - a transformation of the human condition. (p.188).*

In this context, Sade, Nietzsche, Dostoyevsky, Blake, Rimbaud, and Lautreamont can all be considered metaphysical or spiritual revolutionaries according to Camus(p.188). Greene also stated in the same page that the most desperate and pathetic recent metaphysical rebel was a poet named Antonin Artaud. It is not crucial to be familiar about the life of some writers in order to understand them. This was not the case with Artaud. Antonin Artaud was a Surrealist who was involved in the Surrealism movement, which peaked between 1925 and 1930 and was then divided and disintegrated. Rather than internalizing surrealism, he incorporated surrealist aspects into most of his works, yet he diverged from it at a certain point. This was due to Artaud's preference for theater over poetry. Also, the relationship between Artaud and André Breton, a prominent figure for Surrealism became strained, leading to Artaud's expulsion from the Surrealist movement in 1926. Greene (1967) proved that "*Artaud was emotionally alienated from them; he could not conceive of anything less than an absolute change in life itself that would be capable of solving man's problem*"(p.189). Artaud's strong personality, his rejection of Surrealist dogma, and his increasingly confrontational attitude contributed to this break. Artaud's struggles with mental health and his use of drugs also played a role in his conflict with the Surrealists. Breton and others were concerned about Artaud's erratic behavior and the impact of his drug use on the coherence of the Surrealist group. However, the most related one was that Surrealist writing, according to Artaud, relied too heavily on language and words. He believed that effective communication required a more immediate, visceral interaction with audience member and went beyond the limits of language. Still, Artaud's ideas influenced Surrealists and subsequent generations of artists. His emphasis on the visceral and the power of the body in performance echoed Surrealism's exploration of the irrational. However, further initiatives which contribute to the formation of his theater were the performance of Cambodian dancers which Artaud

watched and Balinese Theatre. As Knapp (1985) stated, "*he was impressed by the spectacle: by the metaphysical terror he experienced when seeing strange and horrifying forms, dragons and other inhuman manifestation"(p.65).* It was precisely for Artaud's stage that theater is a visual feast rather than a crippled formation centered on its script. Artaud believed that ritual and symbolism had the power to communicate on a deeper, archetypal level. He noted these elements as a way discovering through the collective unconscious of both performers and spectators, fostering a deeper and more universal understanding. As Artaud et al. stated (2005) "*what he ultimately accomplished should bear a torch through the dark nights of all our souls"(p.28).* Artaud offered a revolutionary understanding of theater that aims to transform theater from being 'merely an act of viewing' into a ritual and a shamanic experience. According to the Literary Terms of Chris Baldick (2001), Theater of Cruelty is described:

> *It refers to his projected revolution in DRAMA, whereby the rational 'theatre of psychology' was to be replaced by a more physical and primitive rite intended to shock the audience into an awareness of life's cruelty and violence. The idea, derived partly from SURREALISM, was that the audience should undergo a CATHARSIS through being possessed by a 'plague' or epidemic of irrational responses. Artaud's own attempts to put this theory into dramatic practice failed, and he was locked up for some time as a lunatic(p.258).*

Artaud's Theater of Cruelty was more than just a stage production; it was a way of looking at art and the world as well as Artaud's ideas were an appeal to theater to push the boundaries and disturb the audience. Artaud invited the audience to seek emotional enlightenment by challenging traditional theater norms. The concept of Theatre of Cruelty was to express a view of theater that aims to create a disturbing and shocking experience for the audience. Not only was it a visual and auditory feast, but it was also an experience that took the viewer beyond the limits of rational thought. Artaud's belief that theater was lost (1958, p.84) was effective in his development of a different and traditional theater. Artaud proposed a form of theater in which the body, voice, and symbols carried deeper meaning, believing that traditional language was inadequate. Artaud&Morgan (1958) explained such an attempt and its reason as follows:

> *Our long familiarity with theatre as a form of distraction has led us to forget the idea of a serious theatre, a theatre which will shove aside our representations, and breathe into us the burning magnetism of images and finally will act upon us in such a way that there will take place within us a therapy of the soul whose effects will not be forgotten(p.75).*

Artaud, the avant-garde theorist who stated that theater and real life were not different, but rather attempted to destroy this distinction, presented a critical opposition with Theater of Cruelty, which, while not making a splash, later took on different forms. Although Artaud clearly based this theater form on theory, another French playwright, Henri Becque, pioneered it by criticizing well-made plays and presenting a slice of life rather than being didactic. *"This is why we shall try to concentrate, around famous personages, atrocious crimes, superhuman devotions, a drama which without resorting to the defunct images of the old myths"*(Artaud, 1958, p.85). This discipline, which aimed to provide a metaphysical experience and was based on a ritualistic quality, was a kind of primitive theater revival, from the rejection of modern costumes to the use of masks and the destruction of the wall between the actor and the audience. The Theater of Cruelty, which makes the subconscious visible but goes deeper into the soul rather than the material and concrete, was an extreme point where all the instincts that people are afraid to know, ashamed to discuss, and discomfort encountering were displayed. Artaud criticized the suppression of human instincts such as sexuality, wildness and aggression. He believed that because of the blockade in mind, a person could never be free, and that a hidden being could never reach its essence. Artaud refused to incorporate the psychological, societal and socially stereotyped components of traditional theater based on speech and text in his theater, which prioritized linguistic traits. It was due to the thought these contents undermined theater. Rather than being a representation, theater centered on the stage turning the place where emotions were directly generated. Artaud (1958) explained that as follows: Theater has lost its status as an art form, or it has become an art without purpose. It aligns entirely with the Western concept of art, saturated with superficial, decorative emotions and activities, solely focused on pleasure and aesthetics. What we seek is a theater that engages actively but within a framework that is yet to be clearly defined. We crave genuine action, devoid of practical consequences. The action in theater does not manifest on the social, moral, or psychological planes. This suggests a desire for a kind of theater that goes beyond mere ornamentation and entertainment, aiming for a more profound, purposeful engagement that transcends traditional

boundaries(p.115). On the other hand, Artaud displayed the importance of authenticity in performance, urging actors to draw on their own personal experiences and emotions rather than relying mostly on scripted lines. This authenticity was intended to have an extended effect on the audience. With the destruction of the fourth wall between the audience and the actor performing, both simultaneously merge and experience a new level of awareness. The spectator as an active participant in theater was not supposed to be passive observer since there was inclusions to evoke strong emotional and physical responses from the audience as theater should not only stimulate the mind but also engage the body and senses. Knapp (1985) reinforced this as "*there should be no separation between the stage and the theatre. The theatre should be enclosed within four walls and be modified according to the architecture of certain sacred places: churches or temples, such as those in Tibet"(p.74)*. There was absence of hierarchy in Artaud's perspective; rather, the musical instruments, lighting, and costumes were just as vital as the main character or so called protagonist for traditional theatre. The goal was to break through the conventional boundaries of polite, intellectual observation and instead create an experience that would shake the spectator to the core. Antonin Artaud developed the Theatre of Cruelty in response to traditional theater's thought of limitations, with the goal of creating a more authentic, visceral, and transformative theatrical experience that could engage the audience on multiple levels. Therefore, Theater of Cruelty which is possible to depict as a confrontation with personally in the conflicts of the authentic self, is the expression of profoundly sensations through an ethereal ritual. Such vision was a radical departure from standard practices, through the intention of forcing the boundaries of what theater could achieve as an art form. "*Artaud was intent upon restoring to the theatre that which had been dethroned by Racine and his contemporaries when they gave primacy to the word and the psychological play"(Knapp, 1985, p.73)*. Theater of Cruelty, with Artaud's analogy, is as follows:

> *The movements, the attitudes, the bodies of the characters will be composed or decomposed like hieroglyphs. This language will pass from one sense organ to an- other, establishing analogies and unforeseen associations among series of objects, series of sounds, series of intonations(Derrida&Thevenin, 1998, p.85).*

2.1.3. Theatre of the absurd

Absurd Theater is an idea that denotes a reaction rather than a movement, and it deals with a further assault to the conventional notion of theater while also adhering to a philosophy in the background. Such theater was neither constructed for a specific purpose nor with a particular title. On the other hand, mentioning a founder, developer, or theorist is controversial. Prior to examining through the definitions of absurd and theater in the same context, the following explanation emerges: *Absurd* means extremely silly; not logical and sensible according to Oxford Learners Dictionary and "*the state or condition in which human beings exist in an irrational and meaningless universe and in which human life has no ultimate meaning*" according to Merriam Webster. When considering the term from the perspective of philosophy, it is possible to define the term as Halloran (1973) stated "*disharmony between man and the world he must live in*"(p.97). However, the term Theatre of the Absurd was coined by Martin Esslin and he popularized the term in his book titled The Theatre of the Absurd which examined the works of several playwrights, including Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, Jean Genet, and Arthur Adamov, among others, who shared common characteristics in their plays. Esslin referred Albert Camus to address a precise point: "*In common usage 'absurd' may simply mean 'ridiculous' but this is not the sense in which Camus uses the word and in which it is used when we speak of the Theatre of the Absurd*"(2004, p.23). However, Esslin implied a distinction between Absurd Theater and the term Absurd, which was introduced by philosophy and adopted by authors in literature:

> *Yet these writers differ from the dramatists of the absurd in an important respect: they present their sense of the irrationality of the human condition in the form of highly lucid and logically constructed reasoning, while the Theatre of the Absurd strives to express its sense of the senselessness of the human condition and the inadequacy of the rational approach by the open abandonment of rational devices and discursive thought(p.24).*

Esslin's book played a crucial role in defining and categorizing this new form of theater. Also, there is a significant historical connection between the Second World War and the birth of the Theater of the Absurd. The destruction and despair brought about by the conflict had an essential effect on playwrights who tried to depict the absurdity of human existence and the degeneration of traditional norms. Europe had a great deal of despair following the second global conflict. The majority became disappointed and started questioning traditional beliefs and ideals as a result of the catastrophic damage, the

massive amount of deaths, and the revelation of the Holocaust. Totalitarian rulers emerged to power and individual freedoms were limited as a result of the war and subsequent years. It is possible to consider the irrationality of absurd theater as a reaction to the oppressive and brutal aspects of these authorities. On the other hand, the struggle intensified existential anxiety, the philosophical investigation of the person's quest for purpose in a seemingly meaningless world. This profound scene manifested itself in Absurd theater, where characters frequently face situations lack of meaning or solution. The breakdown of communication during and after the war is a recurring theme in Absurdist plays, both on a personal and the social stage. Characters struggle to express themselves, and dialogue is frequently disjointed, reflecting the breakdown of social systems. In particular, since Absurd theater incorporates postmodernist elements, it serves as a basis on multiple contexts. "*The term Theatre of the Absurd does not simple-mindedly refer to absurd plays with absurd characters who behave absurdly, it is the designation given by the critic Martin Esslin to a dramatic genre that he saw as momentous*"(Hornby, 2015, p.640). He followed by explaining the features:

> *Thus the playwrights depicted characters in horrible situations performing merely repetitive actions that went nowhere and had no transcendent purpose; the action mixed broad comedy with horrifying images; the dialog was full of platitudes, wordplay, and nonsense(p.640).*

The plays could be labeled as unrealistic, unless one found themselves ensnared in the numerous tyrannies of the twentieth century, in which case, the plays appeared uncomfortably true to life(Hornby, p.2015). The futility of human existence are frequently explored in Absurd Theater. It portrays a sense of meaninglessness and often finds its characters stuck in repetitive, struggling situations. This existentialist theme diverges from the contemporary drama of the time, which was more psychologically oriented. This reflects the breakdown of effective communication and the isolation of characters. Absurd plays do not adhere to traditional dramatic structures. They lack clear exposition, rising action, climax, and resolution. Instead, they present a cyclical and open-ended narrative structure. While modern drama often strived for psychological realism and character development, absurd theatre intentionally challenges these conventions. Characters in absurd plays may be symbolic, archetypal, or simply embodiments of human condition. As in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* which is an allegory for the human condition, Godot is a mysterious figure whose identity remains ambiguous and a symbol

of an obscure and unreachable meaning. Also the main characters, so called Didi and Gogo who represent every man, struggle to communicate effectively and their conversations frequently devolve into confusion and misunderstanding in a sparse and unchanging place, a country road with a single tree. It is unable to discuss Theater of the Absurd while not mentioning *Waiting for Godot*. Bennett (2011) addressed this impossibility by explaining "*though not explicitly putting this event as the starting point for the absurd, Esslin starts his book with the now famous staging of Samuel Beckett's Waiting for Godot in 1957 at San Quentin penitentiary"(p.6).* Bennett resumed by referencing a prominent book which is called Around the Absurd:

> *Ruby Cohn, writing almost 30 years later, and with hindsight, pins 1950 as the approximate date of the birth of the Theatre of the Absurd because it was five years after WWII and plays by Adamov and Ionesco were playing in Paris and Beckett had completed Godot, though he was looking for a theatre(p.7).*

In the same paragraph, Bennett quotes Enoch Brater's idea: He argues that including Beckett in discussions of "Theatre of the Absurd" is not merely following others, but particularly starting with Beckett due to Esslin's mentioned organizational point(p.7). The Absurd theatre had a significant impact on the development of postmodern theatre. Various postmodern playwrights continued to experiment with fragmented narratives, non-linear structures, and the deconstruction of language as in Absurdist plays which paved the way for new approaches to storytelling and performance. Existential themes persisted in various forms, with playwrights and directors delving into questions of identity, morality, and the search for purpose. Playwrights continued to experiment with language, which became a tool for conveying deeper emotions and exploring the complexity of human relationships. Absurd plays utilized physicality and visual elements to convey meaning, often relying on non-verbal communication and symbolic gestures and throughout the following era physical theatre, devised theatre, and other forms emphasized the use of the body and visual elements as central components of storytelling. Movement, gesture, and visual symbolism became integral to theatrical expression. Contributed to the groundwork for Post-dramatic theatre which evolved as a form that prioritizes the experience over a linear plot, The Theatre of the Absurd brought a different perspective to the understanding of theater, which differentiated with Brecht, and then evolved with Artaud to a higher level as previously pointed out.

2.1.4. Freed from chains: In-Yer Face

Two influential revolts remain prominently within the landscape of 20th and 21st-century theatre for their radical departures from traditional norms: Absurdism as stated earlier and In-Yer-Face Theatre. While both movements have an attitude to pushing boundaries and challenging conventions, they differ in their stylistic approaches, thematic preoccupations, and the socio-political contexts that shaped them. Since traditional theater's authority is no longer valid, numerous facets, from content to technique, were added to theater after 1950. The emerging stage, which became brutal with Antonin Artaud, continued the overflowing or excess with Howard Barker's Catastrophic theater, became the most vital form of British theater at the end of the 20th century. The desire of emerging authors to bring to the stage a diseased system and its sick people has united as part of a fundamentally new common structure. In-Yer Face, referred to as Theater to Your Face, was introduced in 2001 by theater critic Aleks Sierz and included extreme theater manifestations from the 1990s. In Your Face: British Drama Today, which examines the latest British theater in great detail, sheds new light on various aspects, ranging from the language used by the young writers who can be referred to as this movement's contributors to the matters they deal with. Alex Sierz (2001) explains the title he offered with a dictionary reference as follows: *"The phrase 'in-your-face' is defined by the New Oxford English Dictionary (1998) as something 'blatantly aggressive or provocative, impossible to ignore or avoid''(p.4)*. In the same section, Aleks Sierz has referenced another dictionary to assess the etymology of the word and quoted it again: *The Collins English Dictionary(1998) adds the adjective 'confrontational'. The phrase originated in American sports journalism during the mid-seventies, and gradually seeped into more mainstream slang over the following decade(p.4).* However, apart from these, the most insightful description for In-yer-face theatre is once again provided by Aleks Sierz.

> *It implies that you are being forced to see something close up, that your personal space has been invaded. It suggests the crossing of normal boundaries. In short, it describes perfectly the kind of theatre that puts audiences in just such a situation(p.4).*

In Yer Face as the title implies, suggests a confrontation with its provocative and direct pattern as well as being an insecure force that you cannot ignore or escape. The disturbing In Yer Face unveils the primitive instincts of humanity and prevents the audience to

breathe in any respect. By pressuring and disturbing the audience, "*it forces audiences to react: either they feel like fleeing the building or they are suddenly convinced that it is the best thing they have ever seen*"(2001, p.5). The atmosphere is unexpectedly shocking until you become aware exactly what is going on, and it refrains from leaving the audience feeling alleviated with medication. Sierz also explained how theatre can be shocking referring some keywords such as broken taboos, electrifying subjects, facing unendurable private pain, visceral, extreme state of mind, atrocity(2001, p.7). The society, which is thought to be constructed from conscious individuals, concentrates on what is accepted, legal, and moral, and effectively ignores or denies all of its existing desires and behaviors. This -conscious- unawareness, however, would no longer be possible for In Yer Face Theatre since it penetrates the soul. Contrary to a didactic message, In Yer Face aims to give the audience an experience they have never had by inserting concepts that people are unaware of, escape, or reject into the audience through an abstract use of force. Such performance, which depicts all of the inner realities that individuals hesitate to face and embarrassed of expressing in their most visible form, portrays what is never mentioned rather than processing what is. As therefore, it is not misleading to refer to the practice as 'beyond theater' since it has a quality that transcends borders.

> *By the mid-90s, a divergent group of young writers had emerged whose plays addressed violence and sexuality in an unflinching manner, and many were produced by the Royal Court. Kane, along with Mark Ravenhill, Anthony Neilson, Martin McDonaugh, Joe Penhall, Jez Butterworth, and Judy Upton, were quickly dubbed by the press the New British Nihilists or New Brutalists(Urban, 2001, p.37).*

In Yer Face Theatre represents these outrageous and brutal young writers' orientation rather than their affiliation. Although it is not a tendency that can be referred to entirely as the theater of the 1990s, its first notable examples today can include theater works by Sarah Kane, Mark Ravenhill and Joe Penhall, which reveal all kinds of outbursts and create the effect of shake or shock. As David Lane (2010) stated "*their plays displayed a distinctly nihilistic attitude towards the world*"(p.18). Considering In-Yer-Face in terms of content and the works that appeal to this new writing, the most similar traits are as follows: Slang substitutes language, concepts such as love, affection, and sexuality lose their positive qualities and reveal their adverse, destructive, and disgusting dimensions, and 'paraphilia' or 'perversion' types, which refer to the suppression of a vital desire such as sexuality, are frequently seen and also the content such as undressing, making love,

and masturbating on stage shakes the accepted concept of morality. It is also worth pointing out that, due to its provocative and critical nature, it deliberately reveals what was then considered controversial concepts such as woman, black, homosexual, or other, where grand narratives such as truth are destroyed, religion, god, and other sacred concepts are disrespected, as well as opposes human intolerance. It is preciser to describe the situation as a punch that simulates a fist but is cruel enough to strike nerves, destroys the comfort zone, and forces people to leave it. The most distinctive aspect of In-Yer-Face Theatre is its unapologetically plainly use of explicit content to shake audiences out of their complacency.Visual scenes in works like Sarah Kane's *Blasted* and Mark Ravenhill's *Shopping and F***ing* provoke an intense and immediate response. Also, Lane (2010) reinforced these examples by referencing:

> *Aggressive and eye-catching tactics were employed both within the work, as evidenced by Kane, and in how it was branded: titles such as Shopping and F***ing and Some Explicit Polaroids by Mark Ravenhill, Penetrator and The Censor by Anthony Neilson all helped to set the tone. The form of the work had its own characteristics too, offering a stylish and streetwise theatrical language that not only embraced the visceral and experiential nature of live theatre, but also echoed attitudes found in the more provocative cultural influences of the time(p.25).*

The unrest resulting from World War II, anxiety about the future, shifting away from familial connections, losing family ties, increasing competition between individuals, the struggle to move up the class and be accepted by the new class, economic difficulties, and a greater desire to earn money put pressure on the individual during this period, forcing the people to do this. It isolated people in a competitive environment and caused social alienation. Besides, there were radical changes in class consciousness and reactions to the existing order began to emerge in society, particularly among young people dissatisfied with the new order and post-war conditions. The first of these was that young people, who opposed the class system and consumption-oriented social order, reacted with their clothing styles, lifestyles and music and alienated themselves from society by not seeing themselves as a part of the existing social order. Also, the playwrights tried to reflect the current society of their times. The bold interaction with contemporary social issues is central to In-Yer-Face Theatre. Playwrights confront issues such as violence, addiction, sexuality, and social degeneration. The content's explicitness becomes a form of social critique, shining a harsh light on the deeper sides of human behavior. Rather than avoiding difficult topics, In-Yer-Face practitioners use the stage to challenge the

status quo and start conversations about major social concerns. Considering some playwrights, Ravenhill dealt with the gap between economic and social classes in his plays. This reveals the difficulties and injustices experienced by the lower classes of society. On the other hand, Kane explored the horrors of war and social collapse in works such as *Blasted*. It was a call to confront and question society's most atrocious aspects.

2.1.5. Post-dramatic theatre in postmodern aesthetic

While postmodern drama tends to be defined according to specific criteria, it is actually problematic to use these two terms as substitutes. Postmodernism challenges the foundations of representation through drama by implying a rejection of its mimetic status. Therefore, using postmodern and drama at the same time appears to be oxymoronic. It is necessary to redefine the word with the title of Post-dramatic that serves as a new theatre understanding in the context of postmodernism. Dramatic structure was shattered by various formations and the last as well as the biggest strike occurred by the latest version of drama understanding. Limiting 90's theatre as just In-Yer-Face or simply categorizing it under this heading is insufficient for some playwrights. The dramatic tradition was indeed disregarded but for all playwrights to be classified under a unified standing, a more comprehensive understanding than the title In-Yer-Face was required: Post-dramatic Theatre, which is a concept that extends from the 1970s to the present which is dominantly embodied in theatre making and performance. To define the concept, there are numerous components including some questions such as what the aim of theatre is or there is any target to reach for through drama or not. Also, it is necessary to understand what the content and how it serves to convey. Begin with the overall description, Post-dramatic theatre is a breathtaking trend that occupies the last part of twentieth century and the rest of it. To count the features of that kind of drama or categorize it with some functions has been almost difficult since it is quite eclectical and experimental. In every stage, there is a huge possibility that it can deconstruct what is formed and brings a new formulation. Hans-Thies Lehmann, a German writer and theorist, introduced the term post-dramatic theater. Hans-Thies Lehmann's book *Postdramatic Theater* detailed and promoted this theater concept. By analyzing the basic principles, features, and staging practice of Post-drama, the present work has had a significant impact on the field of theater. The purpose was explained in the article that included the collaborative work by Lehmann and others as follows:

> *The book was written in and for a situation where the strong tradition of literary theatre, with dramatic narration as a norm, is still very much alive, and the predominant intention was to open people's minds and eyes to new and different ways of theatre practice(Lehmann, Jürs-Munby, Fuchs, 2008, p.14).*

In the same article, it is also stated that Lehmann did not coin the term postdrama, but rather adapted it from Richard Schechner(p.16). However, Fuchs claimed that Andrzej Wirth was the first who used this term by writing "*Lehmann's term postdramatic not his sole invention though he is responsible for its definition and elaboration, seemed to portend, if not exactly predict, the end of the dramatic form*"(Medenica, 2011, p.64). Beyond traditional dramatic structures, Hans-Thies Lehmann's phrase post-dramatic theater was used to indicate a transition in theater and was positioned to reflect a more collaborative, experiential, and innovative staging approach with the audience. As Jürs-Munby pointed out in the introduction of Lehmann's book (2006):

> *'Post' here is to be understood neither as an epochal category, nor simply as a chronological 'after' drama, a 'forgetting' of the dramatic 'past', but rather as a rupture and a beyond that continue to entertain relationships with drama and are in many ways an analysis and 'anamnesis' of drama(p.2).*

Lehmann compiled the scream in the theater after the 1970s in his book, which illustrates what he intends to hypothesize with post-drama in a panoramic framework. In the preliminaries of the book, Lehmann provided the groundwork for the concept of post-dramatic theater. It focuses on the reasons for the emergence of this new theater method, which departs from traditional dramatic forms. "*The take off' towards a formation of postdramatic discourse in theatre can be described as a series of stages of self-reflection, decomposition and separation of the elements of dramatic theatre*"(Lehmann, p.48). This notion of theater, according to Lehmann, is an aesthetic that transcends beyond dramatic structures, is built on contact with the audience, and emphasizes visual and staging technique. Stagecraft, visuality, and connection with the audience are all highlighted. It emphasizes on the value of performance in such a setting as well as critique of traditional theatrical storytelling. According to Lehmann, the dramatic text was the focus of conventional dramatic frameworks, and theater practice is constructed around this text. Post-dramatic theater, on the other hand, minimizes reliance on dramatic text and emphasizes staging practice, the power of performance, and presentation. A distinction forms the basis for the post-dramatic interpretation of theatre at this juncture: drama, a

literary work that is related to literature and whose audience is the reader and theatre, based on staging and performance and whose audience is the spectator or viewer. Post-dramatic theater can fragment, modify or not use the text at all, as opposed to traditional theater, which focuses on a certain narrative or plot. The audience is presented with a visual and emotional spectrum consisting of various perspectives and experiences. "*The dehierarchization of theatrical means"(Lehmann, 2006, p.86)* is the fulcrum of this understanding which was presented under the title *parataxis.* The term was applied to express that the text is no longer at its peak and to describe the realization that all theatrical aspects have their own meaning independent of how they relate to one another. Therefore, the text is seen as a tool that can be used when necessary. Text can support or complement staging practice, but it is not the center of a performance on its own. Visual and bodily language replaces text in post-dramatic theater. Performance, stage design, expressions of the face, gestures and body movements all play crucial functions in transmitting the idea to the audience. This emphasizes an understanding of aesthetics, which allows for the expression of substantial implications without the need of dramatic text. By means of these aspects, Lehmann stated: "*the spectator of post-dramatic theatre is not prompted to process the perceived instantaneously but to postpone the production of meaning (semiosis) and to store the sensory impressions with evenly hovering attention"(p.87).* This explanation can be extended to another component: the audience, which is compelled to be independent of the text, experiences another post-dramatic understanding, which is presented as simultaneity, with all the signs being loaded onto the audience at the same time. With its variation, post-dramatic theater creates an unpredictable perception: either the audience is exposed to an abundance of signs causing confusion, or the audience is left with a meaning gap with barely any signs, enabling them to stimulate their imagination which regards audience as a participant. Terming as "*dialectic of plethora and deprivation, plenitude and emptiness"(Lehmann, p.89),* through the number of signs and the overload presented with equal consideration, this approach prevents the audience from establishing a single interpretation. According to Lehmann, the term sign system heap in post-dramatic theater refers to the coming together of symbols and representations on the stage in a more complex and layered way, unlike traditional dramatic structures. The text is usually the main source of signs in traditional theatre, however in post-dramatic theatre, the sign heap is enriched independently of the text. Staging, performance, and visual components all serve as vital cues that supplement

or extend the text. By referencing Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, Lehmann stated the hedge of synthesis in theatre:

> *Theatre, too, has developed a multitude of rhizomatic connections of heterogeneous elements. The division of stage time into minimal sequences, quasi-filmic 'takes', already indirectly multiplies the data for perception, because, in terms of perception psychology, a mass of unconnected elements is estimated to be larger than the same number of elements arranged in a coherent order(p.90).*

Sound is a further substantial aspect of post-dramatic theater. Musicality refers to the incorporation of musical elements, rhythms, and structures into the theatrical performance, as it frequently explores nonverbal forms of expression, and musicality is an effective means for conveying emotions, moods, and atmospheres without relying purely on words. Music, soundscapes, and rhythmic patterns are all able to be utilized in this way. Some post-dramatic productions include live music, musicians, or interactive components in which the performers engage in musical instruments during the performance. It blurs the distinctions between artistic mediums and lends a sense of intimacy to the performance. "*It is post-dramatic not only through the absence of drama but especially through the emphasized autonomy of musical, spatial and theatrical levels of creation*"(Lehmann, p.111). Scenography and visual dramaturgy collaborate in post-dramatic theatre to produce an extensive, non-linear, and highly intense atmosphere. They assist to achieve the broader goal of defying theatrical conventions through allowing the audience to participate with the performance on a sensory and intellectual level that reaches beyond traditional storytelling.

> *Scenography, naming a theatre of complex visuality, presents itself to the contemplating gaze like a text, a scenic poem, in which the human body is a metaphor, its flow of movement in a complex metaphorical sense an inscription, a 'writing 'and not 'dancing'(Lehmann, p.94).*

Post-dramatic scenography goes beyond static set designs. It embraces dynamic spatial exploration, challenging traditional notions of stage space. Sets may be fluid, interactive, or non-traditional, emphasizing the visual impact on the audience. Visual dramaturgy in post-drama often aligns with non-linear and fragmented narratives. Visual elements, including lighting, set design, and symbolic imagery, contribute to the creation of meaning, sometimes in the absence of a traditional plot structure. Lehmann, who applies the terms warmth and coldness to define emotional and dramatic environment, supports

for a post-dramatic theater technique that deviates from traditional dramatic forms and concentrates on the direct transfer of emotion and atmosphere to the audience. On the other hand, physicality in Lehmann's theatre understanding emphasizes the performers' concrete presence and the fluidity of movement serves to the broader aesthetic and narrative without depending on an organized script. The body which is a primary means of expression, is transformed into a vibrant entity that actively participates in the building of content and state of mind, rather than just a device for delivering sentences. "*As the body no longer demonstrates anything but itself*" according to Lehmann, "*the body becomes the only subject matter*"(p.96). Lehmann's book embodies a major turn in theater, integrating staging approach and visual elements at its core. Such understanding resulted in an instinctual theatrical approach in which the audience no longer acts as a bystander but actively participates in the experience on stage. Post-dramatic theater adopts a multifaceted strategy to theater by pushing the conventional boundaries of the genre and introducing a new dimension to the performing arts. The change in emphasis is regarded as a turning point in the flourishing of theater art, and it continues to inspire contemporary artistic productions. Post-dramatic theatre, in a postmodern vein, promotes disintegration as well as deconstructing traditional narration mechanisms and relying on multiple components. Such an approach is consistent with the postmodern commitment to pluralism and the collapse of hierarchical phases. The outgoing subversion of theatrical norms within post-dramatic works demonstrates a postmodern awareness. The blurring of genres, self-aware performances, and incorporation of common objects call into question prevailing norms, expressing a postmodern attitude of play and the paradox. *"A modernist tries to forge a new style, freed from historical convention"*(Arens, 1991, p.19). However, Arens has added that this situation is different for postmodernists as follows: "*For a postmodernist, any style necessarily is parody or pastiche since there is no 'real history 'and since the 'signifying chain' of history has broken down its ideological weight"*(p.19).

Postmodern drama as stated above challenges and deconstructs grand narratives or universal doctrines that base conventional drama and society. It calls into question the notion of a single, universally accepted truth or semantics. It is often characterized by skepticism toward authoritative institutions and structures such as government, religion, science. Those in positions of power frequently influence the creation and transmission of information, which is often used to reinforce their authority. Deconstruction of

established cultural and historical narratives enables to reevaluate how history is created by power structures. "*Where there is power, there is resistance*"*(Foucault, 1978, p.95)*. This resistance manifests itself in postmodern drama by including the marginalized, the excluded, or the minority. The exploration of local and micro-histories aims to challenge traditional power structures, questions normative narratives, and highlights the diversity of human experience which is a postmodern facet of being eclectic. Postmodern drama often features anti-heroes, characters who do not fit the traditional mold of heroic protagonists. They may have complex moralities, exhibit flaws, and challenge audience expectations as well as reflecting the idea that identity is not fixed or unified as in a grasp that extends from the earlier understanding of theater to Post-drama. Hoffmeister (1987) claims that the conventional drama paradigm is no longer valid and provides her postmodernist perspective on character based on the following:

> *Characters, who developed originally from the Greek concept of hero, have always had a certain inconsistency in their makeup; their traits are barely sketched. They are not discrete, independent subjects as individuals in literature tend to be. The individual, on the other hand, is capable of identity crises and feels antagonism toward society (p.425).*

These plays avoid a crucial distinction by presenting us with a semblance of individuality according to Hoffmeister. In each instance, the audience expects a prominent central character with personal experiences and a defined social setting. However, the characters' experiences gradually lose coherence, plotines fade, leaving the audience facing an "expressionless statue"(p.425).

The evolution from modern drama to postmodern and post-dramatic theatre marks a transformative journey in the realm of dramatic arts. This evolution represents not only changes in the practice of art, but also the postmodern era's broader social conflicts and uncertainties. The journey concludes with the post-dramatic horizon. This journey through dramatic epochs underscores not only the resilience of theatre as an art form but its ability to adapt, question, and mirror the complexities of the human experience. The emphasis on immediacy, physicality, and the demolition of classic dramatic frameworks announces a new era in which the core concept of theatricality is rethought, inviting audiences to participate in a more fluid and intimate study of current existence in the post-dramatic landscape.

## 2.2.	Zygmunt Bauman and His Sociology

It is the ability to universalize that distinguishes the best sociology and Bauman's is a universal remedy to awaken the sleeping sociologist in all of us(Blackshaw, 2005, p.2).

In the constantly changing landscape of contemporary society, Zygmunt Bauman emerges as a prominent figure whose sociological insights have not only shaped the discourse on modernity but also challenged our fundamental understanding of social structures. Born in 1925 in Poznań, Poland, into a Polish-Jewish family, Zygmunt Bauman's life unfolded against the backdrop of World War II, shaping his early experiences and intellectual outlook and was marked by a commitment to understanding the complexities of contemporary society. Bauman's sociological legacy is marked by groundbreaking concepts such as *liquid modernity*, a term he coined to capture the fluid and changing nature of contemporary society. His exploration of globalization, individualization, and the consequences of modernity has left an indelible mark on sociological thought. As we navigate the complexities of the 21st century, Bauman's ideas remain a vital resource for understanding the fluid nature of our modern world. The childhood of Bauman was shaped by the complex and challenging historical events of the early 20th century as he grew up in a time marked by political upheavals, economic turmoil, and the rise of totalitarian regimes. The outbreak of World War II had a profound impact on Bauman's early life. As a young individual, he experienced the German invasion of Poland in 1939. During the war, he served in the Soviet-controlled Polish First Army, contributing to the Allied efforts against Nazi Germany. After World War II, Poland fell under Soviet influence, leading to the establishment of a Communist regime. Bauman, like many intellectuals of his generation, initially aligned himself with the Communist Party. As he witnessed the party's suppression of dissenting voices and the curtailment of academic freedoms, Bauman's commitment to open discourse clashed with the Party's authoritarian measures. Bauman's commitment to democratic socialism and human rights clashed with the Party's authoritarian direction, contributing to their ideological divergence. Bauman's political views began to shift, and he became increasingly critical of the repressive aspects of the Communist regime. His dissenting views and support for student protests in 1968 marked a turning point in his life. Bauman's

open support for the student protests and his vocal dissent against the Party's policies led to his expulsion from the Communist Party in 1968. This formal break marked the end of his affiliation with the party, reflecting irreconcilable differences in their political stances. Da Silva (2017) stated that after losing his teaching position at the University of Warsaw, Bauman was forced to leave Poland with thousands of Polish Jews and his family decided to move to Israel, where they arrived in early 1969(p.223). Bauman held various academic positions during his career, including posts at Tel Aviv University and the University of Haifa. His experiences in Israel contributed to the development of his sociological theories, laying the groundwork for his later contributions. Da Silva later explained the next chapter of Bauman's life: "*Their stay in Israel, however, will not last. After lecturing at university of Tel Aviv and Haifa from 1969 to 1971, Bauman and his family decided and resettle once again. The port of call now is Britain*"(2017, p.223). Bauman later moved to the United Kingdom, where he held positions at the University of Leeds and later at the University of Warwick. His time in the UK was marked by prolific academic output and the consolidation of his reputation as a leading sociologist. Bauman's major contributions to sociology emerged during his time in the UK. He developed the concept of liquid modernity, exploring the fluid and uncertain nature of contemporary society. This concept, along with his other works, had a profound impact on sociological thought. Bauman continued to explore the consequences of globalization, individualization, and the fluid nature of contemporary society until his death in 2017. His writings engaged with a wide range of topics, from consumer culture to ethics, providing a comprehensive understanding of the complexities of the modern world. As Blackshaw stated: "*Reading Bauman is like finding out that someone has finally started building a new stretch of motorway running from the remnants of orthodox sociology after its drawn out but hesitant dabble with postmodernism*"(2005, p.22).

2.2.1. Baumanian postmodernism and liquid modernity

> *The likes of Zygmunt Bauman will never be found in the world of academia again. He is one of that generation of Central and Eastern European intellectuals who literally lived through the disasters of the twentieth century. He experienced what others only write about(Tester, 2004, p.1).*

Zygmunt Bauman's sociology is associated with a wide range of concepts, demonstrating his multidisciplinary approach and commitment to comprehending contemporary society's complex systems. Baumanian sociology is not merely just a theoretical discourse; it is a comprehensive investigation of the concerns regarding ethics of our globalized social dynamism. As Tester stated (2004): "*He wants to show that there is always an alternative because he always wants to recover human responsibility from the trap of the actual*"(p.23). From the individualization of responsibility to the shocking reality of consumer culture, Bauman's approach explores fundamental issues that influence our lives and societies. Bauman's most distinctive contribution to the understanding of modernity is the idea of liquid modernity. He characterized the modern era as marked by fluidity, where social structures, relationships, and identities are in constant flux. The term was explained as:

> *Fluidity is the quality of liquids and gases. What distinguishes both of them from solids, as the Encyclopaedia Britannica authoritatively informs us, is that they 'cannot sustain a tangential, or shearing, force when at rest' and so undergo 'a continuous change in shape when subjected to such a stress(Bauman, 2000. p.1).*

This fluidity contrasts with the solidity and stability traditionally associated with the 'solid' modernity of the past. He clarified the opposite nature of these modernities by stating "*while solids have clear spatial dimensions but neutralize the impact, and thus downgrade the significance, of time, fluids do not keep to any shape for long and are constantly ready to change*"(2000, p.2). However, the term Bauman refers to as liquid modernity is distinct to the relationship between modern and postmodern thought. Liquid modernity, which explains the deconstruction of modernism's solid society and its transformation into a postmodern individual, is thus neither modern nor postmodern in expression. There is a mismatch in this context between the original meaning of modern and its contemporary meaning later acquired. According to Bauman's Liquid Modernity

Revisitation (2012), "*forms of modern life may differ in quite a few respects – but what unites them all is precisely their fragility, temporariness, vulnerability and inclination to constant change*"(p.2). This results in a perplexed interpretation as: there is no limit to what is considered to be modern, and there is bound to be things that are more modern than what is considered modern. *"When Bauman said the modern life was characterized by its tendency to dissolv[e] everything that is solid, this was not a riddle but a well-known reference—he paraphrased Marx and Engels"*(Hugoson, 2019, p.50). The idea of a postmodern thing always being modern may seem paradoxical at first, but it can be understood through a philosophical exploration of the relationship between modernity and postmodernity. In postmodern thought, there is an acknowledgment of the fluidity and relativity of labels and categories. The distinction between modern and postmodern is not seen as a rigid binary but as a spectrum where elements of both coexist and intermingle. The simultaneity of being modern and postmodern signifies a rejection of strict categorizations and a recognition that cultural and intellectual evolution is not linear. This complex interweaving reflects the pluralistic and fluid nature of the contemporary cultural landscape. The mention is extended much further in the first section of the 2012 version of Bauman's Liquid Modernity. "*To 'be modern 'means to modernize – compulsively, obsessively; not so much just 'to be', let alone to keep its identity intact, but forever 'becoming', avoiding completion, staying underdefined*"(p.2). He continued underscoring the transitory nature of structures in modernity, where what is considered old-fashioned is swiftly replaced by new arrangements acknowledged as temporary. The continuous state of being *"post-something"*(p.2) reflects the ongoing evolution and adaptability inherent in modernity. The phrase "*until further notice*"(p.2) implies a constant openness to change and a recognition that nothing is static, aligning with the dynamic and ever-shifting character of modern societal structures.

Traditional modernity, or what Bauman refers to as solid modernity, implies stability, predictability, and fixed structures. In this context, institutions, social roles, and identities were relatively stable and enduring. Bauman's concept of liquid modernity represents a departure from solidity. In the liquid modern era, structures become fluid and unstable, leading to constant change and a lack of fixed reference points. Relationships, identities, and societal configurations are no longer solid but take on more transient, malleable forms. While modernity involves change, it is often seen as a more gradual and linear process. Institutions and social frameworks evolve over time, but the changes are

typically within a recognizable, enduring structure. The pace of change in liquid modernity is accelerated. *"When a melting 'solid modernity' began to run into its 'liquid' successor; their literary practice addresses the anxieties of changing social, economic, and class relations"*(Windle, 2020, p.79). Bauman describes it as a constant, rapid flow of transformations, where individuals and societies must navigate an ever-changing landscape. The speed and unpredictability of change characterize the liquid modern era as Bauman described all these as fluid and the way that they are described reinforced the situation. "*Fluids travel easily. They 'flow', 'spill', 'run out', 'splash', 'pour over', 'leak', 'flood', 'spray', 'drip', 'seep', 'ooze'; unlike solids, they are not easily stopped"*(2000, p.2). In solid modernity, individuals were often integrated into stable social structures, and collective identities played a significant role. There was a sense of belonging to communities, institutions, and societal norms. Individuals often identified with predefined roles based on gender, class, or profession. These roles provided a framework for understanding one's place in society. The notion that identities frequently emerge along a predefined path, which contributed to a coherent narrative of social and individual growth. However, Bauman's perspective on identity in Liquid Modernity contrasts with traditional modern identity's more fixed and definite nature. The transition to liquid modernity brought with fluidity, individualization, and a plethora of identities, reflecting the dynamic and continually evolving aspect of modern existence.

> *Whenever we speak of identity, there is at the back of our minds a faint image of harmony, logic, consistency: all those things which the flow of our experience seems - to our perpetual despair - so grossly and abominably to lack. The search for identity is the ongoing struggle to arrest or slow down the flow, to solidify the fluid, to give form to the formless (2000, p.82-83).*

Bauman conveyed the idea that there is a constant struggle to deny or conceal the profound fluidity that exists just beneath the superficial structure of forms, such as societal norms or identities. People often attempt to turn away from the complexities and uncertainties that they cannot fully comprehend. However, Bauman argued that rather than impeding or halting this fluidity, identities are comparable to crusty spots forming repeatedly on the surface of "*volcanic lava"*(2000, p.82-83). These superficial identities harden momentarily but continuously melt and dissolve before they have the chance to solidify(2000, p.82-83). Bauman's emphasis on individualization underlines the developing significance of autonomy in the building process of identity. Individuals in liquid modernity are increasingly charged with the responsibility of defining their own

identities. As a result of the absence of set system of society, the drive for independence becomes enabling and intimidating. Describing as "*a holy war of attrition*"(2000, p.25) and once fixed to preset roles, modern identity has been regarded as an empty stage for self-expression and personal inquiry. The understanding has also been outlined by Tester (2004) as follows: "*Liquid modernity is the condition of the emergence of an individualised society. What the idea of 'individualization' carries is the emancipation of the individual from the ascribed, inherited and inborn determination of his or her social character*"(p.175). The following emphasis can also be added, which is related to liquid modernity:

> *Liquid modernity is episodic and contingent and life's essential incompleteness doesn't merely invite its denizens to fill its gaps; it compels them to do so. It is no wonder men and women these days are always on the look out for guides to living – those institutions of lifelong consumer education(Bauman, 2004, p.66)*

Bauman's work, particularly his concept of liquid modernity, addressed the complex dynamics and challenges of the postmodern era. However, even if modern and postmodern are overcome, another duo emerges. Bauman clarified in his understanding of semantics that postmodernity and postmodernism refer to different contends. Jacobsen & Poder (2008) expressed the matter by referencing Bauman as follows:

> *In my semantics, 'postmodernity 'stood for a kind of society (or, more to the point, a kind of human condition); while 'postmodernism 'stood for a worldview- cum-cognitive strategy that may (but need not) arise from the 'postmodern condition '(much like in the case of another conceptual couple: 'modernity 'and 'modernism(p.238).*

Like any understanding, postmodernism denotes a trend, a hypothetical emergence, or an ideologization. Postmodernity, on the other hand, denotes a phenomenon. While postmodernism embraces subjectivity, ambiguity, and the idea that there are multiple truths, postmodernity is marked by a sense of fragmentation and uncertainty which means that with the breakdown of traditional structures and the loss of collective identities, individuals are left to navigate an increasingly complex and diverse world. As stated above, postmodernism refers to a simply movement while postmodernity refers to the historical and social context in which postmodernism emerged. Although postmodernism and postmodernity are related, they are not synonymous as the first is a response to postmodernity, challenging the dominant narratives and structures of the era.

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Postmodernism demands a methodical critique of modernity that is sophisticated or beyond modern, since postmodernity demands anonymity and meditation, which is ideal. Due to this fact, the majority of postmodernist theorists are reluctant to be classified under this general term because being classified as 'something 'opposes the ontology of postmodernity. In the same way, Bauman was also often hesitant to be certainly labeled as a postmodernist. His reluctance to be categorized as a postmodernist is rooted in his critique of the simplification and homogenization that can accompany such classifications. He emphasizes the diversity and fluidity of contemporary society, arguing that the term 'postmodernity 'fails to capture the full range of experiences and dynamics at play in the modern world. It is essential to note that Bauman's reservations about being labeled a postmodernist do not stem from a refusal to engage with the themes associated with postmodernity. On the contrary, his work deals with the implications of postmodernity at length, addressing issues such as liquid modernity, consumerism, globalization, and the erosion of traditional social structures. However, Bauman's approach is characterized by a critical lens that seeks to dissolve the multifaceted nature of these phenomena, rather than simply embracing them as emblematic of a postmodern condition. Blackshaw (2005) implied that it would be misleading to label Bauman as a postmodernist: "*The idea that Bauman is a postmodernist is a misconception made most particularly in three camps*"(p.5). Blackshaw's firm stance on this issue can be summarized as follows: It is crucial for readers to recognize that Bauman is not a postmodernist in the negative sense, and he has never identified as such. Despite casting a wide net in exploring various avenues of sociology, Bauman has been significantly influenced by thinkers labeled as postmodern, yet this doesn't categorize his own perspective as strictly postmodern. Three primary reasons for this misconception lie in hasty dismissals, difficulties in understanding Bauman's work, and misrepresentations resulting from inadequate or selective readings(p.5-6).

For a sociologist who observes the shift from modernity to postmodernity as a progression toward a society with fluid, complex and diverse traits, categorizing it as either modernist or postmodernist would hinder understanding as Blackshaw (2005) outlined: "*There is a move in Bauman*'*s sociology which has the effect of a parallax; the perspective shifts from modernist to postmodernist – thereafter solid modernist to liquid modernist*"(p.26). Connecting Bauman's rejection of strict postmodernist categorization with his ethics

involves recognizing his view that while traditional postmodernism rejects grand theories and universal truths, it does not reject the need for ethics or meaningful social action. Bauman's approach to postmodern ethics based on the understanding that in a highly complex and fluid social landscape, ethical responsibility requires ongoing negotiation, empathy, and a commitment to human dignity, notwithstanding the absence of fixed moral frameworks. Bauman studied ethics, examining how the changing socioeconomic scene impacts our moral compass. By examining how liquid modernity and postmodernism intersect in the realm of ethics, it is necessary to provide a particular understanding of the complex and evolving nature of moral considerations in our contemporary, rapidly changing world. Bauman argued that in the postmodern era, the fluid nature of social relationships and the rapid changes brought about by globalization have destabilized the foundations of moral values. In this context, ethical principles that were once considered universal and fixed are now subject to constant renegotiation. Bauman suggested that postmodern ethics requires individuals to navigate a world characterized by uncertainty, ambiguity, and constant change. This poses significant challenges in terms of establishing a stable moral compass. The postmodern ethic, therefore, necessitates a reevaluation of our understanding of morality and the development of new frameworks that can accommodate the complexities of contemporary society. Bauman's perspective on postmodern ethics is rooted in his sociological theories, particularly his concept of liquid modernity. To fully grasp the implications of postmodern ethics, it is essential to explore Bauman's critique of modernity and his concept of liquid modernity as stated above. The relationship between postmodern ethics and liquid modernity is deeply intertwined. Bauman argued that the fluid nature of modern life has profound implications for our understanding of morality and ethical values. In a world where everything is in a constant state of flux, traditional moral frameworks become inadequate. The postmodern ethic, therefore, necessitates a shift from fixed and universal moral principles to a more flexible and context-dependent approach. Bauman suggested that ethical judgments in the postmodern era should take into account the specific circumstances and fluid dynamics of each situation. This requires individuals to engage in ongoing reflection and negotiation, constantly reevaluating their ethical choices in light of changing circumstances. The connection between postmodern ethics and liquid modernity is also complex and multifaceted. On one hand, the fluidity of modern life challenges traditional moral frameworks and calls

for a more nuanced and context-sensitive approach. On the other hand, the postmodern ethic itself is shaped by the fluid nature of contemporary society, as individuals navigate the ever-changing social landscape in search of moral guidance. He argued that the shifting social landscape has profound implications for our moral compass, calling into question traditional notions of right and wrong. In the postmodern era, Bauman suggested that morality becomes a personal and individualized matter. With the breakdown of traditional moral frameworks, individuals are left to navigate the complexities of modern life on their own. This individualization of morality, however, comes with its own set of challenges. One implication of Bauman's postmodern ethic is the need for ongoing reflection and negotiation. In a fluid and changing world, ethical judgments cannot be made once and for all. Instead, individuals must engage in constant dialogue and self-reflection, reevaluating their ethical choices in light of new information and changing circumstances. Another implication of Bauman's postmodern ethic is the importance of empathy and understanding. In a world characterized by diversity and difference, it is crucial to recognize and respect the perspectives and experiences of others. Bauman suggested that a postmodern ethic should be inclusive and embrace the multiplicity of voices and values that exist in contemporary society. Postmodern ethics questioned the assumption that human ethical conduct could be reached through laws or external spiritual influences, claiming that this was not particularly ethics. It is insufficient to discuss morality when it comes to decisions that individuals make using only their own free will and independent reason, without any outside influences. He contended that morality can be formed by individuals making their own decisions and accepting responsibility for the consequences of those decisions, and that reducing morality to established and stereotyped norms will not produce positive results. There are differing opinions on what constitutes morally acceptable behavior for humans and how to attain it. Bauman explained it as "*an act is moral in as far as it is an uncalculated, natural, spontaneous and mostly unreflected-upon manifestation of humanity*"(2008, p.105). The further comment about morality can be observed as attached to the same page:

> *A moral act does not 'serve 'any 'purpose 'and most surely is not guided by the expectation of profit, comfort, notoriety, ego-boosting, public applause or any other kind of self-promotion. Though it is true that 'objectively good – ' helpful and useful – deeds have been performed time and again out of the actor's calculation of gain(2008, p.105).*

Modernism, on the other hand, identified human beings as morally ambiguous and unreliable from beginning to end and turned to laws to overcome this, arguing that in a fully rational society where pure reason is active, the ambiguous human being would be saved from this situation through laws. From the outset, modernism viewed humans as ambiguous, morally erratic, and untrustworthy. It attempted to address these issues by enacting laws that would establish a rational society based solely on reason. People have been standardized by modernism's ethical understanding, which also has regulations. Bauman claimed that the application of these laws constrained people, restricted their capacity for morality, and resulted in detrimental, immoral situations. Therefore, modernism's pledges of delivering a life free from ambiguity and prejudice have not proven to be fruitful, as the outcomes have not been favorable. Universal values such as freedom, equality, sacrifice, and unity, which modernity attempted to introduce as a radical rebellion against the discriminatory political and social order, were nothing more than principled good values that no one could argue against, fell short of their promises, and created new problems. While topical concepts like modernism, postmodernism, modernity, and postmodernity have been attempted to be explained above, Bauman's explanation below strengthens this argument.

> *Modernity has not vanished but been transformed. To talk about such a transformation one needs both a conception of the modern in general and more specific conceptions of different epochs of modernity. The modern in general should not be delimited from the postmodern but from the traditional. (Jacobsen&Poder, p.176-177).*

Jacobsen & Poder also implied that the collapse of society founded on accepted—or even unquestionable—understandings, institutions, and knowledge is modernity. Modernity has caused communities to arise that have realized some foundations are absent; in other words, it has disturbed the growth of human existence(p.176-177).

The eventual claim is that Bauman has made significant and broad contributions to the field of sociology. His analysis and determination on postmodern ethics and liquid modernity has had a significant influence on how we perceive contemporary society and the problems it confronts. Bauman's insightful revelation is a profound reminder of the fluctuation and flexibility that define the postmodern human experience. It compels us to embrace modernity's fragmented, dynamic nature, encouraging us to abandon the pursuit of unity in favor of navigating the multidirectional, uncertain terrain with flexibility,

empathy, and significant admiration for the intricate fabric of constantly shifting human existence. "*What has been cut apart cannot be glued back together. Abandon all hope of totality, future as well as past, you who enter the world of fluid modernity*"(Bauman, 2000, p.22). The metaphor of things being irreversibly cut apart and the futility of attempting to restore wholeness speaks to the fundamental shifts and fractures that have permeated the fabric of our social, political, and cultural institutions. It calls into question the very notion of totality and stability, urging us to acknowledge the intrinsic fluidity and impermanence that define our modern age.

2.2.2. Society in limbo and further concepts

In a world characterized by constant change and uncertainty, Zygmunt Bauman's concept of the liquid modern society offers a compelling perspective on the challenges we face in the postmodern era. Bauman suggested that conventional structure of social organization has become fluid and unstable, leaving individuals and communities in a state of limbo. In the Prophet of Postmodernity (1999), the situation has been described as "*The everyday world of the postmodern habitat is episodic, haphazard, inconsistent and contingent. What seems 'true' today may seem 'false' tomorrow*"(p.158). This notion of a liquid society reflects the rapidity with which everything around us seems to shift and reshape. By examining the social shifts brought about by globalization, consumerism and technology, it is possible to explore the opportunities and obstacles that emerge as a result of living in a liquid modern world. Living in a liquid modern society presents individuals with a myriad of challenges. One of the primary difficulties lies in navigating the uncertainty and constant change that characterizes the postmodern era. Smith (1999) supports that by referencing Bauman as follows: "*The culture of postmodernity, in Bauman's view, is drenched with anxiety. People feel ambivalent about themselves and the world they live in. They try not to think or care too much. They are uncertain about the present and lack trust in the future*"(p.25). Traditional notions of stability and predictability have been replaced by a sense of impermanence and flux, leaving individuals feeling depressed. Furthermore, the erosion of traditional social structures and institutions means that individuals must continually adapt to new social contexts and relationships. This constant need for adaptation can be mentally and emotionally exhausting, as individuals are often required to reinvent themselves to fit into constantly changing social dynamics. Another challenge individuals face in a liquid modern society

is the pressure to conform to social expectations while simultaneously striving for individuality. The emphasis on personal choice and freedom can be overwhelming, as individuals are bombarded with options and possibilities. This paradoxical situation can lead to decision paralysis and a sense of dissatisfaction with one's choices. Additionally, the erosion of strong social bonds and the rise of individualism can contribute to feelings of loneliness and isolation. The lack of stable community structures and the emphasis on self-reliance can leave individuals feeling disconnected from others and yearning for a sense of belonging. The idea suggests that social norms and structures no longer provide a solid foundation on which individuals can rely. Instead, they find themselves suspended in a perpetual state of flux, unsure of where they belong or how to navigate the complexities of modern life. "*Postmodern culture seems doomed to remain disorderly, to wit plural, rhizomatically growing, devoid of direction*"(Bauman, 1992, p.35). In a postmodern society, adaptability and flexibility are crucial for navigating the challenges and uncertainties that arise. The ability to quickly adjust to changing circumstances and embrace new opportunities is essential for personal and societal growth. Adaptability in a liquid modern society involves being open to change and willing to let go of outdated beliefs and practices. It requires individuals to constantly reassess their values and priorities and be willing to make adjustments accordingly. This mindset of adaptability allows individuals to thrive in a rapidly changing world and seize opportunities as they arise. Flexibility, on the other hand, involves being able to navigate diverse social contexts and engage with individuals from different backgrounds and perspectives. In a liquid modern society, individuals must be able to connect with others and build meaningful relationships despite the transient nature of social interactions. This flexibility allows for the creation of new social bonds and the cultivation of a sense of belonging in a changing social landscape.

2.2.3. Globalization in a liquid society

In a rapidly changing world, the concept of globalization has become increasingly prominent. As Bauman revealed, globalization is not just a phenomenon defined by economic integration or technological advancements, but rather a complex and multifaceted process that encircles various aspects of our daily lives. Bauman addressed the current widespread use of the term globalization in a critical manner. He suggested that it has become a popular buzzword, losing its original meaning and significance.

Bauman implied that globalization has transformed into a kind of password or charm that is thought to grant access to all the secrets and opportunities of our time and beyond. *"Globalization is on everybody's lips; a fad word fast turning into a shibboleth, a magic incantation, a pass-key meant to unlock the gates to all present and future mysteries"*(1998, p.1). The critique by Bauman reflects his deeper concern about how the term may be overused and misinterpreted to the point that it loses its substance and true implications. Bauman, therefore, provided a fresh perspective on the subject, exploring its social, political, and cultural implications. Bauman's analysis of globalization begins with his concept of liquid modernity. According to Bauman, the world we live in today is characterized by a sense of constant change. He emphasized the social, political, and cultural dimensions of globalization, arguing that it is not just about the flow of goods and services, but also about the flow of ideas, information and people. For Bauman, globalization is a process that reshapes the social fabric, blurring boundaries and expanding our horizons. While acknowledging the benefits of globalization, like higher levels of interdependence and the possibility of cross-cultural exchange, Bauman also criticized some of its drawbacks. *"Globalization divides as much as it unites; it divides as it unites – the causes of division being identical with those which promote the uniformity of the globe"(1992, p.2).* He claimed that globalization has led to the erosion of national boundaries and the loss of local identities. In a globalized world, Bauman contended that power is concentrated in the hands of a few, leading to social inequalities and the exclusion of marginalized groups.

> *And yet the effects of that new condition are radically unequal. Some of us become fully and truly 'global'; some are fixed in their 'locality – 'a predicament neither pleasurable nor endurable in the world in which the 'globals 'set the tone and compose the rules of the life-game(1992, p.2).*

The argument emphasizes the impact of globalization on power and resource redistribution, revealing how it may worsen disparities and excluding dynamics on a global scale. Bauman appears to be highlighting the implications of this power concentration for marginalized or disadvantaged individuals and communities in the context of globalization. He argued that globalization has created a homogenized global culture, where local traditions and values are being replaced by a standardized consumer culture. Describing as *"the most racially, ethnically and class-wise segregated, homogeneous local communities"*(1998, p.47), Bauman highlighted concerns about the

erosion of diverse cultural traditions, practices, and identities as a result of global interconnectedness. This shift towards consumerism and individualism, according to Bauman, has profound implications for social cohesion and the sense of community. He also highlighted the need to preserve cultural diversity and promote dialogue between different cultures in order to counteract the homogenizing effects of globalization and challenges us to question the assumptions and consequences of globalization, urging us to consider its impact on social justice and human rights. Bauman's analysis of globalization also addresses the issue of inequality and social exclusion. He argues that globalization has intensified existing social inequalities, creating a stark division between the global elite and the rest of the population by referencing John Kavanagh: *"In fact, globalization is a paradox: while it is very beneficial to a very few, it leaves out or marginalizes two-thirds"*(1992, p.71). He also revealed that the ultra-rich now have the chance to make money more quickly because to globalization. These people speculated more effectively and moved significant sums of money across the globe very fast by using cutting-edge technologies. However, the lives of the underprivileged around the world remain unmodified by technology(p.71). Bauman's observation underscores the influence of globalization in reshaping financial systems and the unequal distribution of wealth, reflecting on the impact of these developments on global socioeconomic structures. Also he added the unequal distribution of wealth and resources as well as the increasing precarity of work in a globalized economy. He called for a reevaluation of our economic systems and the development of alternative models that prioritize social justice and inclusivity. Defining the industries as a result of globalization as "*geared increasingly to the production of attractions and temptations"(1998, p.78),* Bauman explained the impact of globalization on the economy as follows: "*Globalization drags economies toward the production of the ephemeral, the volatile (through a massive and universal reduction of the life- span of products and services) and of the precarious (temporary, flexible and part-time jobs)"(1998, p.78).* Globalization facilitates the exchange of cultural elements, leading to increased hybridity as diverse cultural practices and traditions interact and influence one another. When hybridity is analyzed; it refers to the blending, mixing, or merging of different cultural elements to form new, often unique, identities, practices, or products while cultural hybridity can be seen in the fusion of diverse cultural practices, traditions, and beliefs, resulting from interactions between different ethnic, national, or religious groups. People, especially in multicultural societies,

often develop hybrid identities that combine elements from various cultural backgrounds. The connection between hybridity and globalization lies in the interplay of diverse cultural, social, and economic elements on a global scale. Globalization, with its facilitation of interdependence among nations and cultures, serves as a catalyst for hybridity. It fosters the exchange and interaction of cultural practices, traditions, and beliefs, leading to the emergence of hybrid identities and cultural forms. This phenomenon is evident in the fusion of culinary traditions, the evolution of mixed languages, and the hybridization of fashion and art. Through processes of migration, technological advancements, and media dissemination, globalization not only enables the diffusion of cultural elements but also encourages their blending and reshaping to form new, dynamic expressions. Thus, globalization not only alleges the hybridization of cultural practices but also contributes to the creation of innovative and unique cultural products and identities in our interconnected world.

> *The contemporary world is, rather, a site where cultures (this plural form is itself a postmodern symptom!) coexist alongside each other, resisting ordering along axiological or temporal axes. Rather than appearing as a transitory stage in the as-yet-unfinished process of civilizing, their coexistence seems to be a permanent feature of the world, with no authority in sight aspiring to an ecumenical, universal role(Bauman, 1992, p.35).*

Bauman is expressing the idea that in today's world, various cultures exist alongside each other without a single overarching authority attempting to impose a universal order. He suggests that this coexistence is not merely a temporary stage in the progression of civilization but rather a permanent characteristic of the world. The plural form of cultures itself, according to Bauman, reflects this postmodern condition, resisting categorization along hierarchical or temporal lines.

2.2.4. Consumerism as a facet of postmodern condition

Zygmunt Bauman invites us to travel through time and witness a transformative moment when the ordinary act of consumption evolved into a destructive force that shaped the essence of existence. Imagining a world millennia ago in which the simple act of buying and consuming goods took an immense turn, evolving into a phenomenon so profound that it was dubbed a revolution. According to Bauman (2007), this shift occurred millennia later and marked a moment when consumption became not only important but even central to the lives of the majority, essentially defining the purpose of existence for

many and this transition from basic consumption to a more intricate and pervasive consumerism reflects a transformation in the way people engage with goods and desires(p.26). Bauman explored the influence of consumerism on society and the dilemmas it generates. With the idea of a significant turning point, referred to as a consumerist revolution, Bauman depicted the evolution from mere consumption to the more complex concept of consumerism. Consumer society, as described by Bauman, is characterized by the constant desire for acquisition and consumption. He stated that "*Ours is a consumer society*"(2004b, p.23). We all understand what it implies to be a 'consumer'. A consumer is a person who consumes things, which means eating, wearing, playing with, and subsequently pleasing one's demands or desires. According to Bauman, considering money, in our part of the world, is typically the "mediator" between desire and delight, being a consumer requires obtaining most things that are typically meant to be consumed through purchasing, paying for, and more., thereby making them the private property of a person and prohibiting others from using them without that individual's permission(2004b, p.23). In this society, individuals are defined by their ability to consume. The market-driven economy is based on the never-ending cycle of production and consumption, where new goods and fashions are always being introduced to satisfy our needs. People all over the world are being drawn into the consumerism web, which has further intensified this culture of consumption with the rise of global capitalism. The consumer society is marked by the pursuit of instant gratification, where buying and owning material possessions is seen as a means to happiness and fulfillment. However, Bauman argued that this quest for happiness through consumption is ultimately futile, as the satisfaction derived from material possessions is short-lived and often leaves individuals feeling empty and unfulfilled.

> *Consumed goods should bring satisfaction immediately, requiring no delay, no protracted learning of skills and no lengthy groundwork; but the satisfaction should end the moment the time needed for their consumption is up, and that time ought to be reduced to a bare minimum (Bauman, 2004b, p.25).*

According to Bauman, the most effective way to achieve this reduction is when consumers are unable to sustain their attention or direct their desire toward any object for an extended period. It happens when they are restless, impulsive, and easily agitated, particularly susceptible to both excitement and a quick loss of interest(2004b, p.25). Such a way of thinking not only feeds the vicious cycle of excessive consumption and

environmental damage, but it likewise makes social inequality worse. Therefore, he claims that consumerism has transformed our identities, making us increasingly defined by what we own rather than who we are. Consumer society is also characterized by the constant pressure to conform to societal norms and expectations. The market-driven economy relies on creating and sustaining desires, leading individuals to constantly compare themselves to others and seek validation through their consumption choices. This pressure to conform to social standards often leads to a loss of individuality, as people strive to fit in and be accepted by their peers. In a consumer society, our identities become closely tied to the products we consume, and our worth is often measured by the material possessions we own. This commodification of identity creates a sense of insecurity and anxiety, as individuals are constantly chasing after the next big trend or trying to keep up with the latest fashions. *'The desire of identity and horror of satisfying that desire, the attraction and the repulsion that the thought of identity evokes, mix and blend to produce a compound of lasting ambivalence and confusion''*(Bauman, 2004b, p.28). He argued that consumerism has a profound effect on our sense of self-worth and our overall well-being. In a society where value is placed on material possessions, individuals who are unable to keep up with the demands of consumerism may feel marginalized and excluded. This can lead to feelings of inadequacy and low self-esteem. Moreover, the constant pursuit of material possessions leads to a never-ending cycle of desire and dissatisfaction. As soon as one desire is fulfilled, another one takes its place, creating a perpetual state of longing and discontent. The pressure to constantly consume can also lead to financial strain, as individuals may find themselves trapped in a cycle of debt in order to maintain a certain lifestyle or keep up with the expectations of consumer society. Consumer society also places a great emphasis on the concept of choice. In a world of endless options, we are constantly bombarded with choices in every aspect of our lives, from what we eat to what we wear to how we spend our leisure time. While the freedom to choose is often seen as a positive attribute of consumer society, Bauman discussed that it can also lead to feelings of anxiety and paralysis.

> *You can pick and choose your look. Choosing as such – choosing some look – is not at issue, since this is what you must do, and can desist and avoid doing only at peril of exclusion. Nor are you free to influence the set of options available to choose from: there are no other options left as all the realistic and advisable possibilities have been already preselected, pre-scripted and prescribed(Bauman, 2007, p.84-85).*

The abundance of choices, on the other hand, can be overwhelming and can leave individuals feeling uncertain and indecisive. Bauman explained that this abundance can be deceptive. The freedom to choose is constrained by marketing strategies and economic structures. Choices are often guided by what is available, affordable, and socially acceptable. Moreover, the emphasis on individual choice can lead to a breakdown in collective decision-making and a weakening of social bonds. As individuals become more focused on their own desires and preferences, the sense of community and shared values is often dissolved. Bauman's analysis of our relentless pursuit of happiness through consumption sheds light on the complexities and contradictions of our modern lives. As we navigate the world of endless choices and instant gratification, Bauman's ideas on the liquid modernity and its impact on our identities resonate deeply.

2.3.Martin Crimp: Attempts on Her Life (1997)

2.3.1.Martin Crimp and his remark on drama

Martin Crimp is a prominent British playwright known for his innovative approach to theater. He was born in 1956 and has contributed significantly to contemporary drama. His works often challenge traditional theatrical conventions, exploring themes related to power, language, and the complexities of human relationships. Crimp's innovative approach to narrative and structure has influenced modern theater, encouraging experimentation and pushing boundaries within the dramatic form. His use of language and his exploration of contemporary issues have contributed to a redefinition of theatrical storytelling, inspiring playwrights and directors to think differently about the possibilities of drama. As an acclaimed playwright, screenwriter, and translator, Crimp has captivated audiences worldwide with his unique works that push the boundaries of conventional storytelling. His profound insights into the human condition, combined with his masterful command of language, have established him as a true luminary in the world of dramatic arts. "*Crimp's plays repeatedly show that, in postmodernity although we have a natural inclination to care for others [...] we rediscover this inclination at the same moment that all guidance about how to behave morally is taken away from us*"(Agusti, 2013, p.323). Born with an innate passion for words and performance, Crimp's artistic journey began

to take shape at a young age. Inspired by the works of Samuel Beckett and Harold Pinter, he embarked on a quest to redefine the possibilities of theatre, seeking to challenge traditional norms and conventions. Alex Sierz (2013) explained Crimp's this aspect as follows:

> *He tends to like writers who are distant from what he does. He's read French minimalists; he admires Peter Handke. Other writers have percolated slowly through his consciousness. All have gone into Crimp's theatre toolbox, which includes devices on loan from Ionesco, Beckett, Pinter, Mamet and Churchill, and these have served him well for the past two decades and more(p.161).*

Through his unique and daring approach, Crimp has become renowned for his ability to delve into the depths of human emotions, tackling complex themes with a sharp, unfiltered honesty. Crimp's plays are a masterclass in precision, with every word carefully chosen to provoke, challenge, and unsettle the audience. His ability to explore the darkest corners of the human psyche is unparalleled. "*He hits a contemporary nerve with his tone, and although he isn't cynical, he understands the nature of the moral shifts in our culture in a way very few other writers do*"(Sierz, 2013, p.188).

Throughout his illustrious career, Crimp has penned a multitude of plays that have garnered critical acclaim and left an abiding mark on the theatrical landscape. From his groundbreaking work '*Attempts on Her Life*' to the hauntingly beautiful '*The Country*', each piece showcases his sheer talent for crafting narratives that are both intellectually stimulating and emotionally resonant. His ability to seamlessly blend humor, darkness, and social commentary within his works has cemented his status as a true visionary. Not content with limiting himself to the stage, Crimp has also ventured into the realm of screenwriting, collaborating with esteemed directors such as Michael Haneke and Sally Potter. With films like 'Hidden' and 'The Party' under his belt, he has demonstrated his versatility and adaptability as a writer, effortlessly transitioning his unique voice from the theater to the silver screen. Beyond his own creative endeavors, Crimp has also made significant contributions as a translator, bringing works by iconic playwrights such as Molière and Ionesco to a wider audience. His skillful interpretations not only showcase his deep understanding of the original texts but also highlight his ability to infuse them with his distinct artistic sensibility. Martin Crimp's life is a testament to the power of artistic exploration and the boundless potential of storytelling. Through his bold and evocative works, he has challenged and inspired audiences, provoking introspection and

sparking dialogue on the most pressing issues of our time. As we delve into the depths of his extraordinary career, we are invited to witness the transformative impact of a true creative genius, who continues to shape and redefine the world of contemporary theatre. Crimp's theatre-making technique combines elements of traditional drama with avant-garde experimentation. He pushes the boundaries of structure, language, and character development, challenging audiences to question their assumptions about narrative conventions. Crimp's theater undergoes a transformation, not just in style but also in the nature of the dramatic space, emphasizing a shift from physicality to a more cerebral engagement with the audience.

> *With the passage from The Treatment to Attempts on Her Life, which corresponds to the transition from a theater In-Yer-Face to a theater "In-Yer-Head," the dramatic space in Crimp's writing moves from physical to mental, as the post-traumatic stage gives way to a post-sacrificial stage where the woman only exists in our heads*(Boles, 2020, p.160).

The passage here introduces a distinct aspect related to Martin Crimp's theater. It notes the shift from a theater that is In-Yer-Face (intense and confrontational) to a theater that *is In-Yer-Head* (more psychological and mentally engaging). This bold and innovative style has earned him critical acclaim and a dedicated following of theater enthusiasts. Crimp's plays often feature fragmented narratives and non-linear storytelling, creating a sense of disorientation and uncertainty. He breaks free from the traditional linear structure and instead presents a series of disjointed scenes that require the audience to actively engage with the material. This technique forces viewers to piece together the puzzle-like structure, resulting in a more immersive and intellectually challenging experience. Additionally, Crimp utilizes unique language and dialogue in his plays. His characters often speak in fragmented sentences, repeating phrases, and engaging in disjointed conversations. This unconventional use of language adds depth and complexity to the characters, allowing the audience to delve into their psyche and motivations. One of the distinctive features of Crimp's plays is his ability to explore complex themes and ideas with precision and depth. He deals with the human condition, treating the intricacies of power dynamics, identity, language, and the nature of relationships.

In *Attempts on Her Life*, Crimp concerns the theme of power and its impact on individuals and society. The play presents a series of fragmented scenes, each exploring different perspectives and interpretations of a central character. This deconstruction of identity and

power challenges the audience's preconceived notions and highlights the fluid and malleable nature of personal narratives. *The Country* is another notable play that showcases Crimp's exploration of identity and language. The characters in this play struggle to communicate effectively, leading to a breakdown in relationships and misunderstandings. Crimp raises questions about the limitations of language and the difficulties we face in truly understanding one another. Crimp's plays often feature minimalistic and abstract set designs, allowing the focus to remain on the characters and their interactions. This plain approach enhances the emotional impact of the performances and invites the audience to actively engage with the material. Furthermore, Crimp's use of repetition and fragmented dialogue adds a rhythmic quality to his plays. This technique creates a sense of urgency and tension, intensifying the emotional impact on the audience. The repetition of phrases also serves to emphasize key themes and motifs, leaving a lasting impression on the viewer's mind. Another notable feature of Crimp's plays is his ability to create multi-dimensional and morally ambiguous characters. He avoids simple categorizations of good and evil, instead presenting complex individuals with conflicting desires and motivations. This nuanced portrayal of characters adds depth and realism to his plays, making them resonate with audiences on a profound level through his audacious storytelling and meticulous attention to detail, Martin Crimp continues to captivate audiences worldwide. His plays are not just mere entertainment; they are powerful cultural artifacts that provoke and stimulate discussion long after the curtain falls. Crimp's innovative theatre-making technique has had a significant impact on contemporary theatre. His willingness to challenge traditional narrative structures and experiment with language has inspired a new generation of playwrights to push boundaries and explore unconventional storytelling methods. Besides, Crimp's exploration of complex themes and his ability to create multi-dimensional characters have expanded the possibilities of what theatre can achieve. His work encourages audiences to question societal norms, challenge power structures, and examine their own identities. Crimp's unconventional approach to theatre-making has influenced a new generation of playwrights. His willingness to break free from traditional structures and experiment with language and form has inspired others to push the boundaries of storytelling. Playwrights such as Caryl Churchill and Sarah Kane credit Crimp as an important influence on their work. His innovative techniques have opened up new possibilities and expanded the horizons of contemporary theatre. As his work continues to be produced and studied, it is clear that

Martin Crimp's legacy as a visionary playwright and theatre-maker is secure. His plays will continue to provoke thought, challenge assumptions, and captivate audiences for years to come.

2.3.2. Attempts On Her Life as a postmodern play

Attempts on Her Life was first performed in 1997 at the Royal Court Theatre in London. Written by British playwright Martin Crimp, the play is a series of scenes and monologues that revolve around the elusive character of Anne. The title itself is intriguing, as it suggests multiple attempts on Anne's life, but the play does not provide a clear answer as to who she is or why she is being targeted. The lack of a fixed narrative allows for multiple interpretations. Anne becomes a symbol, representing different aspects of contemporary society and the struggles faced by individuals in a rapidly changing world. The play delves into themes such as identity, gender, consumerism, and the impact of technology on human relationships. By presenting multiple versions and perspectives of Anne, Crimp challenges the audience to question their own assumptions and preconceptions. "*What he suggests, as in Attempts On Her Life, is that modern urban existence is defined by despair, and that there is a grisly continuum of collective unhappiness*"(Sierz, 2013, p.229-230). *Attempts on Her Life* probes into a wide range of themes and concepts that are relevant to the contemporary human experience. One of the central themes explored is the complexity of identity. The play challenges the notion of a fixed and stable identity, presenting Anne as a constantly shifting and elusive figure. This reflects the fluid nature of identity in the postmodern world, where individuals are influenced by various social, cultural, and technological factors. Anne, whose identity is constructed and deconstructed through various perspectives is referred to by various names and descriptors such as Annie, Anya, Annuska, Anna. These names and descriptors often reflect different perceptions and interpretations of her character, contributing to the play's exploration of the fluidity of identity in a postmodern context. At the end of the first scene, a faint indication of Anne's existence lingers, yet it remains uncertain whether it pertains to Anne, Annie, or Anya. What is definite, however, is that all messages were erased, likely at her hand. "*That was your last message. To save all messages press one. Pause. All messages deleted*"(Crimp, 2005, p.207). For the very first part of the play, Topaloglu (2014) stated as follows:

In this part, Anne is sometimes missed by her husband, sometimes her dad shouts at her on phone, and sometimes she is abused. This short prelude gives us some clues about the strangeness of the play because Anne, who is a postmodern character, is loved, threatened, praised, humiliated, but she can put an end to all these events by touching a button to delete messages in her phone. There are seventeen scenarios in this play and each of these parts mention about different characters and, in fact, all these characters represent the different ages of Anne, or who knows the humanity(p.270).

Anne remains absent from the physical stage and instead transforms into a conceptual figure discussed by various narrators within the play. Even the existing or real Anne in the narratives can only be partially understood through the integration of the depictions presented throughout 17 scenes. In the context of *Attempts on Her Life*, Bauman's theory of liquid modernity provides a lens through which to understand the fragmented and transient nature of identity and relationships depicted in the play. The characters' struggles to define themselves and form meaningful connections mirror Bauman's observations regarding the challenges posed by liquid modernity. Anne's shadow is responsive for what Bauman depicts: *"Identity is now expected and preferred to be easy to melt and suitable for recasting in moulds of different shapes"(2008, p.13).* In Bauman's concept, identity shifts from a static concept to a dynamic, flexible entity. Throughout the play, Anne symbolizes this fluidity, resisting categorization and rejecting traditional norms and assumptions. Bauman's idea of liquid modernity mirrors Anne's constantly evolving identities, demonstrating the constructed and deconstructed nature of identity. *"The most I can hope for is an identity kit, a composite picture that may contain as many gaps and blank spots as filled-up sections. Even that final composition, though, will be an unfinished task, left to the readers to complete"*(Bauman, 2003, p.viii). Bauman's statement reflects the idea that in the modern world, individuals are often presented with fragmented and incomplete identities. The identity kit symbolizes a collection of diverse influences and experiences that shape a person's sense of self. However, this composite picture is inherently incomplete, containing both gaps and filled-up sections. Bauman suggests that even the final composition of one's identity remains an unfinished task, leaving it to others, or readers, to interpret and complete. This underscores the fluid and evolving nature of identity in contemporary society, where individuals struggle with the complexities of constructing and defining themselves amidst a multitude of influences and uncertainties. In the second phase of the play, *Tragedy of Love and Ideology,* the relentless barrage of images and descriptions reflects the way in which individuals,

particularly women, can be objectified and reduced to mere commodities in the eyes of consumer culture.

> — *The woman?*
> — *Young and beautiful, naturally.*
> — *The man?*
> — *Older, troubled, sensitive, naturally.*
> — *A naturally sensitive man but nevertheless a man of power and authority who knows that this is wrong.*
> — *They both know this is wrong.*
> — *They both know this is wrong but they can't / help themselves. Exactly.*
> — *They're making love in the man's apartment.*
> — *Doing what?*
> — *Making love. Making love in the man's apartment. A luxury apartment, naturally, with a view over the entire city. These are the / basic ingredients(Crimp, 2005, p.208).*

The cruel pursuit of perfection, beauty standards, and social expectations depicted in the scene reflects the commodification of identity. Anne's character becomes a canvas on which consumer society projects its ideals and desires, highlighting the dehumanizing impact of a culture obsessed with consumption. Bauman (2003) depicts the affair in postmodern society as follows: "*Today, sexuality no longer epitomizes the potential for pleasure and happiness. It is no longer mystified, positively, as ecstasy and transgression, but negatively instead, as the source of oppression, inequality, violence, abuse, and deadly infection(p.39).* The scene raises critical questions about the power dynamics inherent in a society driven by consumerism, where individuals become both consumers and consumed. Another example of the connection between consumerism and fluidity of intercourses in the play can be summarized as:

> *He kisses her and presses her back down onto the bed. Or she him. Better still: she presses him back down onto the bed such is her emotional confusion, such is her sexual appetite, such is her inability to distinguish between right and wrong in this great consuming passion in the high-ceilinged apartment with the solid walnut bed, the polished parquet floor, the grand piano by Pleyel circa 1923 without it should perhaps be noted any visible means of protection against pregnancy in the case of Anne or in the case of either against sexually transmitted diseases including the so-called AIDS virus more correctly known as the human immune deficiency virus or / HIV for short(Crimp, 2005, p.214).*

The setting, with its luxurious elements, serves as a backdrop to the characters' uninhibited and potentially risky behavior, adding layers of depth to the scene in the context of consumer society by highlighting the portrayal of reckless consumption and the commodification of intimacy. The emphasis on the characters' emotional confusion and sexual appetite reflects a society where personal desires and impulses are often influenced and shaped by consumerist ideals. The luxurious setting of the high-ceilinged apartment, with its solid walnut bed and grand piano, symbolizes a lifestyle associated with material wealth and indulgence, contributing to the portrayal of a culture where consumption and pleasure are intertwined. Additionally, the absence of protection against pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases underscores the potential consequences of unchecked desires within a consumer-driven society, shedding light on the risks and vulnerabilities that can arise when personal relationships are influenced by the values and norms perpetuated by consumer culture. Also in the part 7, the choice of turning Anne into a car exemplifies the objectification inherent in consumer culture. Cars, often associated with status, lifestyle, and personal expression, are symbolic consumer objects. By representing Anne as a car, Crimp underscores how individuals are reduced to commodities in a society where personal identity is closely linked to consumer choices. 'The New Anny' is "*fast, fleek, free, happy, secure, in control*"(p.234-235). However, another aspect of consumerist ideals are also included in the scene.

> — *We will always be embraced by good-looking men and good-looking women.*
> —*[phrase]*
> — *We will not be betrayed.*
> — *[phrase]*
> — *Tortured.*
> — *[phrase]*
> —*Or,shot.*
> — *The two-litre Anny achieves excellent mileage in the simulated urban cycle . . .*
> — *[phrase]*
> —*and is also available in diesel(p.236).*

In the context of consumer culture, this can be interpreted as a critique of the idealized marketing and branding strategies often employed to promote products. The phrases reflect the portrayal of the 'Anny' as a symbol of purity, efficiency, and moral superiority, aligning with the idealized narratives often used in consumer culture to promote products as solutions to societal or personal issues. Understanding the place of the excluded or the

poor in consumer society requires addressing systemic issues related to economic inequality, social justice, and access to resources. Efforts to promote inclusivity, reduce inequality, and create avenues for economic empowerment are essential to mitigating the challenges faced by marginalized groups within the context of consumerism. Whether consumerism is perceived as good or beneficial depends on individual perspectives and societal priorities. While it has positive aspects such as economic growth and innovation, its negative consequences, including environmental degradation and social inequality, have led to critiques and calls for more sustainable and equitable models of consumption. As it can be proved in the play, excluded or marginalized individuals often have limited access to the consumption patterns prevalent in consumer society. Economic disparities may restrict their ability to afford and partake in the same range of goods and services as more affluent members of society.

> — *[phrase]*
> — *No one in the Anny lies cheats or steals.*
> — *[phrase]*
> — *Dirty bastards.*
> —*[phrase]*
> — *Gangsters.*
> —*[phrase]*
> — *Motherfuckers.*
> —*[phrase]*
> — *There is no room in the Anny for the degenerate races*
> —*[phrase]*
> — *for the mentally deficient*
> — *[phrase]*
> —*...or the physically imperfect(p.236-237).*

However, the abrupt shift to derogatory language such as 'filthy gypsies' and 'dirty bastards' within the same context highlights the underlying prejudices and discriminatory attitudes that can coexist within consumer culture. This contrast underscores the discrepancy between the idealized image presented in marketing and the complex, often problematic, social realities that consumer culture may overlook. Consumer society often perpetuates symbolic exclusion by promoting certain standards of beauty, success, and lifestyle. Those who do not conform to these standards may feel socially excluded, further highlighting the societal pressures associated with consumerism. According to Bauman (2007), these people are evaluated as follows:

In a society of consumers - a world that evaluates anyone and anything by their commodity value – they are people with no market value; they are the uncommoditized men and women, and their failure to obtain the status of proper commodity coincides with (indeed, stems from) their failure to engage in a fully fledged consumer activity. They are failed consumers, walking symbols of the disasters awaiting fallen consumers, and of the ultimate destiny of anyone failing to acquit herself or himself in the consumer's duties(p.124).

Anne, the central but elusive character, is likely presented in the eyes of the Girl Next Door. The monologue may reveal how Anne is perceived by this particular character and how social expectations shape this perception. In the part 14, *The Girl Next Door,* Anne is a summary of the whole play and presents the individual who can be anything. "*She's a refugee, a pornographic movie star, a killer and a brand of car, a terrorist threat, a mother of three, ecstasy, a femme fatale"(p.263).* The descriptions may lack a linear structure, contributing to the overall sense of disorientation and complexity in the play. This scene adds another layer of subjectivity and ambiguity to the portrayal of Anne. The character's perspective on Anne is likely to be one of many, contributing to the play's exploration of the fluid and elusive nature of identity. In the final section of the play, P*reviously Frozen,* Anne transforms into a fragmented individual who has lost everything. With a sense of meaninglessness, Anne, as the only existing postmodern individual, wanders through bookstores but does not read, only skimming through. The last portrayal of Anne, described as indifferent or unconcerned, highlights the superficiality of the postmodern individual. "*She feels that something, something inside of her has died"(p.278).* Anne is unable to explain her own existence; her existence relies on the testimony and expression of others. Fixed identities existing in the modern era transform with identity construction in the postmodern era. The individual must define themselves and take responsibility for their existence.

—Taught. Not necessarily thought, but taught. Taught they had / some meaning.
— Well - thought, taught, whatever, the fact remains she'd rather skim.
— Okay, you mean to skim seems more appropriate to the world / she's living in?
—That's exactly what I mean: she'd rather skim. She'd rather read just the smallest parts of things. Part of a recipe. Part of a letter. Part of / an article.
— Part of a recipe. Part of a letter replying to a letter she's never read about an article she missed(p.283).

Reflecting the postmodern idea of fragmented identity and superficial engagement with the world, the emphasis on skimming and only engaging with partial information underscores the postmodern condition of being overwhelmed by a constant influx of fragmented, often meaningless, information. It highlights the challenge of constructing meaning in a world saturated with disjointed and often inconsequential content. The quotation captures the postmodern experience of navigating through a sea of disconnected fragments, struggling to find coherence and significance in a world of information overload. Crimp's employment of diverse characters and perspectives amplifies the intricacy of the narrative. Every scene depicts a distinct rendition of Anne, delving into diverse facets of her identity and the manner in which others perceive her. This multitude of voices and viewpoints facilitates a profound and multi-faceted examination of the play's themes. The use of repetition is another notable narrative technique in *Attempts on Her Life*. Certain phrases, images, and motifs recur throughout the play, creating a sense of rhythm and pattern. This repetition serves to emphasize key ideas and themes, as well as to disrupt the audience's expectations and challenge their assumptions. "*We are the good guys*"(p.224), "*The camera loves you*"(p.224) and the use of six times *the camera* in the same part are the examples of the repetitions which can serve as a structural device in post-dramatic theater. Aiming to reflect the complexity and dissonance of contemporary experience, repetitive language can mirror the repetitiveness of daily life, media, or social norms. It becomes a reflection of the cacophony and repetition found in the postmodern world. Also, the play explores how language can be used to construct and deconstruct meaning, as well as to manipulate and control others. Crimp's use of fragmented and disjointed dialogue reflects the fragmented nature of contemporary communication, where messages are often fragmented and taken out of context. Post-dramatic plays incorporate multiple languages, reflecting the diversity of contemporary societies. Characters may switch between languages, and scenes may include dialogue in different linguistic registers. This approach challenges linguistic boundaries and emphasizes the polyphony of voices as well as translation can be used as a tool for fragmentation and dislocation."*O-shigoto wa nan desu ka? Oku-san wa imasu ka? OKU-SAN WA IMASU KA?*"(p.264), the use of multiple languages reflects the play's exploration of identity, media, and the elusive nature of truth in a globalized world. Lehmann expressed this: "*Apart from collage and montage, the principle of polyglossia proves to be omnipresent in postdramatic theatre. Multi-lingual theatre texts dismantle*

the unity of national languages"(2006, p.147). Finally, when the play is approached from both postmodern and post-dramatic perspectives, the distinction between reality and fiction is blurred by the use of multimedia and technological elements and signifiers which expanding the possibilities of what can be achieved on stage. Video projections, soundscapes, and live feeds are used to create a visually striking and immersive production. The use of video projections allows for the inclusion of visual elements that cannot be achieved solely through live performance. These projections can range from abstract images to documentary-style footage, adding another layer of meaning and interpretation to the play. The combination of live action and recorded video creates a sense of dislocation and uncertainty, challenging the audience's perception of what is real and what is constructed. By embracing postmodern themes and techniques, the play exemplifies the fluidity and complexity of contemporary existence, urging viewers to reconsider their understanding of reality and representation in the postmodern age.

2.4.Mark Ravenhill: Some Explicit Polaroids (1999)

2.4.1.Mark Ravenhill's drama

Renowned for his daring and innovative contributions, Mark Ravenhill stands as a profoundly influential playwright and theatre director. He explores limits and challenges social standards with major contributions such as *Shopping and Fucking* and *Some Explicit Polaroids*. Ravenhill's examination of sexuality, identity, and power, combined with his unique writing style, has captivated audiences globally. Mark Ravenhill's early experiences influenced his career as a creative playwright. Born in Haywards Heath, West Sussex, in 1966, Ravenhill developed an interest in theater from a young age. Growing up, he was exposed to the works of influential playwrights like Bertolt Brecht and Samuel Beckett, which greatly influenced his writing style. Additionally, he attended Bristol University, where he studied English and Drama, further honing his skills and deepening his understanding of theater. These formative experiences not only helped Ravenhill develop his unique voice as a playwright but also instilled in him a desire to challenge social norms and exceed the boundaries of traditional theater. One of his most iconic works is S*hopping and F**king,* which premiered in 1996 and addressed the themes of consumerism and alienation in modern society. The play propelled Ravenhill to the forefront of the theatrical landscape, earning him critical acclaim and cementing his status

as a prominent figure in contemporary theater. Following the success of *Shopping and F**king*, Ravenhill continued to push limits with plays such as *Some Explicit Polaroids* and *Mother Clap's Molly House*. These plays explored issues such as sexuality, gender, and power dynamics, delving deep into the complexities of human relationships and social constructs. Alex Sierz (2012) interprets Ravenhill's theatre as:

> *If the work of any dramatist exemplifies the much-overused term zeitgeist it would be the 1990s plays of Mark Ravenhill. While his contemporary Sarah Kane has been widely lauded as the most significant playwright of that decade, it was Ravenhill who best caught its mood(p.161)*

Ravenhill's contributions to theater extend beyond his provocative plays. He actively engages in conversations and debates about the role of theater in society, advocating for it as a platform for social change and political commentary. Ravenhill's theater is notable for its bold investigation of taboo conflicts, presented unflinching portrayals of contemporary life, aligning closely with the ethos of the In-yer-face. However, Billingham describes this as an inaccurate labeling. "*Mark Ravenhill is a writer who has been inaccurately defined and trapped as part of the 'In-Yer-Face' phenomenon of the 1990s*"(2007, p.256). Ravenhill's plays often address complex social, political, and psychological themes. Categorizing him solely within a movement known for its explicit content might overlook the depth and complexity of his explorations. In describing Mark Ravenhill in a postmodern context rather than strictly within the In-Yer-Face movement, Billingham (2007) emphasizes:

> *His ground-breaking and controversial Shopping and Fucking is a high watermark of the new writing of the last decade, principally for its characters caught in the crossfire between postmodern assemblage and his critiquing of postmodern moral discourse inherent in the piece(p.257).*

Whether it is sexuality, gender, or power relationships, he bravely deals with the complexity of these topics, compelling audiences to confront brutal truths. Ravenhill initiates vital conversations and challenges the established quo, prompting society to reconsider its values and ideas. Billingham again remarks *"...to map out the territory of modern British theatre, the themes and concerns in the plays are as important as the undoubted creative skills and talents of the five dramatists"(p.4)*. He evaluates Mark Ravenhill as dealing mostly with "*alternative sexuality and gender, Left and postmodern and post-Marxist political perspectives"(p.4)*. Ravenhill's theater also stands out for its political undertones and social commentary. Through his plays, he addresses pressing

issues such as consumerism, alienation, and the impact of social constructs. By intertwining these themes with personal stories and complex characters, Ravenhill brings these larger social issues to the forefront, prompting audiences to reflect on their own lives and the world around them. Sierz (2012) reinforces this as follows:

> *Ravenhill's importance, like that of the 1968 generation of dramatists who came before him, was that he rose to the challenge of creating a new type of political theatre whose project was to make sense of the rapid changes taking place within the systems of economics, politics and technology during the 1990s(p.162).*

He also has inspired and influenced a new generation of playwrights. One such playwright who has been inspired by Ravenhill is Sarah Kane. Known for her provocative and intense plays, Kane's work embodies the same raw honesty and social commentary that Ravenhill championed. Her play *Blasted*, which premiered in 1995, shook audiences with its unflinching portrayal of violence and its exploration of the dehumanizing effects of war. Kane captured the raw and unapologetic essence that Ravenhill championed. Lucy Kirkwood is another playwright who has drawn inspiration from Ravenhill's work, as seen in her play *NSFW*. Addressing the objectification of women in the media industry, Kirkwood explores themes of power and control, aligning with Ravenhill's exploration of social issues. Ravenhill, according to Wallace (2006), specifies these issues by stating:

> *I want to write about globalisation or, to give it a more honest name, Americanisation. To capture the truth of this new world we live in [...]. To write about the virtual markets of images and information spinning around us and threatening to drag us into perpetual postmodern giddiness. To write about the hypocrisy of our calls for universal freedom and democracy as we destroy the world for profit(p.91).*

By aiming to capture the truth of this new world, Ravenhill suggests a desire to uncover and reveal the underlying realities and dynamics of the contemporary globalized society. This points to the influence of technology, media, and information in the globalized era. The reference to perpetual postmodern giddiness suggests a sense of disorientation and confusion in the face of rapid technological and cultural change. For the plays, especially *Shopping and Fucking* and *Some Explicit Polaroids,* postmodern themes of identity and sexuality are prevalent. The plays contribute to breaking down the norms, including heteronormativity, which assumes heterosexuality as the default by presenting characters with diverse sexual orientations and preferences. This challenges the idea that heterosexuality is the only valid or default sexual orientation. As a gay writer, Ravenhill

often intertwines personal and political themes in his plays. His works explore not only the individual experiences of LGBTQ+ characters but also engage with broader political and social issues related to sexuality, discrimination, and the struggle for equal rights. Monforte & Aragay (2014) exemplified this as follows: "*Mother Clap's Molly House carries out a queer imaginative exploration of Britain's gay subculture*" and" *as in Handbag, the play interrogates the reproduction of bourgeois, heteronormative structures by sexual minorities"(p.156)*. Ravenhill's plays are situated in the postmodern era, a time marked by the AIDS epidemic. During this period, the virus had a profound impact on society, shaping public discourse, medical practices, and cultural perceptions. The HIV/AIDS epidemic was accompanied by significant stigma and discrimination. Ravenhill's plays often address the social prejudice and fear associated with the virus. In *The Methuen Drama Guide to Contemporary British Playwrights*, edited by Martin Middeke, Peter Paul Schnierer and Aleks Sierz (2011), another reason for incorporating these themes into the theater can be demonstrated as follows:

> *In 1990, he was diagnosed as HIV-positive, and in 1993 his boyfriend died from complications related to AIDS. Illness and death are frequent subjects in his work, and although his work is rarely directly autobiographical, the spectre of disease haunts his writing(p.403).*

Ravenhill's works, like many postmodernist ones, frequently involve a critical analysis of the mechanisms of power. His investigation into sexuality extends beyond the surface, revealing the underlying power dynamics that affect sexual interactions and society standards. This critique is consistent with the broader postmodern effort to challenge and demolish hierarchies.

2.4.2. Some Explicit Polaroids as a postmodern play

Some Explicit Polaroids by Mark Ravenhill is unquestionably a postmodern play that questions traditional theatrical conventions, crosses limits, and deconstructs numerous sociopolitical themes. The editors of Methuen Drama Guide (2011) introduced the play as follows: "*Some Explicit Polaroids was first performed on tour as an Out of Joint production on 30 September 1999"(p.407)*. The title itself *Some Explicit Polaroids* submits the play's intention to shock and provoke. Polaroids are instant snapshots, capturing moments in their rawest form. Similarly, the play aims to present its themes and ideas without pretense or filter. It wants to confront the audience with the

uncomfortable truths that exist in our society, challenging them to reflect on their moral compass and their role within the perpetuation our dismantling of oppressive systems. Wallace (2005) addresses the play:

> *In Some Explicit Polaroids Ravenhill returns full circle to some of the questions provocatively posed about the nature of contemporary urban life in Shopping and Fucking. Throughout Ravenhill's 1990s work a vision of consumerism and postmodernity is developed that, while often sardonically humorous, is far from positive in its diagnosis(p.273).*

The use of explicit polaroids as a narrative device heightens the impact of the play, forcing the audience to confront the uncomfortable reality of these taboo subjects. According to Billingham (2007), "*The Polaroid denotes a world of closeted, private, transgressive experience. Its ephemeral witnessing is reinforced by the fact that Polaroid photographs are poignantly transient images of the human condition experience*"(p.140). Set in the backdrop of 1990s England, the play explores issues such as promiscuity, power dynamics, sexuality, and the consequences of our actions. Through its four characters, who are connected through their involvement in various forms of protest and activism, the play also delves into power dynamics and their influence on relationships. Middeke et al. (2011) describe the beginning of the play as follows: "*It tells the story of a former revolutionary left political activist named Nick, who is released from prison after fifteen years for kidnapping and torturing a venture capitalist named Jonathan*"(p.407). Billingham (2007) on the other hand, attributes the basis of the play and its inclusion of political issues to being inspired by another play:

> *Ravenhill's play was inspired by a satirical political fable from earlier in the twentieth century, Hoppla, wir leben! (Hurrah, We Live!) (1927) by the German anarchist poet and dramatist Ernst Toller. Toller's play deals with precisely the same kind of political compromise and betrayal that Ravenhill explores in Some Explicit Polaroids(p.139).*

The first part of the 12-scene play begins with capitalism destroying two characters, Nick and Helen, in different ways, serving as the play's initial reflection on postmodernism. The play depicts how capitalist structures can limit individual agency and autonomy. Nick, who rejects modern world impositions and thus ends up in prison as a result of his conflict with Jonathan, a capitalist symbol(Sierz, 2001, p.144), discovers that nothing is the same when he visits Helen's home. The dialogues between Helen and Nick in the play, which depicts this transformation using references from postmodern society such as,

demonstrate that while Helen has turned into a member of consumer society, Nick is unaware of it.

> *Nick: Kid in the lift tried to sell me smack. Must have been about seven. I said: 'You shouldn't be selling drugs at your age. 'And he said: 'How else am I gonna buy a PlayStation? '*
> *Helen: There's   a   lot   of   that   goes   on*
> *Nick: What the fuck is a PlayStation? How's your mum?*
> *Helen: Dead(Ravenhill, 1999, p.1-2).*

The exchange between Nick and Helen highlights the unsettling impact of capitalism on society, particularly on the young, as they are drawn into the cycle of material desires and the need to fulfill them through unconventional, and often dangerous, means. The reference to the PlayStation serves as a symbol of modern consumer culture and the lengths to which individuals, even children, may go to attain material possessions in a world driven by consumerist values. The mention of a young child trying to sell drugs to buy a PlayStation symbolizes the normalization of drug culture and the influence of consumerism in society, even among the very young. The part which provides an essential perspective on the relationship between social speed and change, correlates with Bauman's critique of modernity: "*Life reduced to an unceasing chase of ever elusive and never securely attainable pleasures*"(1992, p.44). As a deformed individual who is unable to adapt to change, Nick realizes that he cannot remain with his prior identity in a world where everything changes and remains unclear.

> *Nick: I've only just got out. I don't understand anything now.*
> *Helen: Well, everything's changed.*
> *Nick: And you've changed?*
> *Helen: Of course. Look at me.*
> *Nick: Let me stay.*
> *Helen: No.*
> *Nick: Looking at you now, I still feel a lot of the same stuff. About you.*
> *Helen: You're looking at a different person.*
> *Nick: Same feelings.*
> *Helen: Yeah?*
> *Nick: Yeah. And what are you feeling right now?*
> *Helen: I don't know(p.5-6).*

Nick's plea to 'let me stay' underscores the challenge of finding stability in a world of perpetual change, while Helen's assertion that 'everything has changed' and 'you're looking at a different person' echoes the fluid and transient nature of relationships and identities in a Baumanian perspective. Social change continually reshapes individuals'

identities and heighten the sense of uncertainty, thus a Baumanesque analysis resonates throughout the play:

> *We are all—to one extent or another [...] on the move; none of us can be certain that he or she has gained any right to any place once for all and no one thinks that his or her staying in one place is a likely prospect; wherever we happen to stop, we are at least in part displaced or out of place(1997, p.93).*

As well as embodying political tenets, *Some Explicit Polaroid*s satirizes consumerism and popular culture, which are emblematic of postmodernist critique. The characters in the play are driven by their desires, seeking validation and fulfillment through material possessions and superficial relationships. This critique of consumerism highlights the way in which postmodernism challenges the dominant capitalist culture, revealing its shallow nature. The play, which clearly exposes this criticism even in its opening scene, approaches to a different postmodern case in its second scene. The setting shifts from Helen's flat to the airport with a sudden jump, reflecting postmodern bonds with Nadia, Tim, and Victor.

> *Nadia: Because we all have our own journeys that we're travelling. Each of us has our own path and, of course, we can't always see the path, sometimes it seems like there's no sense in anything, you know? But of course there is. Everything makes sense.*
> *Victor:You   think   so?*
> *Nadia: Oh yes, of course, yes.*
> *Victor: I don't think so. No?*
> *Nadia: I think everything is crazy. The whole world is fucking crazy(p.8-9).*

Victor is a sex worker who considers life to be rubbish and does anything for pleasure. At the same time, as a fragmented individual who accepts being termed as a slave, he was hired by Tim to spend time without feeling pure things. While Nadia and Victor are having conversations, Nadia adds that Tim requires real sentiments and has a spiritual and love-oriented side, but Victor is opposed to them because he is entirely pleasure and fan-oriented trash-lover, and accuses Tim of lying. That scene emphasizes temporary relationships and unreliable connections, as well as conflicting ideals and priorities among the characters. Nadia's emphasis on emotional and spiritual depth, and Victor's emphasis on mere pleasure and superficial relationships, are linked to Bauman's concept of transience. This term alludes to the tendency of contemporary interpersonal relations to be short-term, superficial, and vaporous. "*Bindings and bonds make human relations*'

impure'– as they would do to any act of consumption that assumes instant satisfaction and similarly instant obsolescence of the consumed object"(Bauman, 2003, p.47). The quote implies that human relationships and ties can become stained or impure when considered with an emphasis primarily on immediate fulfillment and disposability. It compares this approach to consumption, in which immediate satisfaction and disposal of the consumed object are valued. In essence, it reflects the idea that when relationships are viewed as disposable or for quick pleasure, they lose depth and authenticity, becoming impure in the process. The rise of online dating apps, social media, globalization has made it easier for individuals to seek out and connect with potential partners in postmodern era. As a result, people are constantly searching for the next best thing, always on the hunt for the perfect partner who can fulfill all their desires and expectations. Love, in this sense, has become a commodity that can be purchased, used, and discarded when no longer satisfactory. On the other hand, concentrating on appearance rather than a deeper attachment fosters superficiality and commodification.

> *Nadia: I think you're a very beautiful person.*
> *Victor:You   like   my   body?*
> *Nadia: On the inside. Beautiful on the inside.*
> *Victor: You don't like my body?*
> *Nadia: Of course, you've got a great body.*
> *Victor: I've got a fucking fantastic body. I could have been in porno. Body like this I could be huge porno star. Guys go crazy for my body(p.9).*

Focusing on physical appearance and sexual appeal rather than emotional connection or appreciation of inner qualities, it portrays a superficial emphasis on external attributes. Also, dehumanizing interaction, where individuals are treated as possessions, emotions are repressed, and vulnerability is discouraged can be reinforced in the next part of the play when Victor states that he cannot tolerate ugly and unhealthy people.

> *Victor: I don't want to be near ill people. They have ugly bodies.*
> *Tim: Alright.*
> *Victor: I could be in any country in the world with any guy.*
> *Tim: But I paid for you. I own you.*
> *Victor: Please. What is it like to be ill?*
> *Tim: Are you feeling sorry for me?*
> *Victor: No.*
> *Tim: So what are you feeling?*
> *Victor: Nothing.*
> *Tim: Good boy, because I warn you, you feel anything, you're out, okay? And you pay your own way home(p.15).*

Postmodernism explores profound changes in human relationships, beauty standards, and social structures by examining topics such as the human body being viewed as a mere metaphor, the standardization of beauty perception, and its treatment as a consumer object. In the same way, Bauman argues that the prevailing obsession with physical appearance and the pursuit of a universally accepted ideal of beauty can be traced back to the rise of consumer culture. He asserts that consumerism promotes the notion that happiness and success can be achieved through the attainment of a perfect body image. "*You owe your body thought and care, and if you neglect that duty you should feel guilty and ashamed. Imperfections of your body are your guilt and your shame*"(Bauman, 2000, p.67). The distinction he draws between health and fitness aligns with postmodernist ideas that challenge fixed, absolute truths and highlight the fluidity and subjectivity of concepts. Therefore, Victor's perspective on the body and his aspiration for a desirable physique aligns with Bauman's interpretation of the role of health and fitness within postmodern society. *"How do you feel today? (if 1 am 'fit', 1 will probably answer 'I feel great'), its real test lies for ever in the future: 'being fit' means to have a flexible, absorptive and adjustable body"(2000, p.77).* This refers to the ability to adapt and change in response to various circumstances. In the context of the body, flexibility implies the capacity to adjust to different physical and environmental conditions.

> *'Fitness' means being ready to take in the unusual, the non-routine, the extraordinary - and above all the novel and the surprising. One may almost say that if health is about 'sticking to the norm', fitness is about the capacity to break all norms and leave every already achieved standard behind(2000, p.77-78).*

In our current fluid and rapidly changing culture and society, there has been a significant shift in the way the body's potential is being explored and cultivated. Bauman, who has included the consumer and producer bodies in a variety of his works, claims it is proper to refer to the body as autotelic at this particular instance. In the same manner, he resonates to Victor since his physical desires find fulfillment through his body, which is seen as the most significant value. According to Bauman, the consumer's body is inherently self-directed, possessing its own purpose and intrinsic value which he named *"autotelic"*(2005, p.91) Within a consumer-centric society, it emerges as the paramount value, representing the ultimate and central focus.

Its well-being is the foremost objective of all and any life-pursuits, and the final test and criterion of utility, advisability and desirability for the remainder of the human world and any one of its elements. As the enhancement of bodily sensations – bodily bliss, pleasures and joys – moves into the focus of life politics as its ultimate purpose, the body is cast in a unique position(Bauman, 2005, p.91).

Sexuality is another significant theme in *Some Explicit Polaroids*. The characters engage in various sexual acts and explorations, often blurring the lines between pleasure and power. Ravenhill does not shy away from depicting explicit sexual scenes, which some may find shocking or offensive. As a result of this complex affairs, it is stated that Tim has been suffered from HIV-positive. Throughout the scenes, various postmodern elements have been discussed and these implications have been covered through the character analysis by Sierz (2001) as follows:

In it, Nick, a left-wing radical, is released from prison after serving fifteen years for a savage attack in 1984 on Jonathan, a capitalist entrepreneur. He calls on Helen, his former partner, and finds that she has turned into a New Labour councillor with ambitions to become an MP. She doesn't want him to stay, so Nick drifts around city, meeting Nadia, a lap-dancer who spouts self-help cliches, and lives with Tim, an HIV-positive man whose boyfriend is Victor, a Russian doll addicted to trash. But while these youngsters just want to party, Nick struggles to adjust to a world whose values he doesn't understand(p.145).

However, these descriptions serve a purpose in the play, as they showcase the complex connections between power, desire, and human relationships. As stated above, Mark Ravenhill's *Some Explicit Polaroids* is a prime example of postmodernist theater. It embraces the characteristics of the In-Yer-Face movement mostly by fragmenting narratives, deconstructing meaning, and challenging established norms. Through its out of linearity structure, explicit content, and critique of consumerism, the play embodies the postmodernist ideals of uncertainty, disintegration and rebellion against prevailing ideologies in the same context of Bauman's postmodern sociology.

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CHAPTER THREE

3.   DISCUSSIONS AND CONLUSIONS

This work explores the evolution of the 20th century and the individual it has shaped and offers a brief introduction to the often controversial concept of postmodernism by exploring it from a multitude of perspectives. Examining a period when it was increasingly difficult to identify and convey it clearly revealed that the aim of this study was twofold in the light of the nature of the specified issue. First was to critically examine the underpinnings of contemporary society as it undergoes transformations within the framework of postmodernity in alignment with the insights of Zygmunt Bauman, a prolific author of the 20th and 21st centuries. Since it is challenging to explain postmodernism simply, the introduction provided an extensive guide to the subject. The study also aimed to assess and conduct a sociological analysis of two British theatrical productions, Martin Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life* and Mark Ravenhill's *Some Explicit Polaroids*, examining them within the contextual influence of postmodernism by the textual analysis method to interpret the characteristics of the plays based on Baumanian Postmodern Theories. Justified by the research question "How are postmodern elements conveyed through a Baumanian reading in the plays *Attempts on Her Life* and *Some Explicit Polaroids*?", the present study was grounded on the intersection of sociology and the art of theater. For this reason, the significance of this thesis, which is a collaborative study, can be explained as follows: By providing an inclusive perspective on theater, which evolved under several headings in the 20th century, this thesis not only identified the two plays with different theater approaches, but also evaluated humanity sociologically by applying the plays as a tool to demonstrate this matter. Given the controversial and confusing nature of postmodernism as a concept, adopting a broad perspective rather than a clear-cut explanation has facilitated a better understanding of the term. Based on this, the study has unfolded the subsequent findings pertaining to the term 'postmodernism'. Postmodernism is not a concept easily comprehended through a few explanations. Furthermore, formulating a comprehensive definition without bringing together different disciplines results in a reduction of the word's semantic complexity. In this respect, the introduction of the study attempted to compile often referred authors when the postmodern period is addressed with the goal of creating a shared image of

postmodernism. Also, it must be noted that according to the results of the present study there is a difference between postmodernism and postmodernity, as the latter characterizes a state of being, a status, circumstance or a condition. On the other hand, postmodernism, which is commonly referred to as a continuation of the modern period, encompasses the entire spectrum of understanding, perspective, or philosophy. This part also revealed that postmodernism is the result of every aspect positive and negative in nature created by modernity, rather than the aftermath of the modern period, because the concept of modernity requires innovation due to its structure and has no end. Even though a single, universal definition should not be searched after and it is perceived as a different and opposite movement, especially after modernism, the culmination of the study has led to the identification of a nuanced lexical combination to comprehend postmodernism: The social, political, philosophical and aesthetic vomiting of society facing the consequences of being modern.

This thesis also focused on theatrical perspectives from the 20th century that could be considered as postmodern and attempted to provide an overview of the processes from the earliest form of theater to its current standing in our changing world. For a deeper understanding of the postmodern framework, these processes were examined under titles such as Epic theatre, Political theatre, Theater of Cruelty, Theater of the Absurd, and it appeared that they experienced a departure from Aristotelian drama. The argument frequently presented is the distinction of these theatrical approaches from Aristotelian drama. However, this study demonstrated that, rather than focusing on the differences of these theatrical approaches, it examined how they contributed to the development of postmodern theater. In this respect, this study discussed the concept of text-oriented theater was no longer relevant in the final quarter of the 20th century regarding the distinction between theater and drama. Both In-Yer Face and Post-dramatic theater strategies have emphasized performance as much as text and challenged the hierarchy of theatrical components. Serving as postmodern theatre understandings, these concepts have elevated the audience, who can produce meaning just as much as the playwright, to the status of an element in theatrical activity, and they have considered theater as a multidimensional and collaborative aesthetic that extends from the stage to the actor, from the audience to the director. This study, consisting of an analysis of plays created two years apart 1997-1999, outlined the prominent theatrical approaches of the 1990s under

the canopy of postmodernism. With this, the other key point the study aimed to emphasize is that categorizing plays considered as In-Yer-Face or Postdramatic as postmodern theater allows for the opportunity to analyze these plays from both perspectives.

The present study also provided the theoretical basis, which covers both modern and postmodern periods and served as the foundation for the keywords and plays. The first section began with Zygmunt Bauman, who postulated the analysis of the postmodern age by engaging in a variety of topics and indicated how life has progressed to a fluid and uncontrollable point. Bauman refrains from explicitly addressing postmodernism; instead, he explores modernism and refers to the still-existing modern age as liquid modernity, or, in the same way, liquid existence. The ache of being modern is constantly conveyed in a fluid manner. Individuals in this society are in a constant state of consumption and turn into a fragmented subject whose power of acting is weakened. Therefore, it would be correct to say that only one thing is obvious: flow in a never-ending ambiguity. Bauman refers to a society and individuals that have become uniform as a result of globalization and are incapable to form their own identity in order to destroy it. However, this is refuted as follows: in a consumer society, decision-making mechanisms and morality have become challenging. The present study clarified that this society is nothing more than a postmodern society.

This thesis also focused on two plays, and postmodern assessments were conveyed through an analysis of these plays. Martin Crimp's *Attempts on Her Life*, which features both a postmodern being and technical facets of postmodern drama, was researched. It appears that the dominant narratives of the modernist mindset are disregarded by post modernism and Crimp deconstructs conventional outlines and character building conventions to demonstrate this rejection in *Attempts on Her Life*. Instead of an orderly plot, the play consists of 17 scenarios that can be performed in any order as each of them is autonomous of one another. This fragmentary structure generates a sense of disorientation and instability, reflecting the chaotic nature of postmodern society. Mostly Anne as the title refers 'Her', just like Ravenhill's characters, is unable to explain her own existence and is torn apart by a fluid society, but her situation evolves in each part, and her identity becomes increasingly blurred. In the words of Bauman, modernity's confusion and constant flux make the individual's search for identity difficult, as revealed by Anne, who transforms into several subjects in Crimp's play and even into an object. As it turns out, with the postmodern crisis, an individual is constantly tends to become

something else which is presented by Crimp; the play has an ensemble with a variety of personalities, all of whom claim to be her.

The other play addressed in this study, Mark Ravenhill's *Some Explicit Polaroids*, which incorporates postmodern features, was examined on the basis of Bauman. In the play, which technically includes In-Yer Face and Post-dramatic elements, the social structure, human relations, habits and the pure state of the individual are presented. However, considering the data obtained as a result of the literature review, the play has been again measured by theatrical elements and has been often subjected to theatrical features called In-Yer Face. In terms of its thematic content with references to the liquid society, it is proper to evaluate this play as a product of the fluid society. Therefore, the play should be approached with postmodern findings and this study has revealed that for sociological analyses, Zygmunt Bauman is an inevitable reference point. Zygmunt Bauman's sociological perspective provides to understand the complexities of today's society and can therefore be considered within a common framework with the play. Bauman's works emphasize that social relations are temporary and uncertain. Mark Ravenhill's play *Some Explicit Polaroids* coincides with Bauman's perspective. Bauman examines how the fixed rules and structures of modernity affect human relations. Ravenhill's play echoes this criticism. At this point, he identifies with Bauman, who investigates the effects of social change on the identity of the individual, and Mark Ravenhill, who studies his characters' search for identity and their stance against social norms in theatre. Bauman's focus on changing and uncertain social structures is also seen in Ravenhill's play. The uncertainty and rapid change experienced by the characters make it possible to read *Some Explicit Polaroids* through Bauman's eyes. Nick's identity, called a socialist, is also ignored by him. By stating that he is no more, he becomes a fragmented subject again. The feeling of belonging to a place, belonging to a person, and the search for it, which are depicted throughout the play, also represent the collapse of the postmodern world on values. What is intended to be conveyed through relationships is very similar to Bauman's expression: transience and ambiguity. Ravenhill, which deals with a phase where life flows very fast, displays how fluid ideologies and values are with characters whose identity construction is incomplete, with a 12-scene play. It is appropriate to infer that in this flow individuals are moved so quickly and at the same time blindfolded that they do not know what to feel, what to love, or what to defend. In an atmosphere of abundance of production, consumers' desire to constantly reconsume will not end. *Some Explicit Polaroids* reveals this as

follows: The so-called love consumed after Tim's death (thrown away like an expired object) directs Victor to the next consumption, which always represents a search and failure to find what he hopes for, because, as Bauman also argues, life cannot remain static in a fluid society, and anything can happen in this world, anything can be done, but it will not last forever. Although Bauman does not explicitly label himself as a postmodernist, and/or Aleks Sierz portrays *Some Explicit Polaroids* as an example of In-Yer-face theatre, it is quite clear that Bauman critically analyzes a postmodern world and much like *Attempts on Her Life*, *Some Explicit Polaroids* is a play that can be evaluated in many respects within the context of postmodern theater.

As stated earlier, within the scope of the research, postmodernism and postmodernity, as well as theater and various types of literacy have been addressed and the theoretical situation of the modern world is assessed through the striking portrayal of stage serving as a metaphor. It has been debated that the dichotomy between postmodernism and modernism, as well as the conflict between drama and post-drama, for years. These concepts are not mutually exclusive. It is possible to evaluate post-drama as the result of a formation of drama through time, which is similar to postmodernism, which is the accumulation of every aspect brought by modernity. The ultimate subject of these realms is the human, adrift in the current, first an individual, then a being, and subsequently a fragmented essence.

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