David Foster Wallace's *Infinite Jest*: Acquiring Post-Postmodern Shared Identity via Virtual Communication

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ABSTRACT

The current paper examines the ways David Foster Wallace's (1962-2008) encyclopedic and all-encompassing novel *The Infinite Jest*, can be considered a piece of art in which the central features of post-postmodernism can be traced. Furthermore, the paper tries to investigate the nature of human identity during a time when programs, applications, and virtual products such as WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have made it incomprehensibly conceivable to create a sense of communication and the ability to share between those who used to be painful, fragmented, separated, and alienated in the previous era of postmodernism. Alternatively, each painful, separated, fragmented, and alienated person is thought to be a dynamic operator, communicator, and lastly, a maker as opposed to a sole inactive watcher, peruser, and one-route communicator portrayed in postmodern narratives. Employing post-postmodern criticism as the theoretical framework and utilizing the ideas of post-postmodern critics such as Fredric Jameson, Alan Kirby, and Charles Reginald Nixon, the current study unravels that humans living in the post-postmodern era have been able to successfully receive such a new personality and identity thereby making a new chance to express it to have the capacity to leave the postmodern inactiveness, passivity, and detachment.

Keywords: Communication; Post-postmodernism; Shared identity; Social networks

INTRODUCTION

By the turn of the century and entering a new millennium, humans are at this point mindful that s/he is among one of the most vivid innovative transformations in history fluctuating all things including the methods of working, contacting, communicating, and so on. The revolution happening in this era in the world of technology fixating on PC, data, communication tools, and multimedia advances is frequently deciphered as the initial stages of social formation, which is in accordance with the advancement of information and knowledge, as focal parts in human life. This great change postures gigantic experiments to the so-called users to reconsider their fundamental principles, utilize the innovations in inventive and beneficial ways, and rebuild the basic structure of life to react valuably and dynamically to these social and technological changes human beings are currently encountering.

Unquestionably, the 20th century is called the most notable example of changes among other ones, and the 21st century even more. There are many changes in the primary one, which has been even malfunctioned and reversed later. If one wants to count them in general, he/she would be able to mention those that Fuller mentioned in his article "Change in

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the 20th Century" (2010), including; (a) change in political power; (b) change in the balance of world power; (c) change in the distribution of wealth; and (d) technological and scientific changes which enable us to contact people around the world almost instantly, instead of waiting days, months or longer, for a letter or messenger to deliver a message.

Needless to say, the last one, technological and scientific changes, is more obvious in the 21st century and it can be taken as the main differentiating factor between these two centuries. By technology, we mean something more than the communal advancement of human being from the 1960s until the 1990s. Technology in the years after these periods mostly focuses on the issues such as intercommunication and notably social networks. That is to say, social network tools and applications through cutting-edge gadgets like cell phones revolutionized the ways of communications and in turn, almost entirely replaced the traditional ways of informing as well as communication.

Hence, in the age of technology and e-communication, it is essential to pay attention to the desires and needs of the users who are running and using these social nets. The old-fashioned ways now have their paths to the world of disappearance, and each person is involved in the quest and the structure of the social nets. That is to say, nowadays different user get their desired information and news from different platforms in accordance with their desires. For instance, according to Lawrence (2012), "on Facebook, 70 percent of users get most of their news from friends and family, versus the only 13 percent who get it from news organizations and journalists, and 10 percent who get news from non-news organizations." In addition, "on Twitter, only 36 percent get news links from friends and family, as opposed to the 27 percent who get it from traditional news orgs and journalists, the 18 percent who get it from non-news organizations" and the 19 percent who does not receive any news. Therefore, by utilizing such social networks, humans can share news and spread new information about their standpoint and business rapidly and contact those who

have the same interests, habits, favors, etc. Consequently, this is why humans are living in the Age of Information and the methods for the distribution of information are continuously shifting and speedily evolving. This is very touchable in the use of communicative devices such as smartphones.

Henry James in his work "the Art of Fiction" (1884) states, "[a]rt lives upon discussion, upon experiment, upon curiosity, upon a variety of attempts, upon the exchange of views and the comparison of standpoints; and there is a presumption that those times when no one has anything particular to say about it […] are not times of development" (1). He refers to the point that art and writing strongly depend on many factors intermingled with each other, focusing on the exchange of views, discussions, and experiments for the creation of literary fiction. Therefore, when the communication and exchange of ideas are vaster, the created literary works are supposed to be more valuable and universal.

Undoubtedly, literature, as a manifesto, or better to say the accurate representation of human life, is not far or separated from such a shift and advancement. In the world of literature, there are two critical periods, the elements of which, to some extent, are in contrast with each other. The prior is postmodernism entering the philosophical vocabulary in 1979 with the publication of Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition*. The latter is post-postmodernism, famously dubbed by Fredric Jameson in 1984 with the publication of *The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* with a simple principle: *we no longer live in the world of postmodernism*. In the clarification of postmodernism, Lyotard "employs Wittgenstein's model of language games (1953) and concepts taken from speech act theory to account for what he calls a transformation of the game rules for science, art, and literature since the end of the nineteenth century" (Aylesworth, 2015, p). On the contrary, post-postmodernism studies a wide diversity of cultural manuscripts and books in tracking its analyses, including everything from the classic rock of Black Sabbath to the post-Marxism of Antonio Negri, and from reading

empirical literature to betting. Jeffrey T. Nealon in his book *Post-Postmodernism or, The Cultural Logic of Just-in-Time Capitalism* states:

> We live, in other words, in a very different world from the early to mid-'80s. Though we still live with the fallout of the '80s, it's clear that the economic component of our "cultural dominant" is no longer that particular brand of "postmodernism, or late capitalism." The neo-Marxist hope inscribed in the phrase "late capitalism" seems a kind of cruel joke in the world of globalization ("late for what?"). So among the tasks of periodizing the present, a collective molecular project that we might call post-postmodernism is to construct a vocabulary to talk about the "new economies" (post-Fordism, globalization, the centrality of market economics, the new surveillance techniques of the war on terrorism, etc.) and their complex relations to cultural production in the present moment, where capitalism seems nowhere near the point of its exhaustion. (p.15)

As Levich (2009) states, the causes of the emergence of changes and the creation of the new in the World (the nature of time) is the greatest enigma of science. Its solution will possibly lead to an understanding of the essence of many world phenomena" which are apparent in human life. (2) Consequently, if a writer intends to compose a literary and artistic work, particularly a novel, he/she would have the impact of such a movement and time in both the significance and the substance of the work. By this supposed impact of time, one would connote an effect, which is generally apparent in the personality of the characters of a novel and their newborn identity. By this, one might meritoriously separate the characters' personalities from each other—the character of a postmodern human as a postmodern character and the character of a post-postmodern human as a post-postmodern character.

Some literary works investigate the notion of identity from another perspective that has nothing to do with the newborn platforms of communication and the ways of acquiring identity through these internet-based platforms, the focal discussion of the present research. To mention some, Lewis D. Wurgaft (1995) clarifies the notion of identity as a bridge between formulations of personality development and the psychosocial aspects of cultural cohesiveness. He also refers to the postmodern perspective in defining a stable, integrative identity or self as an organizing agent in human behavior. He asserts that in gender identity, particularly, feminist theorists have criticized the construction of polarised gender identities both for their psychological inadequacy and their cultural bias. A parallel line of criticism has developed at the cultural or historical level. He also explains that these identity structures are more ambiguous and unstable and reflect the heterogeneous experience of contemporary culture. In his view, the postmodern reformulations of identity theory challenge the notion of cultural boundedness by emphasizing the discontinuities endemic to modern life and the inescapably plural character of contemporary identity.

David Michael Green (2007) explains nationalism as a phenomenon of modernity which is widely agreed. He also explains the implications of a shift toward a postmodern culture for patterns of political identification. Then he highlights five important contemporary trends and their possible effects on identity and introduces postmodern political identities to be more diffuse, diverse, instrumentally determined, context-dependent, and less essentialized than those of modernity. Finally, he concludes that they may be different enough from modern variants as to no more extended warrant the appellation of political identities. But he did not mention how a human should acquire these identities. The present study clarifies that no matter who you are or what you do. You may be a politician or a journalist with some unique ideas. However, you can easily spread your thought in post-postmodern platforms and be in touch with those who agree or disagree with you. Then you can form your political identity or revise or

even change your thoughts based on the interactions you receive from others.

Natasha Greenwood (2012) states that the term 'identity' is understood as the point of suture between the discourses which contextually position an individual and the cognitive processes which produce subjectivities. He believes that tradition has been displaced as the main source of shared identity with the rise of modernity. As a result, the modern individual's existence is dictated by an insistence on self-discovery, self-expression, and self-actualization. However, postmodern thinkers reject the grand narratives of modernity which claim that each person has a core, visual identity. Postmodernism asserts that the idea of 'self' is only perceptible when considered relative to others. Tradition, modernity, and postmodernity have had a distinct impact on the theorization of 'self' in wealthy, Western societies. However, the present study introduces mutual communication and understanding through web-based social media as the primary source of shared identity. The present study also states that the process of self-discovery and self-expression can be followed and succeeded if human uses these new-fangled platforms much more accessible than in previous eras.

Subsequently, the purpose of this paper is to think about the personality and identity of a post-postmodern human in the period when conveying application and programming projects like WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram, in addition to virtual worlds like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram and so forth have made it possible to have a sense of sharing among the divided people, something which is amazingly grasped instead of censure.

METHOD

As one of the pathfinders of Post-postmodernism, David Foster Wallace (1962-2008) scripts a sort of sweeping novel, *The Infinite Jest*, in which, similar to social networks and applications like Telegram, there are more than 171 characters as the users and, among them, the character of Hal plays the role of an administrator.

Besides, it ought to be noticed that the novel was composed in Late Capitalism, in the period of Facebook and other programming projects and the virtual world, the impact of which on the personality of the mutually divided characters who attempt to discover equivalence as opposed to distinction is quite striking. The Post-postmodern human now searches externally instead of internally to escape taking shelter in the realm of fantasy against what we saw in postmodern writings. In postmodern books, depression and alienation are engaged and the characters' personality is lost and decentered following in the footsteps of Derrida's Deconstruction. Nonetheless, in post-postmodernism, the characters' depression is a unique one; on account of present-day innovation and technology, they are forlorn, yet in the meantime, they are given a brilliant chance to leave their dejection and be dynamic while searching for another thought and a solution for themselves.

To concentrate on the art and specialty of creating a novel, whether a postmodern novel or a post-postmodern one (an era in which the advances in technology prepared a framework for people to communicate actively and mutually), a writer should consider the components and the standards of every period he/she writing in or about. In a similar vein, Wallace, who was almost at the center of such a circle, was keen and eager about humans, in his pain. That is to say, he was a responsive man of literature who was very interested in finding a way to discover the pain and healing methods for a post-postmodern human. Unlike post-postmodernism, literary works in postmodernism address issues that are dependent on simply a cause-effect relation in which the pains are given without any arrangement and elucidation and people and likewise the characters in literary works are surrounded by an unlimited world of loneliness and alienation without even a simple solution. Nonetheless, a post-postmodern writer like Wallace does not merely delineate the torment of a person like a postmodern literary writer; additionally, he/she presents his/her career as the perfect answer for such torment and estrangement.

Unlike the age of postmodernism, which deals somehow with anti-technological reactions, post-postmodernism emphasizes the interaction between humans and technology so that he can even define himself using it, which finally leads to creating a sort of new identity for himself. In fact, it is possible to say that unlike the human of postmodernism who is a sole reader, watcher, and listener, the human of post-postmodernism is a phone user, a clicker on the internet, the one who gets everything only by a press, surfs on the internet and social networks to find what he/she desires, chooses, moves and downloads and finally what is important is that he can share them. Thus it is crystal clear that one born before the late 1980s is totally different from the human of the recent age in terms of identity and personality. They— before the late 1980s—were dealing with those texts and things that were introduced to them but men in post-postmodernism choose what to read and see and can share what they find exciting and give online comments by giving at least a "like!" that is to say, through the virtual world of internet, human is likely to find those similar to him from every aspect one might imagine, from religion and politics to health care and beauty!

Furthermore, reality is another aspect that is challenged through the changes from postmodernism to post-postmodernism. Kirby states that "whereas postmodernism called 'reality' into question," the latter expresses "the real implicitly as me, now, interacting with its texts" suggesting that "whatever it does or makes is what is reality" (p. 4). Therefore, for a human who lives in the age of post-postmodernism reality is what he deals with at the moment.

In addition, from the perspective of philosophy and rationality, it can be comprehended that the essential errand of postmodernism is to reinterpret the inquiry about what information knowledge is and what can be considered knowledge. Postmodern scholars do not have confidence in any target presence of reality, value, truth, logic, etc.. In their opinion, these elements are supposed to be social development and the formation of cultural and social practices. The important fact about these practices is that they are injected into social groups and people so that they can be considered a list of activities that every normalized person has to do to gain the same sort of identity and personality as other people have. Nonetheless, when it comes to the age of post-postmodernism, the notion of reality is changed. There is no fixed definition or clarification to which every social group and gathering should adapt. The reality in post-postmodernism is to be considered as a label that is unique for each group or even each person; so that, the identity of each group and consequently each person is shaped through this favored reality.

In this regard, Charles Reginald Nixon explains post-postmodernism's high sensitivity to social and political issues as:

> Post-postmodernism is rooted in the social and political condition of the society, for this reason, first of all, it is tried to work on the impact of Capitalism on society in general and the emergence of Post-postmodernism in particular in a period when according to him the spread of global capitalism is 'complete.' It represents a time in which there is no 'outside' to capitalism. This is the period in which 'capitalism no longer looks outside but rather inside its domain, and its expansion is thus intensive rather than extensive.' This is the most significant factor that transforms the economic realities of post-postmodernism into a totalized cultural logic (p. 255).

In fact, one could undoubtedly proclaim that there would be no emergence of post-postmodernism if there was no suitable social and political condition. Therefore, a new concept such as postmodernism needs a suitable framework for its emergence and capitalism. Thus it is essential to say that this capitalism should be spread entirely through the global situation. It has its focus on its domain rather than the outside of its circle. One should keep in mind that the expansion and horizons of this sort of capitalism are more intensive rather than to be extensive.

What happens to humans and their identity in post-postmodernism when connecting with

others instantly, when sharing their interests on Facebook and the likes? When bombarded by lots of advertisements on TV? Opposite to the postmodern stance of technological wariness, contemporary writers use the abundant availability of information on other cultures and lifestyles to connect with and understand individuals contradictory to themselves. They do not shy away from technology but rather embrace it. Instead of being wary of its power, contemporary writers use the social aspects of technology to connect with those around them and those halfway around the world.

DISCUSSION

For Wallace, as a post-postmodern novelist, the minute features of post-postmodernism are more important than writing a bestseller novel. It is to say that when he was busy creating characters like Hal and many alike, he mainly considered the way that people behave, act and communicate in the world of reality. They are in search of finding their selves and their own desired identities. They want to communicate with other characters around, those having the same desires and needs. As Nicoline Timmer states:

> Nevertheless, a reader of *Infinite Jest* is undoubtedly able to see Hal as a self, albeit not as a unified and emotionally coherent, and stable self. How can that be? Is Hal's self simply not a proper narrative self then, but something else (whatever that may be), or should we perhaps find a solution in another direction and develop a more adept concept of what counts as a narrative? (Timmer, 2010, p. 322)

At the beginning of the novel, we note that Hal is not stable and emotional while the reason is not clear. There is something hidden and mysterious about him and this hidden part of his psyche has made him a lonely person. When we go through the process of reading the novel, we understand that Mr. Incandenza, Hal's father, committed suicide in a very threatening and frightening manner and the critical fact for Hal is that he found him dead at the age of "thirteen going on really old" (Wallace, 1996, p. 248).

Timmer continues describing his horrible situation of Hal as he states:

> The reported cases of multiple personality disorder, schizophrenia, and dissociative disorder challenge the idea of a unified self 'present to itself', and so some contributors conclude that in such cases narrative 'fails' because we can perhaps no longer speak of a narrative self in cases like these in which experiences cannot be ordered coherently from a unified perspective. (Timmer, 2010, p. 323)

Consequently, the reader gradually gets familiar with the sad, tragic, and frightening pastime of Hal that directly leads to his alienation. Therefore, we become aware of Hal's tragic and potentially scarring past. Therefore, as a former postmodern human, he is limited by his psychic pain and solitude, but as a post-postmodern character, he does not want to keep his passivity, instead, he is in search of finding a way to escape from this prison rather than taking refuge in it, and further healing such a pain. Thus, he is now a post-postmodern human and uses the elements of the recent era to remove his pain.

Somewhere else in her book, Nicoline Timmer refers to another point regarding a post-postmodern human. She states that:

> In *Infinite Jest* it is a psychic pain that appears to be the central existence of the novel, more so than any of the 171 characters that make an appearance in this text, including Hal. However, Hal does feature as an example case in point, as an empty self that supposedly has no interior feelings but is at the same time overwhelmed beyond speech by a persistent feeling of loss and loneliness. This psychic pain is what the characters have *in common*. However, through the 'logic' of what Wallace has named the 'solipsistic delusion', they do not know this, yet. Yet, it is what binds them. Nevertheless, they cannot get 'outside' it, this lonely feeling, enough to 'call it anything'. However, maybe that is not the point, finding an expression for it. Maybe simply referring to 'it' will do, as

long as at least two people are willing to tap into this shared reservoir of feelings: 'Do you feel it too?' (Timmer, 2010, p. 332)

Again, this psychic pain is what the characters have in common. However, through the logic of what Wallace has named the solipsistic delusion, they do not know this, yet. Nevertheless, it is what binds them. Although they apparently cannot get outside this lonely feeling, they share their loneliness with known and unknown people through the virtual world of social networks such as WhatsApp, Viber, Telegram, as well as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Instagram, the effects of them, is irrefutable.

Obviously, this painful loneliness is what Wallace repeatedly emphasizes as *The Infinite Jest* begins:

> I am seated in an office, surrounded by heads and bodies. My posture is consciously congruent to the shape of my hard chair. This is a cold room in University Administration, wood-walled, Remington-hung, double-windowed against the November heat, insulated from Administrative sounds by the reception area outside. Uncle Charles, Mr. deLint, and I were lately received. I am in here. [...] I believe I appear neutral, maybe even pleasant, though I've been coached to err on the side of neutrality and not attempt what would feel to me like a pleasant expression or smile. I have committed to crossing my legs I hope carefully, ankle on knee, hands together in the lap of my slacks. My fingers are mated into a mirrored series of what manifests, to me, as the letter X. [...]. There is something vaguely digestive about the room's odor. The high-traction sole of my complimentary Nike sneaker runs parallel to the wobbling loafer of my mother's half-brother, here in his capacity as Headmaster, sitting in the chair to what I hope is my immediate right, also facing Deans. The Dean at left, a lean yellowish man whose fixed smile nevertheless has the impermanent

> quality of something stamped into uncooperative material, is a personality type I've come lately to appreciate. This type delays the need for any response from me by relating my side of the story for me, to me. Passed a computer sheet packet by the shaggy lion of a Dean at the center, he is speaking more or less to these pages, smiling down. (p. 162)

As it is apparent in the passage above, as a man who has suffered a lot, Hal has many problems, which are directly rooted in the situation of being alone. When he is explaining himself, the reader can feel the pain. Wallace wants to say that people are no longer interested in the world of loneliness; they are no longer alone; instead, they are surrounded by the heads and bodies of people they have to communicate with; however, they feel pain.

At this juncture, the question that springs up refers to the fact that what a post-postmodern human can do when he is trapped and caught in the middle of solitude between the walls of a cold room, Remington-hung, and double-windowed which is walled with wood and therefore, even there is no possibility to see those who are around him. There should be a way to get rid of this fabricated alienation. This newly established form of alienation has changed the identity of this postmodern human in a way that he believes to be a neutral and dispassionate person with no identity of his own. He should give himself a chance to express himself, which he defines as a pleasant expression or even a kind of smile, something that definitely brings him activity, passion, livelihood, and thus his wanted and desired identity. It is defined as something that redeems him from the prison of being passive, crossing the legs, putting ankle on knee, hands together in the lap of slacks, and simply doing nothing but suffering. He is entrapped in a world of habits and ordinariness. His activities are monotonous, causing him to be semi-dead. He should find a path to express himself to those who are not far from him, or even far from him in other rooms. This gloomy situation goes on for Hal until the time that he steps into a new world in which the easiest thing is to communicate and it is in the world of post-

postmodernism that Hal may find a pain healer rather than only a pain killer. Because a man like Hal is living in the age of technology, the first and the most influential tool that can assist him is the computer, which has the ability of personalization for humans.

However, this outrage against solitude and passivity even goes beyond the horizons of postmodern human understanding. A postmodern human-only deals with TV and its effects, but today is communication through the internet. Wallace makes this fact clear in his novel when the main character, Hal, states:

> American mass entertainment became inherently proactive and consumer-driven. And because advertisements were now out of the televisual question — any halfway-sensitive Power-PC's CPU could edit out anything shrill or ungratifying in the post-receipt Review Function of an entertainment-diskette — cartridge production (meaning by now both the satellites 'spontaneous dissemination' of viewer-selected menu-programming and the factory-recording of programming on packaged 9.6 mb diskettes available cheap and playable on any CD-ROM-equipped system) yes cartridge production — though tentacular controlled by an InterLace that had patented the digital-transmission process for moving images and held more stock than any one of the five Baby Bells involved in the InterNet fibre-optic transmission-grid bought for. 17 on the dollar from GTE after Sprint went belly-up trying to launch a primitively naked early mask- and Tableauxless form of videophony — became almost Hobbesianly free-market. (1996, p. 163-164)

Herewith, Wallace points to the critical fact that nowadays, with the emergence of new technology, people are no more passive and they are not under the direct influence of televisual questions; instead, they are active and can express their reviews and voices through PCs and CPUs as the preliminary tools of personalization for a human to have a voice of their own. A man like Hal is living in a world where he can select the direction of his observations through Viewer-Selected Programs and Packages. He can choose the identity he is searching for and the activities suitable for him. This is called the productive power of a post-postmodern human.

In addition, is a kind of production that enables him to escape from the previous era's solitude and find those in an equal mental stage with himself. With the appearance of such technological advancement, a post-postmodern man like Hal, as mentioned directly in the passage derived from the novel, can move and share his desired images to those he likes (something like Instagram), transfer selected sorts of files (something like RapidShare), store them forever by CD-ROM Equipped Systems, pay for the things that he wants to buy (something like eBay) in free markets and even share and contact by video (videophony: something like Skype and YouTube) with others he likes.

In addition, as Fredric Jameson in his work "Postmodernism and Consumer Society" (1982) discusses, in the new era of post-postmodernism, there exists the impossibility of wholeheartedly accepting the notion of Postmodernism because the world is covered and surrounded by the exclusively advances in the world of technology. In this regard, he states:

> "[t]he concept of Postmodernism is not widely accepted or even understood today. Some of the resistance to it may come from the unfamiliarity of the works it covers, which can be found in all the arts: the poetry of John Ashbery, for instance, but also the much simpler talk poetry that carat out of the reaction against complex, ironic, academic modernist poetry in the '60s; the reaction against modern architecture and in particular against the monumental buildings of the International Style, the pop buildings and decorated sheds celebrated by Robert Venturi in his manifesto, Learning from Gas Vegas; Andy Warhol and Pop art, but also the more recent Photorealism; in music, the moment of John Cage but also the later synthesis of classical and "popular"

styles found in composers like Philip Glass and Terry Riley, and also punk and new-wave rock with such groups as the Clash, the Talking Heads and the Gang of Four, in film, everything that comes out of Godard - contemporary vanguard film and video - but also a whole new style of commercial or fiction films, which has its equivalent in contemporary novels as well, where the works of William Burroughs, Thomas Pynchon and Ishmael Reed on the one hand, and the French new novel on the other, are also to be numbered among the varieties of what can be called postmodernism; (1)

He places emphasis on the fact that, nowadays, Postmodernism is no more generally acknowledged and comprehended. In his view, there may exist many reasons for this, but a great portion of the conflicts might originate from the unaccustomedness of the literary canon it encompasses. Thus, for example, the artistic works such as the poetry of John Ashbery and the works of other artists such as Gas Vegas, Andy Warhol, John Cage, Philip Glass, Terry Riley, William Burroughs, Thomas Pynchon, and finally Ishmael Reed are known as the works of art that can be put in the circle of Postmodernism, but they are not welcomed in the recent days.

Herewith, Jameson is anticipating that someday, age comes into existence that will reject the notion and concept of Postmodernism after a long time that it has been accepted. In this regard, the important fact is to know that. In contrast, the works of art from 20 years ago have received praise and attraction from ordinary people as well as the critics and commentators who still hold fast to the characteristics of Postmodernism, these works keep on pushing aside the limits of thought, hypothesis as well as the taste of postmodern literature. Clearly, there would exist no clearly distinguishable break between the two subsequent ages of Postmodernism and Post-postmodernism. This unclear gap shall create a situation that seems to be very complex to embody and significantly more deceptive to portray the distinctions. To clarify the distinction, there are some important qualifications attributed to Post-postmodernism which can distinguish the latter from the former one including the ascent of craftsmanship as a product, globalization and expanded scattering of data, emphasis on inter-medial creative practices, the mind-boggling meta-attitude of authors, and recurrence of old-style painting and photography.

Consequently, a postmodern man like Hal, who cannot adapt himself to the postmodern condition, is now equipped with the communicative tools of technology and can create his identity, but virtually. For a man like him, communication as a virtual (not through real meetings) solution has its advantages, the most important of which is to be easy and at hand. When a person saves their time, has no limitations, uses freely, and chooses on their own desires, s/he is more eager to communicate. Therefore, the e-communication for a post-postmodern human has the same characteristics and that is why one could be able to express himself freely while having a great kind of tendency toward introducing his/her own self to others and finding those who are at the same level of mentality, appreciation, desire, needs, and understanding.

Wallace continues:

> No more Network reluctance to make a program too entertaining for fear its commercials would pale in comparison. The more suitable a given cartridge was, the more orders there were for it from viewers, and the more orders for a given cartridge, the more InterLace kicked back to whatever production facility they'd acquired it from. Simple. Personal pleasure and gross revenue looked, at last, to lie along the same demand curve, at least as far as home entertainment went. And as InterLace's eventual outright purchase of the Networks' production talent and facilities, of two major home-computer conglomerates, of the cutting-edge Froxx 2100 CD-ROM licenses of Aapps Inc., of RCA's D.S.S. orbiters and hardware-patents, and of the digital-compatible patents to the still-needing-to-come-down-in-price-a-little technology of HDTV's visually

enhanced color monitor with micro processed circuitry and more lines of optical resolution — as these acquisitions allowed Noreen Lace-Forché's cartridge-dissemination network to achieve vertical integration and economies of scale, viewers' pulse-reception- and cartridge-fees went down markedly; and then the further increased revenues from consequent increases in order- and rental-volume were plowed presciently back into more fiber-optic-InterGrid-cable-laying, into outright purchase of three of the five Baby Bells InterNet'd started with, into extremely attractive rebate-offers on special new InterLace-designed R.I.S.C.-grade High-Def-screen PCs with mimetic-resolution cartridge-view motherboards (recognisably renamed by Veals's boys in Recognition 'Teleputers' or 'TPs'), into fiber-only modems, and, of course, into extremely high-quality entertainments that viewers would freely desire to choose even more. (p. 165)

He makes the fact apparent that networks, which are based on the internet, are essential because it is the users' desire that creates them; that is to say, that they respond to the needs of the users and progress based on what the users and viewers acquire. Likewise, the direction according to which these networks progress depends on the users since they can change them according to their needs, connections, and interests. This system of sharing leads the users towards a technological and internet-based integration, which is very interesting. When one is placed in a situation that is exciting and attractive, he/she can be creative and further be productive agents. Therefore, utilizing HD computers, internet modems, smartphones, and other devices alike, as Wallace mentioned in the passage above, the willing users can choose their own entertainment, subject, issue, and discussion freely. Wallace also mentioned the use of Teleputers—a telephone with highly qualified technology by which people can make a video call—as another way to be free from the prison of loneliness; since, thanks to the expression "seeing is believing," they have

more than one sense involved in the process of communication and that is why they feel emotionally closer to each other.

The examples mentioned are only a few among a thousand examples that Wallace mentioned in his novel to clarify, explain, and represent a post-postmodern human and his most important feature, his identity. Wallace believed that human is defined through social networks and new applications by which they can express themselves and escape from the prison of loneliness and passivity and find ways of being an active and communicative human.

CONCLUSION

For clinching the discussion, bearing in mind the two late ideological sections in the arrangement of contemplations in English writing called postmodernism and postmodernism, one can say that the world and literary writings and especially novels have witnessed changes from all angles. This movement is apparent in the framework of society, which can be comprehended as an elaborated interconnected system in which all the portions are intermixed with each other. In contrast with postmodernism, the era of post-postmodernism, thanks to the emergence of communication technologies, has a wide range of components impacting variables for the life of humankind, particularly his character and identity. In this regard, David Trotter (2013) states that "[c]ommunications technology is an attitude before it is a machine or a set of codes. It is an idea about the prosthetic enhancement of our capacity to communicate. The writers who first woke up to this fact were not postwar, postmodern." (2). With the occurrence and the fast progress of innovations and technology, particularly internet-based ones, human gains another character and a novel identity. Dissimilar to a postmodern human, an underestimated, unvoiced, aloof, and inactive spectator and one-way communicator and connector, a human living in post-postmodern discovers himself encompassed with the universe of technology, innovation, correspondence, and communication.

Moreover, on the minute comprehension of post-postmodernism, one can refer to Fredric

Jameson's idea as a kind of clarifying issue. That is to say, the comparison with Jameson's articulation of postmodernism as the 'cultural logic of late capitalism' can help us to understand the shift from postmodernism to post-postmodernism. For, in Jameson's crucial definition of postmodernism, it is the equalizing spread of capitalism that produces a cultural practice of absolute equalization of space and surface; it is "what you have when the modernization process is complete and nature is gone for good". (Jameson, 1991, p. ix)

Thus, it is the shift that matters, and this change is no longer possible without the existence of capitalism. When this so-called process goes on, humanity and his identity come to the age of technology and this is the emergence of post-postmodernism that changes the non-active, silent, reading, alienated and painful human to the active, speaking, productive, and lively human who is an agent and responsible for generating communication and intercommunication between people whom he/she may know or not, anywhere and anytime.

Therefore, this is the post-postmodernist derivative of Jameson's ideas, and "in the condition of totally globalized capitalism, it is the intensification of already existing surfaces that matters" (Jameson 2003, p. 108.). "This logic requires the increasing capitalization of what is existent: through branding, through the production of excess value, through the multiplication of meanings rather than surfaces" (Nixton, 2013, p. 255). Hence, this is when the existence and the actions of humans have importance. Humanity plays the role of an admin responsible for creating meaning that follows the norms and desires of him/her and those who have the same norms. This is when all parts and members of society can talk in their own voices and now this new identity seems to be highly active.

Additionally, when a human puts his steps through the age of technology, one could refer to Alan Kirby's quote as he says, "postmodernism is dead and buried. In its place comes a new paradigm of authority and knowledge formed under the pressure of new technologies and contemporary social forces"

(p.1). Through technology and specifically social forces, one could notice the use of the mentioned social networks and applications such as Facebook and alike. "Put simply, many of the fiction writers who have come on the scene since the late 1980s seem to be responding to the perceived dead end of postmodernism, a dead-end that has been reached because of postmodernism's detachment from the social world and immersion in a world of non-referential language" (McLaughlin, 2004, p. 53).

Hence, this post-postmodern human is no longer detained by the confinement of the past period; rather, he is himself and can choose. He can communicate and express his own particular thoughts, interests, longings, wishes, and needs. Indeed, he does not smother and suffocate himself and his ideas by being a passive agent. Dissimilar to the aloof human of postmodernism, a human inhabiting the era of post-postmodernism resembles a creator, who makes, breaks the constraints, talks for his sake, and speaks with what the web-based innovations present him. In this way, the post-postmodern author, David Foster Wallace, in his comprehensive and all-embracing work named *The Infinite Jest* demonstrates that human possesses another character and a novel identity, unlike that of a postmodern human. For him, this identity belongs to someone who is dynamic, a maker, an aficionado of correspondence and communication, and one who even can establish a universe of his own through internet-based society, nets, and applications. Similarly, Wallace in his novel introduced characters (such as Hal) who are straightforwardly affected by such a revolution and are using and managing the innovative and technological blessings in their ordinary lives. For example, Hal's time is mainly spent during the act of communicating and speaking with individuals who have the same yearnings and interests as him. That is to say, for Hal, it is an agony healer instead of a painkiller which keeps him away from the universe of loneliness and isolation and, on the other hand, the direct unsatisfactory effects of TV, as the weapon of postmodernism bombarding people with some purposeful information which blocks the

gateways of understanding, awareness, and knowledge and gives him an artificial identity which has no manifestation in the world of reality.

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Biodata

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