

**T.C.
ISTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**



**AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEMATIC ASPECT OF THE CONSUMER
SOCIETY FROM *I, ROBOT* TO *WESTWORLD* THROUGH
POSTMODERNISM**

MASTER'S THESIS

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**Department of English Language and Literature
English Language and Literature Program**

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September, 2021

ONAY FORMU

DECLARATION

I hereby declare with respect that the study “An Analysis of The Problematic Aspect of The Consumer Society from *I, Robot* to *Westworld* through Postmodernism”, which I submitted as a Master / PhD thesis, is written without any assistance in violation of scientific ethics and traditions in all the processes from the Project phase to the conclusion of the thesis and that the works I have benefited are from those shown in the Bibliography. (02/09/2021)

Tuğçe ARAS VURAL

FOREWORD

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ABSTRACT

Postmodernism rising against modernism is a literary and philosophical movement criticising the political, sociological, economic unrest of the period generated during modernism and manifesting itself in the fields of literature, media, architecture, music and a quite number of branches. Postmodernism emerging after the Second World War is also the period that technology advances and thus, industry develops. These three main incidents constitute the context and the content of postmodernism. Postmodernists awakening in the wreck the war brings along expostulate political, literary, sociological and economic issues through the characteristics of postmodernism such as irony, parody, intertextuality, paranoia/technophobia, metafiction, hyperreality/ technoculture. Especially, technology plays a big role since some of the characteristics of postmodernism are based on technological improvements. Besides, it owns impacts on economy because the industry begins to produce more as technology progresses, and on consumption of these increasing products. Mass communication devices such as media, are utilized to encourage consuming and to establish the consumption habits in the society. Thus, the consumer society is generated. *I, Robot* and *Westworld* are masterpieces to examine the characteristics of postmodernism and the consumer society as a genre of postmodernism.

Key Words: Postmodernism, Technophobia, The Consumer Society, Mass Media, Digital Diseases

I, ROBOT'TAN WESTWORLD'E TÜKETİM TOPLUMUNUN PROBLEMATİK YÖNÜNÜN POSTMODERNİZM ARACILIĞIYLA ANALİZİ

ÖZET

Modernizme tepki olarak doğan, modernizm esnasında oluşan politik, sosyolojik ve ekonomik huzursuzlukları eleştiren ve kendini edebiyat, medya, mimarlık, müzik ve daha birçok alanda ortaya koyan postmodernizm edebi ve felsefi bir teoridir. İkinci Dünya Savaşı'ndan sonra ortaya çıkan postmodernizm aynı zamanda teknolojinin ve dolayısıyla da endüstrinin geliştiği dönemi kapsamaktadır. Bu üç ana olay postmodernizmin içeriğini ve kaynağını oluşturmaktadır. Savaşın beraberinde getirdiği yıkımın etkisiyle aydınlanan postmodernist düşünürler politik, edebi, sosyolojik ve ekonomik meseleleri ironi, parodi, metinlerarasıcılık, paranoya/teknofobi, üstkurmaca, hipergerçekçilik/teknokültür gibi postmodernizmin karakteristikleri aracılığıyla eleştirirler. Özellikle, postmodernizmin bazı karakteristikleri teknolojik gelişmelere dayandığı için, teknoloji büyük rol oynamaktadır. Ayrıca, teknoloji geliştikçe endüstriyel anlamda daha fazla üretim olduğundan teknolojinin ekonomi üzerinde ve fazla olan üretimin tüketiminde de etkisi bulunmaktadır. Bunun yanı sıra, medya gibi kitle iletişim araçları da tüketimi özendirmek ve tüketim alışkanlıklarının toplumda yerleşmesini sağlamak için kullanılırlar. Böylece, tüketim toplumu da tüm bu etkenlerin birleşimiyle oluşmuş olur. *I, Robot* ve *Westworld* postmodernizm karakteristiklerini ve postmodernizmin bir parçası olarak nitelendirilebilen tüketim toplumunu incelemek için başyapıtlardır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Postmodernizm, Teknofobi, Tüketim Toplumu, Kitle İletişim Araçları, Dijital Hastalıklar

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I. INTRODUCTION

Human beings have entered into the process of evolution in various fields with the new ideas and developments of the postmodern era. The effects of these developments and new ideas can be observed in every phase of human beings' life and they are connected with the events occurring during the 20th century. The outbreak of the second world war and the ravage of it play a significant role at the emergence of postmodernism. The devastating environment the war leaves behind changes the way of thinking and makes the society question their existence and their purposes in life. Thus, a new era in which mentality alters called as postmodernism begins.

During postmodern period, each conventional approach, method or understanding radically changes and evolves. Literary, artistic, philosophical or architectural products are re-analysed and re-evaluated through the characteristics of postmodernism identified as irony, parody, intertextuality. These works produced during modernism have a new status in the postmodern era since they are criticised and examined from a different perspective. In addition, new works are presented with postmodern ideas and technological advancements related to metafiction, hyperreality/ technoculture and paranoia/technophobia that are taken into consideration as other postmodern characteristics.

Economy owns a significant place and role in this environment of change during postmodernism since the industry advances in this period, and a great number of industrial activities affecting economy take place. Due to this reason, economy sets its seal on the new world order, and it becomes grounds for new theories, movements, discoveries and inventions. Relatedly, the significant term, 'digital technology', comes into people's life in the postmodern era. It can be considered as the most prominent invention of the 20th century, and it causes radical changes in every field of the postmodern world including economy in particular, culture and literature. In other words, economy and technology are deeply connected to each other and they dominate the developments and changes of other disciplines. In

time, technology becomes a medium utilized by capitalists to control the society. Economy plays a great role for the reason of this since capitalists manage manufacturing, and economic activities and increasing number of products in consequence of the industrial development are needed to be consumed. Therefore, advanced technology is a golden opportunity for the capitalist system to govern not only economic balances and operators but also the society. Thus, an economic structure as desired by the capitalism is constituted, and a community that does not object to this structure and even becomes more dependent on it day by day, which is called the consumer society, is created. For this purpose, an artificial world or a hyperreality is invented by means of technology to encourage consuming or to impose consuming habits to be adopted by the consumer society. In this way, they could take people away from reality and create individuals glorifying consumption in this artificial world. From this point of view, the consumption system is associated with economy and technology changing and progressing during the postmodern period and because of the ideas postmodernism brings along, so it can be stated that it is directly linked to postmodernism itself, and the consumer society can also be considered as an important part of postmodernism since it is a description of the postmodern society.

The association of the consumer society and technology makes its case in a whole range of literary works as well as the other characteristics of postmodernism since the 20th century. The characteristics of the consumer society such as the elements of abundance and growth, utilization of signs and codes, the relationship of needs and satisfaction, the impact of enjoyment and happiness, the function of personalization, the feeling of everydayness, consuming body and time, the nostalgia effect and anomie in the consumer society also contribute largely. Moreover, the task of creating the hyperreality that consumption gives to technology to divert people's perception is linked to media since this manmade world can be formed by means of media which is another theme of the consumer society. In this sense, it can be stated that there is a deep connection between the consumer society and postmodernism. In other words, the consumer society can be considered as a genre of postmodernism.

I, Robot, written by Isaac Asimov and published between 1940 and 1950, and *Westworld*, dystopic film written and directed by Michael Crichton in 1973, and TV series generated in the 21st century are significant examples to examine the theory of

postmodernism due to the fact that they belong to the postmodern period since they contain the characteristics of postmodernism such as irony, parody, intertextuality, metafiction or hyperreality, paranoia/ technophobia. They are also noteworthy works to analyse the evolution of the consumer society as one of the outcomes of postmodernism. Even if *I, Robot* is a literary work while *Westworld* is a product of media, a medium of communication, it can also be taken into consideration as a part of communication because literary works are tools of communicating before the invention of TV or internet, or technological developments. Besides, they are similar in subject and content since both of them contain narrations about robots or artificial intelligence. In a way, *Westworld* is the digital age or dystopian version of the high-tech world Asimov creates much earlier. In other words, Isaac Asimov considered as one of the pioneers of science fiction, draws a picture of the future world dominated by technology and *Westworld* can be taken into consideration as this future world Asimov commences in which technology's dystopic effects are at the forefront. In addition, since they are considered as science-fiction, they possess a great role according to Asimov. He emphasizes the importance of sci-fi works by stating that "in the battle against the cult of ignorance a branch of popular literature holds out for the respectability of brains" (Asimov, 1957: 25)

I, Robot displays the environment and the situation of the society in the early period of postmodernism while *Westworld* presents the current state of people at the present time. Therefore, the progress of postmodernism as well as the transformation of the society into a consumer society since the very beginning can be observed and analysed. This analysis can be conducted through the characteristics of postmodernism and the consumer society. *I, Robot* and *Westworld* include stories or plots to examine these elements. Additionally, in *Westworld*, disorder of the consumer society both increase and come to the new stage which can be explained as digital illness. To put it another way, the more technology progresses in time and gives birth new digital inventions, the more consumerism asserts itself in mass communication and eventually, it produces digital diseases considered as anomie in the consumer society.

The aim of this thesis is to analyse this problematic aspect of the consumer society from *I, Robot* to *Westworld* in the enlightenment of postmodernism. It comprises five chapters. The first chapter provides an introduction summarising the

aim, subject, importance and background information about *I, Robot* and *Westworld*. In the second chapter, theoretical background including the history of postmodernism, the characteristics of postmodernism, the consumer society as genre of postmodernism with its elements and the connection of technology/ mass media and the consumer society is presented. The third chapter analyses *I, Robot* from the aspect of postmodern theory, and the first state of the consumer society described in this work of Asimov. In the fourth chapter, the characteristics of postmodernism and the elements of the consumer society as well as its problematic transformation at the present time are examined. The fifth chapter contains the conclusion part consisting of a brief evaluation of the analysis in the previous chapters and the result reached at the end. The result is that the consumer society as the genre of postmodernism becomes even more problematic as technology develops further and generates digital diseases.

II. POSTMODERNISM AND CONSUMER SOCIETY

A. The History of Postmodernism

The theory of postmodernism is briefly identified as a reaction against modernism and its characteristics. In other words, it rejects the intellectual assumptions and values of the modern period which have maintained their existence since the Enlightenment era. In fact, the definition of postmodernism includes not only various explications and approaches of different theorists, but also significant and more detailed content distinguishing itself from modernism. As all the theories are related to the political and historical events from past to present, postmodernism is associated with the incidents happened in the 20th century. In contrast to other theories, the effect of postmodernism can be observed in numerous areas of human beings' life. It "manifests itself in many fields of cultural endeavor-architecture, literature, photography, film, painting, video, dance, music, and elsewhere" (Hutcheon, 2002:1). Relatedly, Featherstone contributes that "postmodernism is of interest to a wide range of artistic practices and social science and humanities disciplines because it directs our attention to changes taking place in contemporary culture" (Featherstone, 2007:11).

Some theorists such as Jameson define postmodernism in relation to culture and nature. He states that "postmodernism is what you have when the modernization process is complete and nature is gone for good. It is a more fully human world than the older one, but one in which "culture" has become a veritable "second nature" (Jameson, 1991:8). Besides, considering that postmodernism is born in the 20th century, the impact of Second World War cannot be ignored. The tense created by the war itself and the environment generated after the war have brought about pessimistic ideas appearing in the society and psychological problems to be dealt with. This situation makes people question the reliability of what they believe and trust until that day and causes postmodernism to rise by paving the way for changes of intellectual assumptions and cultural values of the modern period. Surely, other factors such as technological or economic developments play an important role to

create new ways to see the world as distinct from modernism since they are prominent elements of the 19th and 20th centuries, and they own a relationship based on self-interest.

Different views and thoughts of various theorists exist to define postmodernism and it can be considered as the subjects of debates, especially in the late 20th century.

“Some see it as simply the continuation and development of modernist ideas; others have seen in postmodern art a radical break with classical modernism; while others again view past literature and culture retrospectively through post-modern eyes, identifying texts and authors as ‘already’ postmodern” (Selden, et al., 2005:197).

As it impacts on great numbers of fields and it is affected by many areas, describing its definition begets miscellaneousness and confusions. It has been a research study for several leading theorists and philosophers from different continents or countries such as Lyotard, Habermas, Jameson, Baudrillard etc. In their works, they present their opinions about postmodernism or the relation between postmodernism and modernism from the aspect of academic disciplines such as social and political theory, architecture, sociology, history, philosophy, media, art and cultural studies, and cultural production like film, music and architecture since they come into view with the effect of the dominant philosophical idea or movement of a specific era. Considering the variety of the definition of postmodernism, the difference between the terms; ‘postmodernism, postmodern and postmodernity’ or ‘modernism, modern and modernity’ should be mentioned since this difference possesses a significant place in defining the theories and it poses a problem.

“The three terms, ‘postmodern, postmodernity and postmodernism are in fact often used interchangeably: as a way of periodising post-war developments in advanced media and capitalist economies; to describe developments within or across the arts – which frequently do not synchronize with the first set of developments or with each other; and to signal an attitude to or position on these developments” (Selden, et al., 2005:198).

Besides, theorists like Habermas allege that 'the project of modernity' is unfinished. According to him, the revolution of industrialisation regarded as the second step of modernism fulfils its mission, but modernity still remains itself. In this circumstance, one should know the explanation of these terms. What Habermas claims is not the death of modernism but one of the developments within this period. Even if they are related to each other or the industrial revolution is identified with modernism, it does not prove neither modernism nor modernity is finished. Moreover, it is also stated that the terms 'postmodern' or 'postmodernity' refers to the general developments in the late twentieth century while 'postmodernism' makes reference to the developments in literature, culture and art.

Another problem discussed by the theorists is related to the question whether postmodernism is "a continuation of dominant features in an earlier modernism and in avant-garde movements or radical break with them" (Selden, et al., 2005:198). Additionally, debates proceed "about the identity and boundaries of these earlier movements and hence the significance of their being subsumed or superseded" (Selden, et al., 2005:198). According to some theorists, postmodernism indicates "a deplorable commodification of all culture, and the loss of tradition and value crucially embodied in the twentieth century in modernist works" while others think that it brings a sort of freedom from narrow-minded "orthodoxies of high culture and a welcome dispersal of creativity across the arts and new media, open now to new social groups" (Selden, et al., 2005:198). In this circumstance, interpretations about the definitions of these terms cause complications and separations. No matter how these discussions affect the analysis of modernism and postmodernism, postmodernism signals a change and a progress in society with the help of economical, technological, cultural, philosophical, historical and sociological improvements. These academic disciplines and postmodernism are an inseparable whole and they bring one another into existence. In addition, modernity including the social, political, cultural and philosophical values derived from the Enlightenment is associated with the conscious of society created as a result of the developments happened during modernism, which affects their thinking system and behaviours, and it does not vanish suddenly.

Apart from this, Jameson expresses by rejecting Habermas' idea that:

“...the American reading of modernism that has been sullied and has lost its purity and so must be recovered. However, Habermas's modernism is seen in the context of 1910 and is therefore something very different. Modernism elsewhere died a natural death and is thus no longer available, but in Germany modernism was of course cut short by Nazism; thus, there is an unfulfilled character to that project which I presume someone like Habermas can attempt to take up again. But that option is not viable for us” (Stephanson et al., 1987:23).

From this point of view, describing the difference between modernism and postmodernism or perspectives to identify the theories varies from one country to another or from one culture to another. Jameson indicates the American viewpoint while Habermas represents the German understanding of modernism. Because of this reason, great numbers of ideas related to postmodernism or the relationship between modernism and postmodernism exist.

Jean-François Lyotard whose ideas are one of the most quoted in this field states postmodern as “incredulity toward metanarrative” (Lyotard, 1984: xxiv). He acts with suspicion towards all the information depicted to the society, which is ‘metanarrative’, before the Second World War and the rise of the industrialization including the mass production. “These metanarratives traditionally serve to give cultural practices some form of legitimation or authority” (Butler, 2002:13). Thus, they directly impact on human beings' lives from cultural norms to literature, and they even affect what to say, what to eat or what to believe unconsciously. According to Lyotard, this hegemony loses its influence with the Second World War since it leads people to question the world around them and to doubt what they believe is either exactly what they believe or what they are exposed to believe. So, for him, postmodern is the period in which this interrogation starts. In his work, *The Postmodern Condition* (1979), he focuses on cultural postmodernism directly related to metanarrative, and he states that “the criteria regulating the ‘truth claims’ of knowledge derive from discrete, context-dependent ‘language games’, not absolute rules or standards” (Selden, et al., 2005:204-205). Thus, truth is constructed through metanarrative created by dominant hegemonies. According to him, human liberation affiliated with the Enlightenment loses its validity. The Enlightenment

brings along political, ecological disasters such as war crisis or holocausts, so the Enlightenment associated with modernism results in bureaucracy oppression, indigence and great numbers of problems since the narrative of the Enlightenment consisting of equality and liberation brings forth the opposite of what it actually promises. Related to this, the other narrative affiliated with the revolutionary tradition is inadequate to challenge this domination even if Marxism and Hegelians own speculative history perspective.

“In Lyotard’s view ‘the truth claims’ and assumed consensus of a universalizing history are repressive and untenable. Deprived of these premises, ‘postmodern’ science pursues the technical and commercial aims of optimal performance: a change reinforced by new, computerized technologies” (Selden, et al., 2005:205).

Thus, a new source of legitimation is created which is “invested in more modest and indebted to the radical avant-garde imperative to experiment and ‘make it new’” (Selden, et al., 2005:205). In other words, Lyotard states that the idea of truth is deconstructed under favour of postmodern science and postmodernism can be considered as “an investigative aesthetic of the sublime” and this situation can be defined as ‘postmodern condition’ according to him (Selden, et al., 2005:205). Apart from this, according to Lyotard:

“The postmodern is not an epoch, and less a periodising concept than a mode: ‘The postmodern is undoubtedly part of the modern, as he puts it: ‘it would be that which in the modern, puts forward the unrepresentable in presentation itself’” (Selden, et al., 2005:205-206).

In this way, he goes to a different path from Baudrillard and Jameson believing that a break between modernism and postmodernism exists.

One of Lyotard’s hypotheses related to the postmodern period is about posthumanism. In his work, *A Postmodern Fable*, he makes a reference to posthumanism by stating that "as to what the human and his brain might look like, or rather the brain and its human, when leaving the planet for ever, prior to its destruction-that, the story did not say” (Lyotard, 1993:237). In other words:

“Lyotard plays here with the possibility of a 'disembodied' narrative. Should there still be any humans by the time our solar system

is dying they will have to have completely transformed themselves technologically and evolutionarily in order to survive the explosion of the sun” (Herbrechter, 2013:4).

This point refers to the idea of apocalypse and euphoric scenarios about the end of the world or man. Questions about the life when/if humanity ends are among the ones which have influence on spreading the idea of posthumanism. Besides, especially after the technological developments and advances during the postmodern era, the concept of humanism begins to be questioned. These developments and advances not only awaken anti-humanist thoughts but also generate posthumanism. Throughout history, human beings have faith in the understanding that they are the superior living creature on Earth. They act with anthropocentric approach towards all the incidents in the world history. However, advanced technology alters humans’ anthropocentric aspect and brings along post-anthropocentrism which is associated with posthumanism. Several speculative opinions exist about posthumanism during postmodernism. Putting the computer on the cover of *Times* magazine 1983 has a great role in the emergence of these opinions. The computer is presented as ‘Man of Year’ since it has impact upon the world more than human beings in 1982. Thus, speculative ideas seep into in the society. Among these opinions, “Moravec and like-minded thinkers believe, the age of the human is drawing to a close” (Hayles, 1999:283). According to Moravec, human consciousness can be downloaded into computers. In this way, machines like humans and even better than humans can be created. He states in his article, *Rising of the Robots*, that:

“It is not the mechanical “body” that is unattainable; articulated arms and other moving mechanisms adequate for manual work already exist, as the industrial robots attest. Rather it is the computer-based artificial brain that is still well below the level of sophistication needed to build a humanlike robot” (Moravec, 1999:124).

His ideas are pioneers in this field referring to posthumanism. On the other hand, posthumanism should not be reduced to only machine and computer production for some theorists. According to Hayles, human beings are the first embodied creature formed as a result of evolution. Therefore, this situation proves that human being owns a more complex system, and it is not easy to displace human beings with intelligent machines. “There is a limit to how seamlessly humans can be

articulated with intelligent machines” (Hayles, 1999:284). She also remarks that posthuman does not mean the end of humanity. It indicates the end of a particular consumption of human based on anthropocentric perspective. As a conclusion, despite of all these speculative ideas, the fact that posthumanism exists and emerges during postmodernism cannot be rejected. It has been the focal point of a great number of books and films during postmodernism and the digital age considered as the last state of postmodernism.

Fredric Jameson who is an American literary critic and Marxist political theorist is also one of the most prominent critics of postmodernism. He mentions about the relationship of postmodernism with capitalism, and Marxism’s place within it in his work *‘Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism’* (1991). He analyses the questions raised by postmodernism in the fields of sociology, culture and economy. According to him, “postmodernism is not merely one period style among others but dominant style which takes its particular significance from the context of late capitalist society” (Selden, et al., 2005:207). In addition, a connection between technology, an important part of multinational global economy, and heterogeneous items of postmodernist culture manifests itself and this relationship destroys the boundaries between high culture and mass culture. From this point of view, it can be considered that Jameson focuses on mass culture constructed by means of technology, and its path driven by capitalism since mass culture is related to commercial culture affected and controlled by capitalism. Because of this reason, his ideas about postmodernism and its relationship with capitalism are connected to consumerism and the consumer society shaped by commercial culture. In *‘Postmodernism and Consumer Society’* Jameson indicates three stages of the development of capitalism:

“The first stage ‘market capitalism’ is characterized by industrial growth that creates goods for national markets. This classic era of capitalism marks “the heyday of the nuclear family” and the rise of the bourgeoisie, both of which are reflected in the dominant aesthetic form of realism” (Connor, 2004:47).

The second stage is ‘monopoly capitalism’ harmonized with the era of imperialism and qualified by world markets around nation states. Cultural dominant is modernism in this period. The third and the last stage is identified as ‘multinational

capitalism' which comes to the forefront with the development of global markets and disappearing of national boundaries.

“This current era of multinational capitalism is characterized by the rise of bureaucracy, signalling the demise of the bourgeois individual subject of the classic era. The cultural dominant is postmodernism, which is seen as a reaction against modernist art forms” (Connor, 2004:47).

Postmodernism as the cultural dominant is performed by the dominance of consumer multinational capitalism.

Jean Baudrillard shares similarities with Jameson since both of them analyse the consumer society in relation to postmodernism. He is considered as ‘the high priest of postmodernism’ since he questions the real and reality presented to us over the years. Even if these two theorists have similarities, their ways of analysing the postmodern period differ. Jameson as a Marxist critic focuses on tangible aspects such as the commodity productions driven by capitalism, use or exchange value system. Baudrillard, on the other hand, approaches to the postmodernism with semiotic and symbolic aspect. He raises the terms ‘simulation and simulacra, hyperreality’ regarding to postmodernism. He displays the nature of reality with his definition of simulation, simulacra and hyperreality, and how a hyperreality is constructed in the consumer society as primarily. In his opinion, media and mass communication are the elements of the consumer society which disguise the real reality and prevent us to realise the truth. To sum up, consumerism or the consumer society is an inseparable part of postmodernism because of the fact that it is one of the outputs of this period. Besides, it can be considered as a genre of postmodernism or one of the elements of it. In order to comprehend this situation or the atmosphere created by postmodernism and the path to the consumer society, the characteristics of postmodernism ought to be examined. That’s why, in next section, the characteristics of postmodernism will be presented.

B. The Characteristics of Postmodernism

“What sets postmodernism apart from its predecessor is the reaction of its practitioners to the rational, scientific, and historical aspects of the modern age. For

postmodernists, this took the guise of being self-conscious, experimental, and ironic” (Galens,2002:615). Within this self-conscious and experimental context, postmodernism comprises of several characteristics as irony, parody, intertextuality, metafiction, hyperreality/ technoculture, and paranoia/technophobia. Among these characteristics of postmodern fiction, irony occupies a great importance since the theory is based on ironic elements, in other words, it takes its shape from ironic criticism of modernism or the elements of modernism. Moreover, “in the form of sarcasm or ridicule, irony can express a degree of hostility” (Sim, 1998:286). Therefore, it is a good way of examining and criticising the wicked factors of the period. Besides, it “is a key word in postmodernist thought and a key narrative strategy in the postmodernist text. It can be established through different narrative techniques including intertextuality, parody, and fragmentation” (Romdhani,2014:2). Additionally, postmodern irony differs from the traditional irony since it is neither didactic nor pragmatic due to the fact that postmodernism rebels all the pragmatist ideas of modernism ignoring and condescending the society. Postmodern “irony is always connected with a requirement not to take things (including ourselves) too seriously, or at least not to take things at face value” (Sim, 1998:286). For this reason, it is attached to postmodern parody which is also different from traditional parody.

“Postmodern parody is not to mock the parodied author or style for its own sake, but this parody lacks this mocking, ridiculing aspect and by using irony emphasizes a difference between the past forms of art and sensibilities, a distance between the past and present” (Rezaei, 2014:18).

Because of this reason, postmodern parody and irony are connected to each other in postmodern fiction. On the other hand, it is consistently confused with the actual parody. Hutcheon in *The Politics of Postmodernism* depicts the picture of postmodern parody, and she distinguishes it from satire, travesty. According to her, postmodern parody has resemblance to modernist parody, however, she states that postmodern parody interrogates “unacknowledged modernist assumptions about closure, distance, artistic autonomy, and the apolitical nature of representation” (Hutcheon, 2002:99). Additionally, Hutcheon expresses the concept of double-coded structure of parody by saying that “parody is double-coded in political terms: it both legitimizes and subverts that which it parodies” (Hutcheon, 2002:101). She indicates

the effect of politics in literature and art as the most discussed and crucial topic, mostly known as “incredulity toward metanarrative” by Lyotard (Lyotard, 1984:xxiv). Apart from these, Hutcheon identifies the usage of parody “as self-reflexive technique that points to art as art, but also to art as inescapably bound to its aesthetic and even social past” (Hutcheon, 2002:101). She illuminates in her declaration that postmodern parody includes not only a reference to the old forms of art but also an aim to show the difference between the traditional and recent forms of art in a new linguistic figuration.

Irony and parody are interrelated to intertextuality as the other characteristic of postmodernism. Postmodern fiction can be considered as the copy or cut and paste of the past including parody and irony. Intertextuality “implies a dialogue and connections of a text with another text, other texts or types of texts — which is effected by means of quotations, allusions, by borrowing structure, etc” (Każmierczak, 2019:364). Therefore, the text containing intertextuality conveys traces of the past literary works. Taking into account that this is a realization period for human beings, not only the historical or political events are under suspicion, but also the relationship between these facts and literary works become equally important.

“Since postmodernism represents a decentred concept of the universe in which individual works are not isolated creations, much of the focus in the study of postmodern literature is on intertextuality: the relationship between one text (a novel for example) and another or one text within the interwoven fabric of literary history” (Sharma et al., 2011:194).

This technique is blamed for being “cliché” and not being original by some critics, however, “intertextuality in postmodern literature can be a reference or parallel to another literary work, an extended discussion of a work, or the adoption of a style” (Sharma et al., 2011:194). The term is brought up by Julia Kristeva, a Bulgarian and French theorist and linguist who becomes prominent with her different perspectives of feminism and psychoanalysis. Indeed, she is influenced from “Michael Bachtin’s idea of ‘polyphonic novel’ open to various voices and interpretations and understands a literary text as part of other literary texts in the history of the literary tradition” (Rezaei, 2014:18). From this point of view, it can be

stated that the text is a product formed within the particular contexts of culture and literature, and it cannot be considered only as an output of an author. Because of this reason, it is accessible to different interpretations and conceptions. In addition, Linda Hutcheon in her book, *A Poetics of Postmodernism, History, Theory, Fiction* states that:

“Intertextuality replaces the challenged author-text relationship with one between reader and text, one that situates the locus of textual meaning within the history of discourse itself. A literary work can actually no longer be considered original; if it were, it could have no meaning for its reader. It is only as part of prior discourses that any text derives meaning and significance” (Hutcheon, 2003:125).

Thus, it can be assumed that intertextuality is one of the inevitable inferences of postmodern fiction affected by the postmodern developments. Apart from this, the method of irony is utilized to point out global, social, political and economic unrest during postmodernism. Considering the emergence of postmodernism, it can be stated that Second World War plays a significant role as an element of postmodernism, and it brings along several circumstances causing a number of ideas to rise as well as postmodernism. Among them, existentialism and scepticism become more prominent since the society begins interrogating their existence. In other words, the pessimist era created by the war itself ends up with the realization of human beings about the life they live in. In a way, metanarratives have lost its credibility and doubt has begun growing up inside people’s minds. On the other hand, this may be a sign of hope and salvation for the society. They are able to get rid of their chains since they find out the reality in the end. In comparison to the modernist era and the Enlightenment period as one of the significant elements of modernism, people are more enlightened about the life in which they survive to live. The society subjected to Nazis’ history and utopian ideas of modernism are finally given chance to be cared and noticed not because of their function in life but because of the fact that they are human and each one of them is unique and valuable.

The matters of liberty, economy and religion are also highlighted through irony or parody in the postmodern period. Regarding these social, economic, politic issues, ironical critics of postcolonialism, feminism and consumerism as genres of postmodernism can be observed in many literary works during this period. The other

characteristic of postmodernism associated with irony, parody or intertextuality is metafiction. “Metafictional means that a literary work refers to itself and the principles of its construction by using various techniques and narrative devices” (Rezaei, 2014:18). Thus, it can be considered as a fiction within fiction, and it is commonly utilized technique during the postmodern era.

Hyperreality and technoculture are among the prominent characteristics of postmodernism. These themes have an important place to figure out the digital lifestyle in today’s world, the progress and effect of postmodernism in recent times considering the latest state of technology. Actually, technology and science together hold a more significant position with all the other characteristics and ensure infiltrating of the effect of postmodernism to the digital age. Jameson defines postmodernism as “cultural logic of late capitalism” (Jameson,1991:22). The era of late capitalism refers to the period that technological movements or the information age come in sight and other branches such as culture, society and economy are affected by these movements and the information age. Science and technology fade in themselves so much that human beings become dependent on the achievements occurred thanks to them. Some are excited in front of their TVs when they see the exploration of the moon, some feel relaxed while they’re using their cars to reach their work, or some are just interested in the technological achievements which help them survive in their daily routines such as refrigerators or black screens conquering most of the houses. Undoubtedly, technology leaps down from the stage directly into human beings’ lives and one way or another, it displays its effect in every field, and leads to enter the information age. Additionally, advanced technology causes new approaches to arise or changes the old perspectives belonging the previous periods. Posthumanism is one of these approaches and it becomes a controversial theory during postmodernism. On the other hand, in this information age, everything which seems perfect does not reflect the reality, in other words, the world which technology runs is not the actual world as it looks like. Jean Baudrillard comes out with this idea and exhibits his theory ‘hyperreality’ for the first time in his influential work *Simulacra et Simulation* (1981).

“According to him, signs no longer correspond to, or mask, their ‘real life’ referent but replace it in a world of autonomous ‘floating signifiers’; there has been ‘an implosion of image and reality. It is the

image-creating postmodern communication technologies-especially television- which for Baudrillard stimulate this proliferation of self-generating images across the postmodern surface” (Selden, 2005:201).

What Baudrillard mentions can be exemplified with the world of ‘Disneyland’. In this fun world, everything and everyone seem entertaining, wonderful and impeccable, however, another world exists outside the borders of this glamorous world.

According to Baudrillard, the emergence of this term is related to the Vietnam War. He remarks that this war is not a real war arising from natural causes. It can be considered as an artificial war, in fact, as a simulacrum. Through the declaration of this war, a hyperreality is created for the society to overlap the politic events and aims. Baudrillard describes these politics events and aims explicitly in his book.

“This war, at bottom, was nothing but a crucial episode of peaceful coexistence. It marked the arrival of China to peaceful coexistence. The nonintervention of China obtained and secured after many years, Chinas apprenticeship to a global modus vivendi, the shift from a global strategy of revolution to one of shared forces and empires, the transition from a radical alternative to political alternation in a system now essentially regulated (the normalization of Peking - Washington relations): this was what was at stake in the war in Vietnam, and in this sense, the USA pulled out of Vietnam but won the war. And the war ended "spontaneously" when this objective was achieved. That is why it was deescalated, demobilized so easily” (Baudrillard, 1994:92-93).

In addition, the most significant element which promotes ‘hyperreality’ is media as the latest technological achievement of the century. It holds the power to manipulate and lead the society what to believe, or to display the things that happen as if they do not happen, or things that do not happen as if they happen. Christopher Norris explains this situation with ‘Gulf War’ of 1991. According to him, this war never comes true that it is just a show appeared on media since there are not any symptoms of it at sight. “TV is our strategic site, a gigantic simulator’ which creates war as a virtual reality” (Selden, 2005:201). Thus, we all are captured by the black screen in its imaginary world which is a virtual reality. This situation creates a paranoia in the society, which is taken into account as another characteristic of

postmodernism. In addition, paranoia in the postmodern society can be considered as technophobia towards technology and all the technological advancements because the reason of paranoia in the society is due to technology and the point at which it reaches. Especially, people experiencing the World War II witness the destruction which technological weapons create. Besides, they are concerned about the end of humanity and the machines taking control. Thus, they develop a phobia of machines, technology and cyborgs. This technophobia results in paranoia during postmodernism.

Science, technology and their outcome, media are interrelated with economy and politics since they can be considered as the most significant tools of late capitalism, and they are driven by the interests of it. In other words, it is capitalism that holds the reins of science and technology, and media accordingly. Because of this reason, other consequences caused by this situation affecting the community should be taken into consideration. A marketing sector is to be created to dispose of excessive property produced with the Industrial Revolution and media is the most influential factor to create this marketing sector. This excessive property is to be praised and desired by the society, in other words, it is to be consumed one way or another. In this way, the first foundations of consumer society are laid, and new consumption habits begin to be determined by media. As a conclusion, all of the characteristics including irony, parody, intertextuality, technology/technoculture, hyperreality are prominent factors constituting a bridge on the way to the consumer society. The criticisms containing these characteristics may comprise the criticism of the consumer society since it is the form of the society during postmodernism. Regarding this, the consumer society can be conceived as one of the characteristics or outcomes of postmodernism, or a genre of it.

C. The Consumer Society as Genre of Postmodernism

Postmodernism and the consumer society possess a deep connection forming and reinforcing each other. The environment of liberalism created by postmodernism enables the principles of the consumer society to be adopted more quickly and easily. This situation can be analysed from several perspectives. The first is surely about economy and the atmosphere generated by it in which consumerism is born. Due to the developments in the industrialisation period by means of technology, the speed

and quantity of production increase, and a market with fascinating ambiance is established to dispose of these gradually increasing products. As they enhance, the market expands, and consumption diversifies causing the structure of society to change. Thus, a new sort of society exalting consumption and valuing consuming above all else emerges. From this point of view, economic circumstances during postmodernism own a significant role in occurring of the consumer society. Interrelatedly, it can be stated that the system of capitalism plays a significant role. Jameson states that “the emergence of postmodernism is closely related to the emergence of this new moment of late, consumer or multinational capitalism” (Jameson, 1988:204). Besides, the effect of technology both in the consumer society and in the economic developments of the postmodern era cannot be denied or ignored since all of the developments in the field of industry take place thanks to the advancing technology. Mechanization brought about technology of that age not only increases the means of production and so, the speed of production, but also frees up people. Liberalised people consume more because they take it into consideration as a blessing of freedom and abundance. Therefore, a relationship exists not only with the economic outcome of the postmodern period, but also with the idea of liberalism conceived by postmodernism.

The postmodern era refers to the period that media tools rule people’s lives, characteristics and decisions. The progress of technology influences on mass media as much as it influences on the industry, and media becomes the most significant medium of the consumer society in time. Consuming is praised and encouraged by means of media tools. Codes, signs and secret messages that remind the consumption in every possible minute or even second are imposed on people by mass media. Thus, the foundations of a new understanding of ethics are laid, and it is utterly different from the puritan one reigning during modernism. Regarding new understanding of ethics, culture also takes a new shape during postmodernism due to the fact that both are connected with each other in one way or another, and they constitute a new society together. Culture and ethics are the milestones of a society and the one owning the power to change them can manipulate the society easily. Mass media as the prominent production of postmodernism holds this power to alter the whole system and to create a new society consuming at every possible opportunity. Moreover, it keeps people apart from real life into a hyperreality in

which they believe that they eventually possess happiness and peace. As in the example of Truman Show, the society lives in a fake but organized life in which everything is arranged studiously and is full of advertisements or embedded marketing. All the things seem so real that no one questions their life, or no one doubts whether what they experience or attain is genuine or not. The life of Truman represents every single individual of the consumer society living in a media centred world of the consumer society during the postmodern period. In a way, “the society of the spectacle” emerges. Guy Debord defines this situation that “in societies where modern conditions of production prevail, life is presented as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived is now merely represented in the distance” (Guy, 1994:7). In brief, it can be stated that the society in this era is forced to consume through media tools, and it turns into a spectacle, or a structure applauding this miserable situation. The relationship between postmodernism and consumer society can be indicated by this way. In the following section, the elements of the consumer society will be examined in detail.

D. The Elements of The Consumer Society

“Consumer culture is a system in which consumption, a set of behaviours found in all times and places, is dominated by the consumption of commercial products” and the consumer society is the society which adopts this set of behaviours (Singh, 2011:61). These behaviours consist of several elements constituting consumption habits witnessed during the process of becoming the consumer society such as abundance and growth, signs and codes, enjoyment and happiness, needs and satisfaction, the function of personalization, the feeling of everydayness, consuming body and time, solicitude, fatigue and violence as features of anomie in the consumer society.

The first element is abundance and growth since everything starts with the affluence of products. Abundance of the objects and the environment it creates leads this habit of consumption to become deplorable and to reach on impasse. It is not only related to the numbers of objects or products basically, but also conveys a different meaning for humankind and that is ‘hope’ to attain from plenty or to find something to eat or to drink or to wear. “There should not be enough, but too much for everyone” (Baudrillard, 1998:26). Especially, for a society coming out of wars

and always living in famine, this new system changes their lives and their understanding of living and consuming at this point. They are overwhelmed in one sense and lost in ravishing shops and their flashy windows in which the large scale of commodity is displayed with its most perfect form. Besides, customers are exposed to a set of objects creating in them ‘a psychological chain reaction’ that stimulates them to purchase the whole set even if it is not required. For example, washing machine, refrigerator and dishwasher are displayed together and they together create a “coherent and collective vision” and “a chain of signifiers” that motivate customers to desire and attain these objects (Baudrillard, 1998:27). To put it another way, they juxtapose not only signs without discrimination but also the whole category of commodities. Moreover, they come in possession of the culture centre since commodities are culturalized there, and this consuming habit turns into a part of the culture. Thus, a perfect ambiance is generated to urge society to consume more than they do in the past and thus, their consumption habit shows an alteration in time. Regarding this, collective consumer mentality can be exemplified with The Melanesian natives and their admiration of planes according to Baudrillard. They admire the planes passing over their heads and they keep waiting them to land on their territory, however, they only land on the whites’ territory since the whites own the same objects to allure this flying aircraft. Thus, the Melanesian natives build their aeroplane considered as a simulacrum and look forward to a real aircraft to land on the ground. Their waiting for a miracle to come true is associated with the consumer society’s miraculous thinking because according to Baudrillard, “the beneficiary of the consumer miracle also sets in place a whole array of sham objects, of characteristic signs of happiness, and then waits (waits desperately, a moralist would say) for happiness to alight” (Baudrillard, 1998:31). However, this does not mean that consumer society is similar with a primitive society. What Baudrillard states is the primitive mentality of the consumer society which is based on miraculous thinking or a belief in the omnipotence of signs. This miraculous thinking affects everyday practice and transient satisfactions of the consumer owning hope to reach an endless salvation. In other words, the TV viewer who is exposed to the images from all around world creates a simulacrum just like a native Melanesian. Even though there is a difference between a native and a tv viewer in terms of the interpretation of miraculous perspective between two, undoubtedly, “the TV viewer, like the native, experiences the appropriation as a capturing in a mode of miraculous

efficacy” (Baudrillard, 1998:32). From this aspect, consumer goods are considered as a blessing from nature rather than a tangible outcome of manufacturing.

This way of understanding shares similarity with the belief of Melanesians that they develop a worship called as “the cargo cult” (Baudrillard, 1998:32). According to this belief, the whites own the knowledge of capturing and diverting the goods on their lands. Once the whites begin to help them, they start believing that their gods abandoning them before return. Eventually, they are able to attain what they deserve. That’s why, they take ‘Western aid’ into consideration as an expected blessing of nature and as a magical remedy. Similarly, western economic miracle takes shape with the same understanding that the consumers convinced by advertisers and “fantasies of the Land of Cockaigne” conceive profound of goods as an effect of nature and they have “natural right to abundance” (Baudrillard, 1998:32). Technology, progress and growth as well as the goods utilized to survive are one of the items of abundance in nature or a blessing of nature, thus people have the right to consume and exploit, which can be considered as a good explanation of the TV viewer’s situation affected by the signs transmitted by the mass media. Signs and codes as elements of consumerism occupy a great place in this process.

The aim and capability of signs cannot be described easily, but they definitely have relationship with magical thought and history or change. That is to say that magical thought regarding consumption aims to “conjure away the real with the signs of the real, to conjure away history with the signs of change” (Baudrillard, 1998:33). While consuming goods, we consume the reality and replace it with magical and mystical thoughts or expectations. In this sense, it can be considered that our fantasies are signified and consumed in the image, but more importantly, the real world and history are signified in the image, consumed and repressed in it. Moreover, the consumer society may be characterized with the universality of the news item in mass communication, and every kind of political, historical, cultural news is transferred in the same sedative and fantastic form. Because of this reason, news or mass media is the fundamental element and intermediary of magical thought and mythological belief. Thus, it can be deduced that mass communication transmits not reality, but the dazzling reflection of reality; in other words, mass communication creates fantasy or helps people develop fantasies in their minds and utilizes signs to protect this system. Moreover, according to Baudrillard, consumer behaviour is

based on objects and enjoyment shaped by the signs of social code of values.

“Consumption is a system which secures the ordering of signs and the integration of the group: it is therefore both a morality (a system of ideological values) and a communication system, a structure of exchange. One enters, rather, into a generalized system of exchange and production of coded values where, in spite of themselves, all consumers are involved with all others” (Baudrillard, 1998:78).

In a way, it owns a structural organization including a process providing communication between individuals and groups. It is same as consumption since it is a process of communication between biological system of goods and products in terms of bio-economic and bio-functional, and sociological system of signs. That’s why, consumption may be considered as a language or code established by “the circulation, purchase, sale, appropriation of differentiated goods and signs/objects” (Baudrillard, 1998:79).

Abundance and growth and their possible outcomes economy, equality or inequality are interrelated with happiness and enjoyment, the other elements of the consumer society. Considering the modern societies, happiness turns into an item embodied with the ideology of equality, especially since the industrial revolution and the revolutions of the nineteenth century. Thus, societies begin to interrogate whether they possess happiness or not regarding the equality and well-being. In other words, if they believe that they are equal and they are in a welfare state, they think they are happy. Because of this understanding developed into society, happiness is to be measured with the welfare state standards.

The capitalist system plays a politic game and tries to convince that there does not exist such a thing as inequality and every citizen is equal by increasing the quantity of the goods and indicating that every individual can attain what they desire to consume. In a way, it alleges that it creates affluence or an affluence society and help the countries grow, so it brings democracy. Politicians supporting it promote this idea by saying that “growth means affluence and affluence means democracy” (Baudrillard, 1998:51). In addition, growth is engaged in the developments occurred in various fields in the societies such as technology, as the biggest one, because the ones whose growth is more than others are able to develop more than others. However, according to Baudrillard, growth produces disequilibria, privileges and

social inequalities because the system is unequal, and maintains itself by generating poverty and wealth at the same. Especially, this appears in the growing distance between the overdeveloped and underdeveloped countries since their growth is not in the equal level. Besides, this is valid within a society belonging to one nation since there is always a privileged class or minority reaching the whole opportunity. Even though affluence is presented as the sole solution for this disequilibrium by the authorities, it is made up of a delusion. Baudrillard clarifies this situation with the example of education system. Even if education is seen as a natural right and attainable for everyone, not all the people own the same educational opportunities and similarly, the same objects to consume.

Status or having status also play a decisive role in this class institution. All these habits of consumption frenzy can be clarified by the social logic of consumption depending on the idea that some gain access to the miracle itself, but the others can only attain the products of miracle. Thus, it can be described as the logic of production and social signifiers' manipulation, not contentedness. Accordingly, the process of consumption may be identified with "process of signification and communication" and "process of classification and social differentiation" (Baudrillard, 1998:60). At this point, signs or objects are not solely related to important differences in a code, but values of status in a hierarchy. According to this principle:

"...you never consume the object in itself (in its use- value); you are always manipulating objects (in the broadest sense) as signs which distinguish you either by affiliating you to your own group taken as an ideal reference or by marking you off from your group by reference to a group of higher status" (Baudrillard, 1998:61).

Needs and satisfaction as the other elements of consumer society have connections with this situation, abundance/ growth, happiness and enjoyment because it is also related to the level of income. To put it another way, when we earn more, we desire more and need better to satisfy. Thus, the consumption shaped in consideration of needs and satisfactions owns a structure like a ladder starting from the group of elites to the other social groups, and they constitute a homogenous construction together. In a way, goods and needs related to cultural and denominational features are determined on this social ladder.

Baudrillard mentions about the story of the man who gets married with the affluent society, and what happens to him in the sequel, which is the idea of A.N. Whitehead. This fairy story is that: "Once upon a time there was a Man who lived in Scarcity. After many adventures and a long journey through Economic Science, he met the Affluent Society They married and had lots of needs" (Baudrillard, 1998:69). This refers to the current situation of modern people belonging to the consumer society, or in other words, it is the story about how the consumer society appears and how it is shaped. After this union, the man "seeks his own happiness without the slightest hesitation and prefers objects which will provide him with the greatest satisfactions" (Baudrillard, 1998:69). It displays the relationship between needs, satisfaction and consuming. In addition, according to Baudrillard, "since man is, nonetheless, never satisfied, the same story begins over and over again, with the sterile self-evidence of old fables" (Baudrillard, 1998:69). Thus, a chain creating consumer society itself is formed. In addition, needs to analyse the consumer society are the most ambiguous and undefinable part since what it means varies in different fields. Besides, a relationship between needs/satisfaction and value system of the society exists. In other words, the value system situated in a specific society affects or determines in a way what is to be consumed and what is not, that's why, choices vary from one society to another, and they can be similar within the same society. This idea is served with the term 'standard package' defining the needs for the national standard of living, and it differs from one society to another. Some own more than the standard package offered to them, and some dream of attaining it and reaching at this position. Moreover, it is the idea imposed on us as 'American Dream' referring an ideal living of conformity. A person belonging to a specific society consumes the specific goods because these specific goods are consumed in that specific society, thus standard package is also oriented by the average of goods consumed. From this perspective, conformity and satisfaction share similarities because they include the resemblance of a subject to objects and a subject to a society. In addition, the system itself has a significant place since a relationship exists between the limitless productivity and the need to run out of the product. The system controls the apparatus of the production as well as the consumer society. Manufacturers control not only the market behaviour of a consumer but also their social attitudes and needs. So, consumer is not free -or free enough- to choose or to control their needs contrary to what is believed. Therefore, consumers are

manipulated mercilessly, and so-called needs are praised in an atrocious consumption circle. Advertisement plays an important role. Baudrillard expresses that “through advertising, the system appropriates social objectives for its own gain, and imposes its own goals as social objectives” (Baudrillard, 1998:72).

This system of value regarding needs and satisfaction is also interrelated with happiness and enjoyment. The difference between the perspectives of a puritan and a modern human plays an explanatory role to comprehend the position of the consumer changing over time, and the state it turns into the postmodern era. The puritans consider themselves “as a business to be made to prosper for the greater glory of God” (Baudrillard, 1998:80). Their personal characteristics or qualifications mean their mission in life and a production to capitalize. On the other hand, the consumerists consider themselves “as an enjoyment and satisfaction business” and they are motivated to consume and convinced to believe that they enter in a new era (Baudrillard, 1998:80). Especially, after the war and justice prevails for them to fulfil their desires so, they believe that being happy, charmed or satisfied is a duty. A modern human being living in the consumer society cannot get rid of this obliged understanding of enjoyment and happiness since it is an indispensable element of new traditional ethics of production and labour force. This situation indicates that the consumer society in the modern age uses most of their time to produce for their well-being and to fulfil their needs. They have no choice but to be happy, otherwise, they cannot survive in the consumer society. By this way, a universal curiosity to have a try or taste every possible existence in every field such as sexuality, culture, religion or science etc. is aroused. Otherwise, a consumerist “is haunted by the fear of ‘missing’ something, some form of enjoyment or other” (Baudrillard, 1998:80). It is not only a desire anymore, but a curiosity emerging with the feeling of uneasiness, which is described as “fun morality” (Baudrillard, 1998:80).

Baudrillard describes consumption as a collective behaviour, on the other hand, possessing consumer objects and goods individualizes the consumer since the goods of consumption are differentiated and personalized to lead the individuals belonging to different classes to consume no matter how their areas of interest are different. Because of this aspect of consumption, Bauman describes it as a “lonely activity; an activity which is fulfilled by quenching and arousing, assuaging and whipping up a desire which is always a private, and not easily communicable

sensation” (Bauman, 2005:30). According to Baudrillard, the system creates different products for different personalities. Actually, it is the system itself creating these different personalities by enforced signs spreading through mass media and differentiated products served in the expanded diversity. In other words, it can be stated that the system generates “synthetic individualities” in this way (Baudrillard, 1998:88). Advertising as one of the significant mediums of consumption owns a powerful and persuasive effect on people. It includes differential significations rather than personal ones, and “they are of the order of the industrial production of differences” (Baudrillard, 1998:88). This is mainly the indication of the consumption system with the function of personalization as an element of consumerism. These significations not only arouse desire to consume, but also shape the consumers’ personas by naturalization, functionalization and culturalization effects. In brief, the system originates differentiated personalities by offering different range of products and by conducting differentiated codes through advertisements to make people with these different personalities consume these products.

Everydayness is another aspect of life and a consumption element, which contains privateness from political, social, cultural aspects. Individuals are engaged in their work, family, friends in their daily life more as disconnected from the world and history. They reorganize all of these in a compatible system depended on the enclosure of the private, the securitizing adoption of the environment, the legal freedom of the individual and misrecognition. From this aspect, everydayness is destitute, however, it is prospering and delirious in its attempt to interpret the world ‘for internal consumption’. The organic collusion between mass communication and private everydayness is signed at this place. Besides, private everydayness becomes endurable with the simulacrum of the real world by means of the repetitive signs of transcendence and the images. On the other hand, reeling effect of reality and history, and constant consumed violence are needed in this serenity. In this sense, individuals desire to witness events related to violence in their rooms or in their comfort zones not at the location where these events take place. The images of a war are assumed as if they belong to a different world, and for the ones coming across these images on TV in their rooms, the cruelty of world turns into a warm and intimate thing. From this point of view, their behaviour can be considered as perversely, unhealthy and inappropriate, and it donates the new value system created

by the union of mass communication and consumerism. They seek for the solutions for tensions and happiness; however, they find themselves in discrepancy. They cannot decide whether they should be passive accredited by this new value system or adhere to the norms of social morality. This dilemma or the sense of guilt of passivity are needed to be eliminated for those who are happy to be without histories, thus mass media gets involved for resolving the friction between puritanical and hedonistic morality. Thereby, the tranquillity of private sphere is propounded as a conserved value which is threatened by the danger of a tragic predestination. Human beings are in need of the violence of the outside world to experience security so that they can consider it as a justifiable thing as a choice. They witness the signs of destiny, fatality in their comfort zones, so everydayness increases in importance, and banality is glorified. Because of this reason, the news of the crash and road deaths are repetitively declared on the radios or TVs, and they can be regarded as good reminders for fatality. Everydayness provides protection from the catastrophic destiny and agony for the consumer society. In other words, “the consumer society sees itself as an encircled Jerusalem, rich and threatened. That is its ideology” (Baudrillard, 1998:36).

The other significant element mostly consumed by the system is body which is also another constituent of the consumer society. It starts to do this by determining masculine and feminine identities or roles, and it forces the society to believe in these identities or roles. Thus, the individuals adopt these characteristics of the masculine and feminine models presented by the consumption system. They break away their own personalities in time and constitute a fake personality just as the system intends. This idea, engraved in one’s subconscious, turns into a conscious action over time. The masculine model is formed as particular, selective, demanding and competitive. In a way, it is equipped with the puritan and military virtues, or with the custom of rivalry and challenge in the primitive societies. Therefore, the masculine models are able to obtain their status in the society. On the other hand, the feminine models are formed as selected side and their duty is “gratifying themselves in order the better to be able to enter as objects into the masculine competition” (Baudrillard, 1998:97). In other words, the system creates “functional femininity” since the feminine model is taken into consideration as an object to be selected attracting attention in terms of sexuality and prettiness (Baudrillard, 1998:96). The feminine models possess no

other functions, that's why, they are deprived of prestige while the masculine models are considered as hierarchically superior to the feminine ones in the system. The feminine models are obliged to accept this status assigned to them. Based on this, in time, the understanding and perception of beauty become determined by those who rule the consumer society.

This situation brings along a fondness or addiction to eroticism since beauty and eroticism are undetachable and they form the new ethic of the relationship with the body according to Baudrillard. In addition, the way and method of consumption of the body are also associated with sexuality or eroticism. Due to this reason, the term of "functional femininity" is propounded by the capital system (Baudrillard, 1998:96). According to this idea, women are supposed to be feminine or alluring. The system utilizes all of its media tools to impose this idea on the society. Ultimately, the body is formed as a consumer object and this situation is normalized. The shops are overflowing with women paying attention to makeup and flashy new outfits in the hope of reinventing their bodies. In other words, "beauty sells products, eroticism sells products" (Baudrillard, 1998:135). Besides, it is not only female's beauty which is significant for the system but also male's appearance has importance. "The feminist criticisms of the commercial 'exploitation' of women's bodies in advertising seem to have aided the development of the use of male bodies in their place" (Bocock, 1993:55). Thus, a certain pattern for both females' and males' eroticism is created to attract both gender's attention for each other. As a result, everything commercialised evokes eroticism and thus, the possibility and rate of purchasing increase because people's unconscious thoughts are captured by erotic fantasies and symbols that create an atmosphere to mesmerize them to consume.

Time is the other finest consumer object after the body since it cannot be readily procured by everyone. There are two aspects to be discussed at this point: the first one is about the minority owning and managing the time, and the other is about the majority spending most of their time working and doing the dictated activities by the consumption system in their leisure time. The minority can be considered as the privileged class possessing not only time but also power to control the consumer society containing the majority. As they lead the whole society about what to consume, they determine the way of spending their leisure time and allocate it unequally. Thus, the society labours for the system even in their spare time.

“Previously leisure time meant freedom, naturalism, optional choice deepness of thought; however, ... it started to mean a new tool to reach consecrated and approved life purposes of capitalism...” (Aytekin et al., 2013:185). Besides, they work harder to have free time and to be able to do their hobbies or what they desire in that time because being happy is the most significant motivation of impulse of the consumer society. Actually, consumers assume that all of these are due to the fact that they are satisfied in this way without being aware that they are manipulated. Regarding this, the definition of enjoyment “is that of an unproductive consumption of time” (Baudrillard, 1998:157). The system depends on an exchange system and spending leisure time is also made up of this system.

Related to the concept of consuming time, the consumption system utilizes the nostalgia effect of historical incidents on people.

“Nostalgia and retro style are today popular subjects for postmodern consumption practices. Nostalgia and retro styles mean recycling earlier genres and styles in new contexts broadly (advertising, film/TV genres, and fashion, architecture, images, typography, and hair styles)” (Bati, 2014:224).

In a sense, it resurrects the past and sells it to consumers since it is an opportunity to live in the past for those who live in the present and are bored of daily routine. In this way, “they are consuming in ritual form something which was a historical event and has been forcibly reactualized as legend” (Baudrillard, 1998:99). Baudrillard defines this case as “restoration”, and this term is also associated with postmodernism since analysing or recreating of the works belonging to the earlier periods is a characteristic of postmodernism as the resurrection of old literary works in the postmodern way (Baudrillard, 1998:99).

Anomie can also be taken into account as one of the elements of the consumer society since they are inevitable results the system brings along. This circumstance is mostly interrelated with “destructiveness, collective escapist behaviour (drugs, hippies, non-violence), contagious depressiveness” (Baudrillard, 1998:175). Especially, these behavioural issues can be witnessed in the affluence societies since affluence procures constraint more than freedom according to Baudrillard. These constraints are “of `freedom', of controlled accession to happiness, of the totalitarian ethic of affluence” (Baudrillard, 1998:176). In a sense,

as the chain of needs created by abundance diversifies and these needs are satisfied, people become unhappy, depressed, and thus, anomie shows up in the society. Aimless and uncontrollable behaviours of people can be example of anomie revealing itself particularly as solicitude, fatigue and violence in the consumer society. According to Baudrillard, “the consumer society is at one and the same time a society of solicitude and a society of repression, a pacified society and a society of violence” (Baudrillard, 1998:174). As people are modernized or literate, violence is expected to decrease; however, it increases at the same rate. This situation can be taken into consideration as an irony in the postmodern era and an anomie in the consumer society. Apart from this, with a kind of restricted freedom in the affluent society, people satisfying their needs get into a flap to find a new need and become anxious and eventually, violent. They think being happy is to fulfil the needs and they can become happy only when their needs are addressed. In a way, they consume commodities to enjoy themselves and their lives. Because of this reason, people consume every new thing expeditiously. When the result does not turn out the way they desire, that is, when they cannot achieve the happiness they want, they become aggressive. Governments are aware of this serious situation, that’s why, they activate technology or technological world to take violence away from real life. Therefore, computer games in which violence can be perpetrated are created or films and books in which a sense of violence can be experienced are made. In time, this situation turns into a normal feeling that everyone encounters in their daily lives. Moreover, fatigue is another feature of anomie in the society, and it does not only refer to physical state but also mental or psychological circumstance. People spending most of their time to work to fulfill their needs since they believe it is the only way to be contented become tired out and experience a mental break down. As a consequence, it is highly possible that they get into depression or resort to violence. All of these elements of consumer society are interrelated with postmodernism. The consumption system utilizes the characteristics of postmodernism or the postmodern movement in its favour and forms a consumer society through these elements.

E. The Connection of Technology/ Mass Media and The Consumer Society

One of the significant constituents of the consumer society is unquestionably mass media since it is the solemn medium praising, glorifying consumption and

leading the individuals to be an addict of consuming in a secret pattern generated by codes and signs. In this pattern, the tranquillity of daily life is aggrandized by way of catastrophic news such as murders, rapes, death etc. In other words, the order of daily life is reflected as a valuable thing which is not owned by everyone, and consumption is established as the core part of this order. Thus, the society develops consuming behaviours by carrying out the idea that they are supposed to consume to survive in this world. Furthermore, culture occupies a great place in this pattern because culture is a prominent factor in determining behaviours and guiding people; that's why, mass media dominates the society through the culture it reconfigures and alters. In this altered understanding of culture, everything including nature, knowledge and incident is governed by "the principle of being up-to-the-minute" (Baudrillard, 1998:101). This means that a cultural item is considered as essential and inspirational as long as it takes part on the media agenda. Thus, what matters is not permanence but actuality. Besides, the system creates profusion as well as diversity and promote them under favour of mass-media. Culture is affected by this situation. Ultimately, it becomes indistinguishable from a sock or a chair, so it turns into a thing to be consumed. It loses its meaning over time as it is consumed.

The system attains its goals on the basis of 'communion' or technically, 'communication'. The society represents a communion as in primitive times but in a different shape. In other words, "communion is no longer achieved through a symbolic medium, but through a technical one: this is what makes it communication" (Baudrillard, 1998:103). Additionally, in the communion of postmodernism, people share what mass media presents whatever the content is. This situation resembles the Tirlipot and Quiz Machine according to Baudrillard since the content is also not significant in playing with these machines. Only important thing is to answer the questions as quickly as it can be. Thus, people respond in a quick way to what they hear and watch on the mass media as they answer the questions in the game regardless of the content. The knowledge has no place in this process, but signals and references transmitted by the mass media do. All of this process is like a game and actually, "all these games have the archetype of the examination as their mainspring. The examination is the pre-eminent form of social advancement" (Baudrillard, 1998:104). Thus, people consider that it is a level-up in the community. In addition, purchasing has resemblance to the quiz game. Baudrillard states that it is responding

a question to satisfy a need, “the determination of a preference” or a selection among the answers proposed by the game (Baudrillard, 1998:105).

Mass media creates curiosity with the effect of appropriate environment and ambiance; thus, it drags the society into the world it builds. It is a magical world in which curiosity and passion are entitled and a new sort of human is designed by mass media in this enchanted place. Besides, “the logic of consumption can be defined as a manipulation of signs” and this is actualized by the indirect expression of these signs (Baudrillard, 1998:114). Relatedly, McLuhan’s theory of “medium is the message” is explanatory to comprehend this pattern of mass-media (McLuhan, 1994:9). According to his theory, the message transmitted through the signs and consumed unconsciously is not the apparent content of images and sounds, but it is an output or a pattern.

“the true message the media of TV and radio deliver, the one which is decoded and ‘consumed’ deep down and unconsciously, is not the manifest content of sounds and images, but the constraining pattern -- linked to the very technical essence of those media -- of the disarticulation of the real into successive and equivalent signs: it is the normal, programmed, miraculous transition from Vietnam to variety, on the basis of a total abstraction of both” (Baudrillard, 1998:122).

This means each message on mass-media makes a reference to another. For instance, advertising refers to the news, the news to another current media event. “The systematic juxtaposition of these things being the discursive mode of the medium, its message, its meaning” (Baudrillard, 1998:122). Thus, the real world is misrecognized, the content is glorified as signs, information is foregrounded as a commodity as long as the message is consumed, and eventually, a new world which is alike the real world but the one in which agony and sorrow cannot hurt people is created, so people get involved in this pattern easily and begin living in a simulacrum.

McLuhan expresses that the invention of printed books conveys a great significance in the human history. It is not because of their useful or helpful contents, but their restriction of systematization they apply by means of “their technical essence” (Baudrillard, 1998:123). The current productions of mass media such as TV-series, movies or video games can be considered as the continuation of the

printed books in this digital postmodern world. Similarly, these media productions hypnotize the society by the medium of the message transmitted through the signs in the same pattern McLuhan indicates. TV or mass-media is another version of reading system consisting of signs. TV images can be regarded as the metalanguage of a non-existing world, and the mode of reality is transformed into these images so that people do not find this world of images odd and feel themselves as strangers. According to Baudrillard, “it is the substance of the fragmented, filtered world, the world reinterpreted in terms of this simultaneously technical and ‘legendary’ code, that we ‘consume’” (Baudrillard, 1998:124). Therefore, consumption expands under the influence of this logic of mass communication.

Advertising owns a big impact on this expansion since it presents a universe of objects and brands in which each individual is addressed and retribalized as consumers through a confidential agreement between the consumers and the system. “Advertising discourse functions as a fantasy, it can persuade and cause desire” (Stavrakakis, 2006:93). Besides, it sells hope and seduces people, however, Boorstin explains this situation with human nature, and he expresses that “few advertisers are liars. A strong advertising profession has its own earnest ethic” (Boorstin, 1992:213). According to him, people can be seduced by advertisements easily because they own the desire to be seduced in their nature, so it is not only because of advertising or advertisers. Additionally, what they indicate or tell cannot be analysed as true or false, or as lie or fact since everything they claim is based on self-fulfilling prophecy. Consumers are fascinated by the magical world comprising of magical and influential words without noticing accuracy or reality. Thus, advertising can be taken into consideration as an art. No matter what function it possesses, it is an important factor, component or medium of the consumer society.

III. POSTMODERNISM AND THE CONSUMER SOCIETY IN *I, ROBOT*

Isaac Asimov considered as one of the pioneers of science fiction was born in 1920 in Russia and continued his life in the USA until he died in 1992. He was a professor at Boston University and a well-known writer. As a writer, even though he worked on various types of writing such as encyclopaedias, textbooks, detective mysteries or chemistry and mathematics in his academic life, he became famous as a science-fiction writer with his books including robots as the theme. He not only inspired creativity for future generations but also was the source of ideas that formed the basis of technological developments. His ideas in his books have become scientific facts or technological experiments in time. The robots appearing years after his death are very similar to the robots he described in his books. Having ceased to be a product of imagination, they “are currently perceived simply as technological products” (Ivanov et al.,2017:2). Because of this reason, his series of books mentioning about robots are of great importance. In addition to technology, political, sociological, literary and economic developments or events at that time, as well as criticism and perspectives on these issues, depicted through ironical terms, can be analysed in Asimov’s Robot series. Especially, the first book of these series, *I, Robot*, provides an opportunity to examine these political, sociological, technological, economic and literary elements of that era since it consists of several different stories addressing these issues ironically at times alongside the theme of technology or science. It is a compiled version of the essays or stories appeared in the magazine *Super Science Stories* between 1940 and 1950 and is published as a book in 1950 in this name. It contains nine stories: ‘Robbie, Runaround, Reason, Catch That Rabbit, Liar, Little Lost Robot, Escape, Evidence and The Evitable Conflict’ that each of them touches on a significant point as it is understood from the titles, and several characters who are representatives of the individuals of the society during that period.

Taking into consideration the time *I, Robot* is written or published and the

time the first sparks of postmodernism emerge, it can be stated that *I, Robot* is one of the good literary works and good examples to examine the characteristics of postmodernism. The rise of postmodernism is mostly attributed to the mid to late 20th century against modernism. Therefore, the time *I, Robot* is produced and published can refer to the beginning of the ideology of postmodernism due to the fact that it addresses the period the Second World War comes out and the philosophical, artistic or politic views forming the basis of postmodernism emerging with this war. Besides, the period described in *I, Robot* includes the time associated with the postmodern era, and *I, Robot*'s content, technology, is one of the prominent and controversial outputs of the postmodern period. Furthermore, it touches upon the elements of postmodernism such as hyperreality, irony and postmodern parody, the sense of paranoia or technophobia, and political, sociological, technological, economic, literary criticisms of postmodernism.

In the last story of *I, Robot*, 'The Evitable Conflict', Asimov even briefly explains the period leading up to postmodernism from primitive times:

“Every period of human development, Susan,” said the Coordinator, “has had its own particular type of human conflict — its own variety of problem that, apparently, could be settled only by force. And each time, frustratingly enough, force never really settled the problem. Instead, it persisted through a series of conflicts, then vanished of itself, — what’s the expression, — ah, yes ‘not with a bang, but a whimper,’ as the economic and social environment changed. And then, new problems, and a new series of wars, — apparently endlessly cyclic” (Asimov, 2013:218).

This explanation is similar to the one Baudrillard mentions about the progress of the society from the Melanesian natives to the consumer society in the postmodern era. In Asimov's depiction, this transformation can also be inferred. He also gives a detailed description of the environment and situation of the world at that time in this story. Even if the time given is a distant future, Asimov discusses the issues of the postmodern period in four different regions of the world: The Eastern Region, The Tropic Region, The European Region, The Northern Region, and the world itself at the end. The Eastern Region involves China, and it is the over-populated region among other regions. Thus, Asimov refers to the population problem of China and he

also foresees the economic issues created by this country in the postmodern period by stating that "...Ching Hso-lin was a Regional Vice-Co-ordinator, with the economic welfare of half the people of Earth in his care" (Asimov, 2013:224). Moreover, The Tropic Region addresses the postcolonial criticism which is associated with postmodernism. The authorised person of this region expresses that:

"We've got confidence out here... we don't have to worry about the stale dregs of the last century like you Northerners. ... We've thinned down the jungles and found soil; we've watered the deserts and found gardens. We've got coal and oil in untouched fields, and minerals out of count. ... Just step back. That's all we ask the rest of the world to do. — Step back, and let us work" (Asimov, 2013:230).

In a way, Asimov speaks out the rights of the natives living in this region and criticizes colonialism and exploitation of these areas. In addition, he depicts a picture of people's characteristics belonging to The European Region and their attitudes towards the other regions. Madame Szegezowska from Europe is described as a typical, arrogant European person and her speech displays the policy of Europe throughout the history and in the postmodern period: "We have Egypt and Mesopotamia; Crete and Syria; Asia Minor and Greece. — But old age is not necessarily an unhappy time. It can be a fruition—" (Asimov, 2013:233). Besides, The Northern Region is defined as the most powerful region in the world since it comprises the countries monopolizing the industrial power and governing the consumer society. Thus, an overall presentment can be found out from this story of Asimov.

I, Robot also includes delineation of political understanding, politicians' views, the understanding of religion, ethics and the justice system along with a criticism of them and the elements of modernism. Asimov applies irony and parody as the characteristics of postmodernism to delineate and criticise. In the story of 'Evidence', the types of political ideologies are explicitly given. The reform politicians supporting the liberty and technology, and the fundamentalists against technology and considered as bigoted are mentioned in the story. Asimov indicates the difference between past and present, in other words, modernism and postmodernism with this comparison. Additionally, the degenerated political atmosphere of the postmodern era can be witnessed throughout the story. It starts

with a lobby between Lanning, an expert of US Robot and Mechanical Men and Mr. Quinn who is a politician trying to blacken another reformist politician Stephen Byerley. First of all, this conversation displays that high-level politicians try to get what they want by lobbying, and they even use the media for this. In addition, Asimov states in *I, Robot* that:

“...he'd be incapable of harming humans, incapable of tyranny, of corruption, of stupidity, of prejudice. And after he had served a decent term, he would leave, even though he were immortal, because it would be impossible for him to hurt humans by letting them know that a robot had ruled them. It would be most ideal” (Asimov, 2013:214).

It is a description of robots; however, he presents a criticism of politicians and politics in an ironic way by giving moral qualities to the robots that human beings should have. He also expresses that “the three Rules of Robotics are the essential guiding principles of a good many of the world's ethical systems... if Byerley follows all the Rules of Robotics, he may be a robot, and may simply be a very good man” (Asimov, 2013:199). Thus, his ironic criticism of ethics in the postmodern period is pointed out in this way. The corruption of ethics causes the occurrence of the consumer society or facilitates the creation of consumer individuals during the postmodern period since these individuals are deprived of the qualities that the robots possess.

Asimov handles the theme of religion and performs postmodern irony and parody to analyse this theme in the story ‘Reason’. Initially, a robot named Cutie, questioning its existence appears and it produces and fanatically attaches to a religion within its own logic. Even though this case also refers to scepticism and existentialism, which are the elements of postmodernism, it actually presents a subtle critique of religion ironically. The conversations made by Cutie, Donovan and Powell, robot experts, and the sentences formed by Cutie are the examples of parody in the book. For instance, Cutie says that “there is no Master but the Master,” he said, “and QT-1 is his prophet” (Asimov, 2013:63). This sentence may sound hilarious to the reader; however, a criticism is presented with this parody. In addition, it is an ironic and parodic criticism of reasoning which is an element of modernism. Cutie questions its existence and seems to think in a reasonable way, but the answers it finds at the end are unreasonable. Thus, this is a parody of the reason and Asimov

attracts the attention to this point by naming his story with this title. In the other story, 'Escape', a criticism of reason can also be witnessed. Asimov analyses this situation through 'The Brain' as the most intelligent and sensible machine in the story. It resolves the problems in a logical way, but it cannot obviate every problem it encounters. Therefore, reason alone is not sufficient. Additively, two robots are compared to each other in the story and the one with a characteristic does not break down, but the other acting with only its brain collapses. From a different point of view, 'The Brain' finds a solution to the question asked by Dr. Susan Calvin, however, it presents in a parodic way, thus, this way is Asimov's parodic point of view to the understanding of reason, which he transmits through his character 'The Brain'.

He also puts forward a critique of modernism by referring new and old. Alfred Lanning represents old understanding, modernism, and Peter Bogert represents new understanding, postmodernism. The conflict between these two characters is witnessed in the stories, especially, in 'Liar'. Bogert says "on Lanning. The old fellow disagrees with me." He sighed, "A bit behind the times, that's the trouble with him" (Asimov, 2013:110). Asimov remarks the disagreement between modernism and postmodernism. He also refers to the literary works of modernism and postmodernism by indicating different types of writing in these periods. In 'Liar', the robot, Herbie describes two types of books:

"It's the same with these books, you know, as with the others. They just don't interest me. There's nothing to your textbooks. Your science is just a mass of collected data plastered together by makeshift theory — and all so incredibly simple, that it's scarcely worth bothering about. It's your fiction that interests me. Your studies of the interplay of human motives and emotions" (Asimov, 2013:106).

Postmodern way of writing without rules or structures is praised against the modern way of writing. Herbie's explanation in terms of literary style, and its behaviour, which eventually turns into a parody, offers a postmodern critique of modernism.

Asimov's *I, Robot* also includes an analysis of hierarchy and economy since there are ironic criticisms of the economy and social structure behind all of the

technological stories. In 'Little Lost Robot', the workers Black and Walensky have this conversation:

“Black: Well, it’s the fellows upstairs that have the say on that. Me — I just do as I’m told. Probably all a matter of pull—”

Valensky: Yeah,” the electrician jerked a smile, and winked a wise eye. “Somebody knew somebody in Washington. But as long as my pay comes through on the dot, I should worry. The Drive’s none of my affair.....as long as they dish me my money, they can play games all they want” (Asimov, 2013:140-141).

This indicates the real environment of hierarchy, and the economic situation of the postmodern period. Besides, Valensky’s statement, “somebody knew somebody in Washington”, displays the corrupted the system leading to the formation of consumer society, and the system of consumer society itself. In most of the stories, several conversations may be found out related to the ironical criticism of hierarchy and economy. Two other main characters in the book, Donovan and Powel, also talk about their economic circumstances like these two workers. Especially, Donovan reflects this matter in his speech. In 'Catch the Rabbit', he clearly verbalizes his intention. “There’s the principle of aiding scientific advance. But don’t get me wrong. It’s not the principle that keeps me going; it’s the money they pay us” (Asimov, 2013:84). From this point of view, the economic atmosphere of that era is clearly described by Asimov and the perspective of the workers, or the society, towards earning money can be deduced. Besides, “three laws remind of the system of slavery that has left domination entirely to the hands of the master” (Edman, 2007:381). In other words, Asimov depicts a picture of modern slavery system created in the consumer society. Accordingly, the theme of rivalry is another point examined in *I, Robot*. In the postmodern consumer society, people caring about money more than anything compete each other to attain more money or to reach a more prominent position. The quarrel of Byerley and Quinn is an example to explain this situation. Likewise, the competence of two companies, Consolidated and U.S. robots is another example defined by Asimov in the story, 'Escape'.

“You get it, chief?” The general manager was wildly jubilant.
“You get it? There isn’t any industrial research group of any size that

isn't trying to develop a space-warp engine, and Consolidated and U. S. Robots have the lead on the field with our super robot-brains. Now that they've managed to foul theirs up, we have a clear field. That's the nub, the... uh... motivation. It will take them six years at least to build another and they're sunk, unless they can break ours, too, with the same problem" (Asimov, 2013:160).

It is also an evidence to indicate the competitive environment in the consumer society during the postmodern period.

Another significant theme of postmodernism which can be applied to analyse *I, Robot* is 'hyperreality and technoculture'. Throughout the book, all the events or stories revolve around technology since the inventions included in the book can be taken into account as imaginary and futuristic products when the time the book is written and published is considered. Asimov presents the possible future technological inventions. For instance, Byerley and Quinn talk on the 'visorphone' in 'Evidence'. It is described as a machine that they can talk and see their faces at the same time that is used in the 21st century. Besides, robot is another invention advanced and promoted in the 21st century. Regarding this, *I, Robot* is one of the works to analyse posthumanism. Robots in Asimov's fiction represent the robots Moravec describes in his study, *Rise of The Robots*. In one sense, Asimov's depiction of future supports what Moravec predicts and claims. He expresses that "within a decade or two, experts believed, robots would be cleaning our floors, mowing our lawns and, in general, eliminating drudgery from our lives" (Moravec, 1999:126). In addition, the fact that robots are controlled by human beings in *I, Robot* no matter how they are capable of achieving many things alludes to the opinion of Hayles related to posthumanism, who believe that there is a limit to what robots are able to do. Thus, Asimov's *I, Robot* can be examined with different views of posthumanism.

The attitude of people living at that time towards technology and technological inventions can also be comprehended. According to Asimov's narration, it can be stated that the society at that time develops technophobia, and three robotic laws of Asimov are the biggest proof to indicate this phobia of technology and technoculture. Besides, Asimov clearly expresses in the story, 'Evidence', in the conversation between Lanning and Quinn: "You are perfectly well acquainted, I suppose, with the strict rules against the use of robots on inhabited

worlds” (Asimov, 2013:190). In addition, the attitude of Gloria’s mother, Mrs. Weston, is another proof to highlight technophobia and paranoia created by this phobia as a characteristic of postmodernism. She states that

“I won’t have my daughter entrusted to a machine — and I don’t care how clever it is. It has no soul, and no one knows what it may be thinking. A child just isn’t made to be guarded by a thing of metal” (Asimov, 2013:12).

Furthermore, paranoia among the society emerges due to the media related to technology since it is a production advanced thanks to technology. In time, it becomes the medium of the capitalist system to impose ideas or beliefs on the society. In addition, it is a significant element of consumption as well as postmodernism because of the fact that it directs people to consume, and eventually, a consumer society shows up as a result during the postmodern era.

Media is interrelated to hyperreality since it opens a door to a new land for people to make them disconnect from the real world. Asimov handles this theme in a parodic method through the character ‘The Brain’ in ‘Escape’. Dr. Calvin states his situation that “he developed a sense of humor — it’s an escape, you see, a method of partial escape from reality. He became a practical joker” (Asimov, 2013:184). The Brain represents the individuals in the postmodern period escaping from the reality. Besides, the place where Donovan and Powel go in this story refers to the place when people watch TV and escape from the real life as in the Truman Show, and it is also an indicator of hyperreality. Therefore, Asimov transmits a message by entitling his story as ‘Escape’. Besides, “in a hyperreal environment, over time it’s no longer possible to discern the true relationship between the symbol and reality” (Solomon,2018:122). The delusions of Donovan and Powel travelling on space during the interstellar jump address to this definition of hyperreality or the feeling of people losing themselves in a hyperreal environment such as TV shows, news etc. created by media. Similarly, in the story, ‘Liar’, the effect of media is presented through the character ‘Herbie’. This robot symbolizes how media functions by lying and distracting from reality. Herbie tells people what they want to hear similar to the media. He states that “this is a dream, he was saying, and you mustn’t believe in it. You’ll wake into the real world soon and laugh at yourself. He loves you, I tell you. He does, he does! But not here! Not now! This is an illusion” (Asimov, 2013:117).

Asimov indicates the world offered by the media as an illusion, that's why, he may probably use the word, 'liar' to name his story. Additionally, he describes the way the media is used by capitalism in the society during the postmodern period.

“The news broke upon the city a week before Byerley was to have been nominated. But “broke” is the wrong word. It staggered upon the city, shambled, crawled. Laughter began, and wit was free. And as the far off hand of Quinn tightened its pressure in easy stages, the laughter grew forced, an element of hollow uncertainty entered, and people broke off to wonder” (Asimov, 2013:202).

Asimov depicts a picture of the method utilized by the media. Ideas are imposed in this way gradually, thus, people are ruled easily.

All of this is a portrait of the society in the postmodern era, and the society in the postmodern world should be examined so that the formation of the consumer society can be clarified. *I, Robot* is an outstanding work of Asimov to research the elements of postmodernism and the consumer society created by outcomes of the postmodern period because of the fact that the road to the consumer society with the contribution of technology and the other elements of postmodernism can be witnessed and analysed step by step in Asimov's work. In fact, he sheds light on the consumer society in every story of *I, Robot*. Even the company's name, U.S. Robots refers to the effect of the U.S.A during the postmodern era and the consumer society governed mainly by this country.

In 'The Evitable Conflict', Asimov addresses to the beginning of the consumption system and informs the readers about the process and progress in a way. “In England, a new industrialism was growing, and on the continent, a new nationalism” (Asimov, 2013:219). This new nationalism is the society of consumption, and it emerges by the means of industrialism.

“...when the most important question in the world was which portions of Europe would control the economic resources and consuming capacity of which portions of non-Europe... In the twentieth century, Susan, we started a new cycle of wars — what shall I call them? Ideological wars? The emotions of religion applied to economic systems, rather than to extra-natural ones?... And positronic robots came... it no

longer seemed so important whether the world was Adam Smith or Karl Marx...” (Asimov, 2013:219).

Asimov summarizes the progress of the consumer society in a nutshell. In order to dispose of the increased manufacturing with the industrial revolution, the countries with power start to control the consumption over time. Consumption is to be increased so that production can increase, and more money can be earned. In due course, consumption gets out of control and what is produced becomes insufficient for the society. At this point, robots are invented to enhance the manufacturing.

The characteristics of the consumer society can also be examined in the stories of Asimov’s *I, Robot*. Primarily, the vocabularies such as ‘boss, money’ belonging to the consumption system can be witnessed throughout the book, and rivalry or striving for superiority are the significant details pointing out to the consumer society in the stories. For instance, Donovan despises Cutie in ‘Reason’ in many places and his attitude symbolizes the behaviours of employers in the consumer society: “I’m not going to knuckle under to any do-jigger I put together myself” (Asimov, 2013:64). Besides, the statement of Donovan generally includes the concerns of an employee trying to survive in the consumption system.

The feeling of everydayness imposed by the system and considered as one of the elements of the consumer society can also be witnessed in *I, Robot*. Asimov expresses this situation clearly in ‘Escape’ that “there’s the matter of my lost leave. And the monotony!” (Asimov, 2013:166). In addition to these, as one of the main factors enabling consumption to be exalted, the theme of abundance or growth draws the attention in the book. Dr Susan Calvin, in the interview from beginning to the end of the book enlightens the growth of the society with technology. She also makes statements referring to the theme of abundance:

“When I first came here,” she said, “I had a little room in a building right about there where the fire-house is now.” She pointed. “It was torn down before you were born. I shared the room with three others. I had half a desk. We built our robots all in one building. Output — three a week. Now look at us” (Asimov, 2013:3).

Related to abundance, needs and satisfaction are the other characteristics of the consumer society deduced from the stories. In ‘Evidence’, Calvin connects the

disappearance of Stephen Byerley with needlessness by stating that “or at least he arranged to die, because he knew we needed him no longer” (Asimov, 2013:187). It is a flawless depiction of the society consuming constantly due to the belief of need, and when they are no longer satisfied, they try to get rid of the things which they previously think they need. It is also interrelated with the term ‘fashion’, and Asimov touched on this issue in his first robot story, ‘Robbie’. Mrs Weston declares that “it was different at first. It was a novelty; it took a load off me, and — and it was a fashionable thing to do. But now I don’t know...” (Asimov, 2013:12). Asimov tells a story of Robbie’s owners trying to dispose of it when it is out of date and they are not satisfied with its existence any longer, in other words, when they do not need it.

The impact of signs and codes are also encountered in the language used. Signs and codes are utilized in the consumer society to set moral values or to govern traditions. In the book, the characters produce statements such as ‘Oh, Jupiter’ or ‘Sizzling Saturn’. In a way, they give up praying to God in difficult situations. Thus, it is a significant exemplification indicating the effect of signs and codes on human, language, culture, religion and social values.

Another characteristic of the consumption is consuming body, and it can be taken into account as one of the main themes in *I, Robot*. In the consumption frenzy, robots get their share of this situation. The system that is into consuming bodies invents new mechanical bodies to be consumed as technology improves. Therefore, the system sustains its existence. In all the stories of *I, Robot*, the exploitation of robots or their mechanical bodies is highlighted by Asimov.

Asimov uses the theme of advertising as an indispensable element of the consumer society in most of his stories. Especially, in ‘Escape’, an advertisement appears in the middle of the stories at unexpected moment. Thus, Asimov presents the significance of advertising with its own function. Donovan and Powell hear this advertisement on the spacecraft:

“Does your coffin fit differently lately? Why not try Morbid M. Cadaver’s extensible caskets? They are scientifically designed to fit the natural curves of the body, and are enriched with Vitamin B1. Use Cadaver’s caskets for comfort. Remember – you’re – going – to – be – dead – a – long – long – time!” (Asimov, 2013:179).

This situation refers to the fact that advertisements appear before us even in the most absurd conditions. Asimov describes this function of advertisements in a parodic and ironic way which are the characteristics of postmodernism.

As a conclusion, the uncontrollable or sometimes aimless attitudes of the robots throughout the story such as Speedy's corruption in 'Runaround', dementing of 'The Brain' in 'Escape' or the lost robot in 'Little Lost Robot', refer to anomie in the consumer society. Throughout the stories in *I, Robot*, the situations of the robot and human characters represent the society suffering from fatigue and solicitude. Speedy getting anxious when it encounters a danger, cannot figure it out with its restricted freedom and spoils. This is a symbolization of solicitude as an example of anomie. Besides, the state of overworked robots and people such Powell and Donovan under a lot of strain reflects the impact of fatigue. As a result, Asimov reveals the out-of-control mechanism in a sense, in other words, the consumption frenzy, formed by technology and media with the impact of the political, economic and cultural environment brought about by postmodernism.

IV. POSTMODERNISM AND THE CONSUMER SOCIETY IN *WESTWORLD*

Westworld is a sci-fi series produced by HBO, one of the popular television channels in the USA, and directed by Jonathan Nolan and Lisa Joy. It is inspired by the movie of the same name made in 1973, written and directed by Michael Crichton, and its sequel, *Futureworld*, put on display in 1976. *Westworld* is based on a dystopic story indicating a future world in which technology advances and robots come to life. Therefore, it shares similarities with *I, Robot* by its content and context. In one sense, *Westworld* may be considered as a sequel to *I, Robot* because more expanded and detailed features of the world of robots are witnessed in this series. In addition, it also contains the characteristics of postmodernism and the elements of the consumer society, generated during the postmodern era, in the advanced technological world. Thus, from *I, Robot* to *Westworld*, the progress of the consumer society, the evolution of consumption and their transformation in the digital age with the impact of technological developments can be examined through the postmodern characteristics. The most prominent characteristics to be analysed in *Westworld* are hyperreality and technoculture since it is mainly based on a scenario including technology and hyperreality. The acceleration and form of technology and technoculture since The Evitable Conflict, last story of *I, Robot*, are displayed. Besides, the series includes visual representations of Asimov's several ideas and depictions written in his work *I, Robot*. Even if it is not obvious, what is narrated in *Westworld* refers to the events or stories in Asimov's *I, Robot*. Additionally, this connection is also related to posthumanism. Moravec states that "by 2050 robot "brains" based on computers that execute 100 trillion instructions per second will start rivaling human intelligence" (Moravec, 1999:124). Moreover, Hayles also expresses that

"The three historical formations that I discussed, marked by first-order cybernetics from 1945 to 1960, autopoiesis or second-order cybernetics from 1960 to 1985, and virtuality or third-order cybernetics

from 1985 to 1995, have now progressed to a fourth stage” (Hayles, 2006:161).

Thus, this progress of artificial intelligence can be witnessed in both works. In other words, while *I, Robot* indicates the first state that robots come into human beings’ life, *Westworld* describes their more advanced condition. Besides, the rebellion of android hosts may refer to the idea of the end of man and the rising of robots.

In the story ‘Catch That Rabbit’, Susan Calvin expresses that “we don’t have much to do with robots in action on Earth” (Asimov, 2013:101). Every action occurs on space or other planets in Asimov’s work; however, this non-existent place actualizes in *Westworld* as an amusement park. These two works are interrelated to each other in terms of their identical content and the characteristics they possess, which are associated with postmodernism and the consumer society. In addition, the differences between Asimov’s robots and the android hosts in the park display the differences between the generations living in two periods of time. The old ones are taken into account as partly more problematic than the newer robots even in *Westworld*, which is an indicator that the new generation is exactly what the consumption system desires to construct the consumer society.

The theme of hyperreality may be considered as one of the main themes in the series, and it remarks throughout especially the first and second seasons since a door of a new world; in other words, a new reality, is opened in these two seasons. This new world, named as *Westworld*, resembles the one created by the media to detract the society from the relentless reality to maintain the system of consumption. To highlight this point, the scenario contains several conversations stating that *Westworld* is different from the real world. In the first season and the second episode, Ford expresses to his child version that “everything in this world is magic” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:37.48). This statement refers to the magical, artificial world of media as the one in *Truman Show*, so it is also accounted as a simulation which is an idea belonging to Baudrillard and becoming prominent during the postmodern era. Besides, the term, simulation is exactly presented in the third season of the series. Fearing the collapse of their system or a new attack by the former hosts, the executives of Delos Company find the solution to set up a simulation in a virtual environment in which residents would not understand that it is actually not the real

world but the simulation. To point out this matter, the book *Alice in Wonderland* is utilized in several places throughout the series. The members of the society and the guests of the Westworld are simulated as Alice trying to reach the wonderland to get rid of the real, boring world to become what they desire to be and to behave the way they would like.

Regarding to hyperreality and technology or technoculture, the other postmodern component is paranoia caused by technophobia identified as the fear of technology and hesitation to technological advancements. Even if the series occurs in the digital age or it is made long after *I, Robot*, people are still paranoiac when technology is at stake. This is because it is a bottomless well or a deep ocean, that's why, especially during the postmodern era and after it to the digital age, many conspiracy theories appear in the society. This situation is also depicted in *Westworld* as it is in *I, Robot*. In contradistinction to *I, Robot*, people seem more integrated with digital technological movements in *Westworld* since their life is mainly depended on technology and they are surrounded by technological devices. However, they continue being afraid of robots and abstain getting close or living with them because they are worried about being damaged or hurt by robots. Therefore, robots called as hosts inhabit only in the amusement park and they are coded as the creatures that cannot injure the guests. Thus, Asimov's laws of robotics commanding not to hurt people are also valid in *Westworld*. All of these precautions or adjustments are originated by the element of paranoia in connection with technophobia, and it is witnessed throughout the series. For this reason, Dolores is asked whether she hurts a living thing or not at the end of the first episode of the first season (Nolan et al., "Westworld" 2016:01.01). Since this matter is very significant, such a scene is presented in the first episode.

Another reason for paranoia in the society is the realization of metanarratives considered as a significant factor of postmodernism. The matter of metanarrative is depicted in *Westworld* as the whole series includes an artificial world based on a narrative scripted and controlled by the higher authority. This artificial world consisting of android hosts resembles the real world controlled by higher authorities through metanarrative. The authority determines and scripts history, literature, science and all the fields in human being's life. It owns the power and authorization to change, rewrite or fabricate the truth in the direction it aspires. It imposes the ideas

it intends on the society to believe and transmits subconscious messages by running media or other mass communication mediums. From this point of view, the narratives of Lee Sizemore, one of the characters who is responsible for narrating and designing the Westworld, symbolizes the capitalist system, and his stories refer to the metanarrative of the real world governed by the media. Thus, metanarrative is connected to paranoia because the conspiracy theories emerging especially during the postmodern era argue and reveal this metanarrative system and cause the society even more paranoid. Additionally, these narratives of *Westworld* can be associated with metafiction as a postmodern characteristic since they are renewed and interactive versions of Western stories or movies which are very popular in the past, and they include historical figures or events such soldiers of Hitler or American Indian wars. Moreover, there exists fiction in a fiction considered as an indicator of metafiction.

In conjunction with metafiction, *Westworld* contains the element of intertextuality as another postmodern feature since numerous quotes or references from various works of art or literature are observed from the beginning of the series to the end of last season. *Westworld* provides an opportunity to witness a wide range of these artistic works from Shakespeare to Arthur Conan Doyle, Lewis Carroll, Mary Shelley or Herodotus. They are quoted to describe certain situations and to highlight significant points. Especially, several quotations from Shakespeare's plays can be detected in many scenes. For instance, the most repeated statement of the series, "these violent delights have violent ends" belongs to the play of *Romeo and Juliet* (Nolan et al., "Westworld" 2016:01.01). In addition, *Westworld* can be assumed as the visual version of Asimov's *I, Robot*, that's why, there exists an intertextual connection between these two works. Thus, it can be stated that intertextuality is an indivisible part of *Westworld*.

The other theme of postmodernism to be analysed, which is also the biggest factor in the occurrence of postmodernism, is post-World War II. The third season begins with a scene of World War II in Italy, and the flags of Hitler regime surround all over the place in the new narrative of the park. It is understood by the atmosphere and setting in the second episode that oppression, tyranny brought along the war and the idea of fascism reign over the world and victimize great numbers of people. Besides, at thirty-sixth minute in the same episode, a portrait of Winston Churchill,

who is one of the prominent leaders during that era, is hung on the wall. In this way, *Westworld* draws attention to the second world war, considered as the beginning of malignancy and technological advancements. This theme is also associated with technology since the developments of technology play a significant role in this period in terms of the weapons utilized and experiments conducted by different forces. In one sense, it is a war in which the side possessing advanced technology more or technological superiority is taken into account as more advantageous; in other words, it is a technological war.

Depiction of post-World War II and quotes, references or characters displayed through intertextuality also refer to postmodern irony considered as one of postmodern characteristic. Especially, the theme of war owns a significant place in *Westworld* since a wide range of scenes of gunfight or armed conflagration related to Indian American War, American Civil War, World War II and eventually, the war of human beings and robots or android hosts are witnessed. From this point of view, it can be stated that a war always exists in human beings' history from ancient times to the digital age. Humankind always find something to fight for. They denominate it as the war of liberalism, freedom or independence, but they never assume or consider the post-war period and what happens to the society or what they are exposed to during or after the world. *Westworld* touches upon these elements delicately without dictating or didactic messages. Particularly, the third season of the series is quite significant to examine post-war conditions the society faces with. In the third season, the character, Caleb who is formerly a soldier before, suffers from psychological effects of post-war period. His dream in the first episode makes a reference to the possible mental illness of the soldiers anguishing in the post-war period. In addition to this scene, Caleb talks to Liam Dempsey, son of the creator of Incite which is the biggest technology company, to account for his disappointing military experiences in the fifth episode of the third season:

“Liam Dempsey: Let me go. I’ll make sure you’re taken care of.

Caleb: You already took care of me. You sent me off to war...
slaughtered my friends on the battlefield” (Nolan et al., “Westworld”
2020:11.56).

This scene presents an ironic criticism of the wars in the real world. The

authority responsible for declaring a war is accused, and Caleb as a representative of the society or the army uprisings and rebels to the system sending him off to the war and causing many people die in the war.

The theme of war or post-war exhibits other postmodern concepts, existentialism and scepticism, as the society realising the absurdity and meaninglessness of the war begins questioning their existence. Numerous deaths and the feeling of passing away caused by the war play a prominent role in emerging of these concepts. In the first episode of the series, a scene including existentialism and scepticism is presented with Dolores' father, Peter Abernathy. He begins interrogating after he finds a photo not belonging to the Westworld. Peter Abernathy says that "I had a question, a question you're not supposed to ask, which gave me an answer you're not supposed to know" (Nolan et al., "Westworld" 2016:43.45). *Westworld* contains this scene and a large number of scenes in which android hosts question their existence, so they represent the people interrogating the purpose of life, how it ends and their path in this life not only after the war but also during the digital age governed by the consumption patterns. Thus, it can be stated that existentialism or scepticism are the elements appearing after the Second World War, but they continue to exist in today's world by accelerating their effect under favour of technology and technological developments. These people also refer to the worried community about the end of man that posthumanism defines.

Another theme depicted in the scene with postmodern irony is religion. In the quotes, decoration or scenario, an ironic approach towards the concept of religion commonly believed in the society can be observed throughout the series through bibliographic elements as in *I, Robot*. The vocabularies or names such as "genesis, God, heaven, Solomon", or quotations from various authors mentioning God or its creation, and even the painting, 'Creation of Adam' by Michelangelo are prominent examples to analyse this approach. These examples put forward an ironic criticism not only about the understanding of religion but also its utilization by the higher authorities to control the society by imposing this understanding. Besides, they also indicate the desire of human beings to be God, or playing God described as Frankenstein complex in the academic litterateur. Especially, the scene consisting of the painting, 'Creation of Adam', depicts both situations (Nolan et al., "Westworld" 2016:01.02.16). In addition, the white church used as a gate to the place that android

hosts are created and controlled represents the headquarter of the higher authority where it governs the society by means of religion. The way through the cabinet of confession makes an ironic reference to the belief defending of confessing and getting rid of all the sins. The scene in which android hosts pass away and cross from the Westworld to the other simulation is also the other ironic criticism of the concept of paradise since the hosts have in faith that they move to the heaven as they call “the other side” similar to people on Earth (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2018:48.42). The scene in which Maeve declares her disappointment about her previous assumptions related to God refers to the false assumptions of the society in the real world based on religion. She states that “first, I thought that you and the others were Gods, then I realised you’re just men” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:41.51). This scene also indicates the idea that religion is managed to control the society and it is not God but men behind all the secret doors. Relatedly, in the fourth episode of the second season, transformation of Mr. Delos refers to this idea. As if he begins to turn into a devil and the place becomes a hell as the lights change to red (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2018:57.28). Thus, Mr. Delos as the owner of Delos Company is a representative of the higher authority managing religion and controlling the society. For this reason, he is depicted as the devil himself.

In *Westworld*, postcolonialism and feminism as inseparable parts of postmodernism are delineated. From beginning to end, references to postcolonialism in an ironic way are portrayed. For instance, Indian section in the park and the scene of Emily Grace, William’s daughter, are among the indicators of postcolonialism. In this scene, Emily expresses that “normally, there are the other hosts here... to entertain us, to cook” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2018:06.29). Thus, the hosts represent the colonialisied native people entertaining the colonialists or fulfilling their needs. In the same scene, Emily is accompanied by an English man. The English man’s conceit behaviour and his statement: “Don’t worry. They can’t hurt us” indicate the attitudes of the colonialists towards the colonialisied (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2018:07.19). Death of him after he says this sentence refers to the uprising of the colonialisied during postcolonialism. As well as traditional colonialism, *Westworld* is an important example to perceive modern and postmodern way of it in the technological or digital age. It can be assumed in *Westworld* that colonialism is not over. In other words,

“The audience witnesses the resurrection of the Western frontier and colonialism and its brutal culture, which leads to the complete subjugation of an inferior group of people. The impulse to violently dominate and colonize has always been prevalent in society—this impulse will eventually become commodified and to meet the demands of consumers” (Keefe, 2018:1).

Besides, exploitation of human beings still proceeds in the consumer society through technology by forcing them to consume in every aspect.

“Digital media platforms especially social media have converted people’s perception of communication and socialization into its own culture; therefore, digital communities and identities have occurred. Having its own rules, perception of privacy has changed, too. Yet, capitalism has never been affected by this invention; on the contrary, it has turned into a huge industrialized and digitalized communication tool that mechanizes people’s perceptions and turns people into obedient and dependent participants, consented to do whatever this community leads them to do” (Koç, 2019:209).

In this way, the system encodes the sublimity of consumption into human brains, and digital colonialism consisting of these digital communities and derived from capitalism exists. The ones who are aware of this exploitation and resist against it such as Caleb and Dolores represent postcolonialism in the digital age.

Regarding to exploitation, the concept of feminism is also inferred from the series. Even in the digital age, the circumstances of women do not change. They are not considered as equal and qualified as men. The character of ‘Wyatt’ depicted as the most powerful and respected persona in the series is expected as a man, but it is understood at the end of the first season that it is not a man but a woman. Dolores is actually the character of Wyatt, and it can be taken into account as a postmodern ironic criticism. Moreover, being underrated of Dolores as a leader since she is a woman makes reference to this issue. In the third episode of the second season, the coronal states:

“The Coronal: Major, why is this flaccid plum riding ahead of you?”

The Coronal: And you are?

Dolores: Call me Wyatt.

The Coronal: You are Wyatt?” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2018:18.26).

Thus, this scene is great example to examine feminism as a postmodern characteristic in *Westworld*.

Ironical criticisms based on economic issues and class distinction occupy a significant place in *Westworld* since it is mainly about a theme park visited by high income people, and especially, this issue is uttered in several scenes by the workers or the hosts, in other words, the exploited class. In the series, the hosts own a loop written by someone else for them, and they are supposed to stay on their loop, which symbolizes the monotone life chosen for the working class. On the other hand, the upper classes possessing the power and money are capable of doing everything they wish for. Ford expresses that “the guests enjoy power. They cannot indulge it in the outside world, and they come here. ... for the hosts at least, we can do is make them forget” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:37.21). While the ones holding money can visit the Westworld to satisfy themselves, the others work for them to entertain and delight. This is also an indicator of the problem of hierarchy. In addition, the issues the workers encounter and struggle within the series are articulated from place to place. In the second season, a conversation including these issues can be witnessed. A staff says that “hey! Where is the next shift? We’re going on 13 hours here” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2018:08.23). This statement resembles the dialogues of Powell and Donovan, the characters in *I, Robot*.

The other element criticised with postmodern irony and conceived as a postmodern feature is freedom. Actually, the series is based on the theme of freedom. In the beginning, the struggle of the hosts to be free is mainly described. After attaining her freedom and escaping from the Westworld to the real world, Dolores realizes that people themselves are not free at all. It is revealed in the series that freedom is something limited and controlled by the authority. In other words, it is a privilege owned by not the majority but the minority possessing the power to govern

and control. Unfortunately, the society does not have this privilege and even worse, they are oblivious of this situation. Their future, what to eat, what to drink or what to think are determined and supervised by the authority represented by the company, Incite, in the series. This machine refers to the mass communication or media run by the system in the real world. In the series, Dolores and Caleb deactivate the machine and let the society be informed about the truth. At this moment, they are emancipated even if they are disappointed. Thus, the theme of freedom as a postmodern characteristic is examined ironically in the series. Additionally, this society deceived and directed by the machine of Incite refers to the consumer society whose consumption habits are determined by means of media and mass communication. Thus, the effect of technology on the consumer society and the consumption owns an important role, and it is the biggest part of postmodernism since the postmodern characteristics constitute the consumer society in time, and great numbers of scenes pointing out the consumer society are depicted in *Westworld*.

The first and salient theme of the consumer society delineated in *Westworld* is nostalgia referring to “a longing for the past, a yearning for yesterday, or a fondness for possessions and activities associated with days of yore” (Holbrook, 1993:245). The system sells history to the society consuming everything in the modern life. What is seen in the series makes a reference to this situation since the guests are able to experience the past which they cannot attain in the real life.

“As Marx said of Napoleon III, sometimes in history the same events occur twice: the first time with real historical import; the second merely as caricatural evocation of the event, as a grotesque avatar of it -- sustained by a legendary reference.... Cultural consumption may thus be defined as the time and place of the caricatural resurrection, the parodic evocation of what already no longer exists -- of what is not so much ‘consumed’ as ‘consummated’ (completed, past and gone)” (Baudrillard, 1998:99).

As it is inferred from the passage of Baudrillard, the system pledges the resurrection or to be beamed to the history and live that moment and eventually to consume it. It is called as nostalgia in the litterateur, and it is an opportunity for the ones possessing nothing left to consume in the real world to find something fortunately to consume.

The other elements of the consumer society are abundance, affluence and growth. Particularly with the improvement of technology, abundance, affluence and growth forming the basis of the consumer society are observed in every field. The former situation and the number of the hosts when the park is constructed first, and the recent condition with the increased number of the hosts refer to this idea. In time, the park develops, expands and more hosts are produced, and more guests begin to visit the park thanks to the abundance, affluence and growth occurring in the outside world.

Visiting the park more than the past is also interrelated to another element of the consumer society, needs and satisfaction. As the society grows and the things become plentiful or abundant, needs of human beings change as well as the ways of satisfaction modify. In the digital world, their need is to be themselves since they are assimilated and evolved as a different person. In addition, they are recognized in their real life and there exists norms and values, so they are supposed to be cautious about their behaviours, what to say or even think not to be ostracised. Therefore, they seek for being the person who they really are, that's why, they make a visit to the Westworld to satisfy these needs of them. As Maeve expresses that "this is the new world, and in this world, you can be whoever you want" (Nolan et al., "Westworld" 2016:15.27). Besides, satisfying their needs is a way of becoming happy and enjoying their life. From this aspect, it can be stated that needs/satisfaction, and happiness/enjoyment are the elements of the consumer society, which are interrelated since one can be delighted when needs are satisfied. Besides, the Westworld offers an opportunity for the people who cannot accomplish in the real world and are inclined to commit crimes or suppress their sexual desires in their life. The Westworld is a good place for them to fulfill their hidden aspirations and to satisfy. Since the park is visited by various kinds of people, surely, their ways of satisfaction differ. Thus, the Westworld presents different types of activities, stories for its guests so that everyone is able to find something suitable for them.

This feature of the park also demonstrates the function of personalization in the consumer society considered as one of its characteristics. As the system of consumption offers a range variety of products to consume, the theme park, the Westworld, contains multifarious events to be experienced and consumed by the guests. With signs and codes delivered by advertisements, the system creates

“synthetic individualities” who are deceived to believe that they are unique and special, so there always exists exclusive products for them (Baudrillard, 1998:88). Actually, they turn into an artificial individual whose wishes, desires and tendencies governed by the system of consumption. Then, these individuals pay a visit to the Westworld or similar platforms in order to be themselves, thus, the system continues its existence in this vicious circle. In relation to that, these signs and codes are the other mediums of the consumer society to create and maintain this system of infinite loop. In one sense, the society is forced to consume unconsciously by these codes and signs transmitted by media through advertisements. In *Westworld*, several references to this function of the system of consumption can be observed. Primarily, possessing a loop of the hosts is the indicator of the method the system utilizes and the natural result of this process. Furthermore, ‘the maze’ mentioned especially in the first season symbolizes signs and codes drummed into our head. That’s why, the maze sign is depicted inside the hosts’ skull referring to the unconscious messages instructing to consume.

These signs and codes are transmitted mostly and doubtlessly by advertisements taken into consideration as the other and the most significant appliance and qualification of the consumption since the system is established on advertisements. It is the way of controlling, directing the society as well as designating their consumption habits. Great numbers of advertisements are situated in *Westworld*. “Welcome to Westworld. Live without limits. Discover your true calling” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:20.17). Thanks to the techniques of advertising, hope and promises are put on the market. In this way, individuals are attracted, and they obey the rules of the system of consumption without resisting. In a sense, advertising is a gate to the magical world of consumption. As Ford states that “everything in this world is magic”, this magical world described as the Westworld in the series represents the simulation created by media, which is a fragment of the consumer society and postmodernism (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:37.48). By drawing advantage from advertisements, the system endeavours to detract the society from the agony of the real life and presents an enchanted world in which they can enjoy instead of suffering because it is possible to be enlightened and/or to give up obeying the system when feeling sorrow or anger. In addition, people are not into chaos because chaos brings unhappiness, and human beings

naturally desire to be happy, in peace and satisfied. William states that “do you know why this beats the real world? Real world is chaos. It is an accident” (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:24). Therefore, this dream world, in other words, the simulation in Baudrillard’s term, is a perfect place to maintain their life. However, they are not aware that they are manipulated or governed by the system creating that chaos in reality so that the society can be distracted. The Westworld refers to this dreamland as Truman Show. As Dolores expresses in the first scene of the series that “I am in a dream”, the society is as if in a dream (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:02.03). Besides, the desire of living at ease is also associated with the feeling of everydayness considered as one of the elements of the consumer society. The feeling of everydayness includes tranquillity, comfort and welfare without a conflict or confusion as if living in a loop. That’s why, it is also one of the pledges taken by the system in the simulation.

As a result, the society becomes addicts by means of advertisements in this artificial world. The society enchanted by the unconscious signs, codes and instructions encouraging consumption turns into the consumer society eventually as the system aspires. The individuals belonging to the consumer society adopt all the consumption patterns in time. They begin to live based on these patterns that their relationships, the way of spending their free time change. In fact, they proceed to consume everything including time, relationships, friendships regardless of values or morality. The way the consumer society consumes time differs from the former periods. Especially with the improvement of technology, and as the working conditions get more difficult, the individuals seek for enjoyment and happiness, which are the elements of the consumer society. They surrender themselves to the games taken into account as the other types of simulations. This circumstance resembles the status of the people visiting the Westworld for enjoyment and satisfaction. In a sense, the Westworld also refers to the computer games as a time-consuming activity participated by the consumer society being tired of the stress and depression of the real life. They consider these activities as a solution to get rid of daily problems. It can be stated that the system is good at creating various simulations to attract the consumers, and games are one of them because they are mainly founded on fun system, the other medium of consumerism and the most made use of.

Another thing consumed in a very bad way is the body, and it is undoubtedly a powerful agent of the consumer society. As in every product of mass communication and in *Westworld*, it is at the forefront since the body means exploiting sexuality, soles, emotions or labour force. In every shape, every way and from every aspect, it is consumed or exploited. The system determines the roles of masculinity and femininity and impose these roles on the society. In *Westworld*, these designated roles come to the prominence in most of the scenes. The roles casted for women can be observed, especially in every scene in which the female characters are patronized and categorized by the male characters according to their assigned roles. These roles make consuming the body of women easier. According to the rules of the system, females are supposed to be seductive, attractive, but submissive while males are powerful and charismatic. Both kinds are apparent in the series. Regarding this, great numbers of scenes including sexuality and violence to women are depicted because these are the inevitable results of the provided roles to females and males.

The other element delineated in *Westworld* is anomie in the consumer society containing solicitude and violence. The uncontrollable rebellion of the hosts is considered as an indicator of anomie. People rising against the authority in the real life are represented by these rebellions in the *Westworld*. All the things begin with solicitude and questioning, then it turns into an uprising, and violence becomes an indispensable part of this revolt. "These violent delights have violent ends" (Nolan at al., "Westworld" 2016:01). The violent methods followed by the system are retaliated in a violent way. All in all, *Westworld* is a great work to analyse postmodernism since it includes the characteristics of it and the consumer society as an outcome of postmodernism.

V. CONCLUSION

This thesis aimed to analyse the depiction of the consumer society in Asimov's *I, Robot* and the TV-series, *Westworld* through postmodernism. They can be considered as significant examples to conduct this analysis since they include the characteristics of postmodernism, and the consumer society, as a genre of postmodernism, is depicted delicately in both works. Furthermore, this thesis presents a historical journey of the society commencing to transform in the early postmodern period into a consumer society within the late period of postmodernism through the characters or occasions described in the book and the tv-series. Based on technology, one of the features of postmodernism, both works contain other elements of postmodernism leading to the problematic aspect of the consumer society. With the progress of technology, media and other types of mass communication become prominent in every field of life. In time, they turn into a dangerous weapon utilized and controlled by the authority possessing power and protecting the capitalist system. Thus, the process of creating the consumer society begins with changing the consumption habits.

The relationship or the effect of postmodernism is incontrovertible in generating the consumer society. This is because media, the most efficient factor in constituting consumers, is a production of technology developed more during the postmodern era, and technoculture is shaped by this advanced technology. Relatedly, hyperreality, capitalized on distracting the society from the real life to the magical world of consumption, is an outcome of media and technology union. In addition, paranoia/technophobia and postmodern irony or parody as the other elements of postmodernism depicted in this thesis are interrelated with the consumer society since the individuals who are aware of the system's mechanism deliver ironic criticisms based on economy, politics, literature modified by the system, and cause paranoia to erupt in the society. The other reason of paranoia is because of technophobia possessed by the ones who are afraid of the wicked impacts of technology.

There also exists interaction between literature and the consumer society since the effect and the elements of consumption as well as the characteristics of postmodernism such as intertextuality can be detected in the literary works, and these literary works are shaped by the system similar to media. From this point of view, it can be stated that the society, media and literature are the pieces of a trivet governed by the system, and all of these pieces are examined in this thesis by means of *I, Robot* and *Westworld*.

The characters have significant roles to demonstrate this point of view as the historical journey from the early to the late period of postmodernism to display the formation of the consumer society is presented by the characters and events. In both works, the youth and elderliness of the characters represent this situation and assist to set off this journey. Dr. Susan Calvin and William refer to the individuals of the consumer society accustomed to the system increasingly in the course of time. That's why, the way they act, think and live change from the beginning to the end of the book and the tv-series as well as their consumption habits.

This situation is more explicit for the character, William in *Westworld*. The reason of this is that *Westworld* is produced literally in the late period of postmodernism and in the transition to digital age in which the consumer society reaches its peak. Even if *I, Robot* includes the qualifications of this period by its context, the picture of the consumer society depicted in the book is not as much as elaborative and sophisticated because of the fact that it is written in the early postmodern period. For this reason, the brutal progress of the consumer society reveals itself more in *Westworld*. This situation is also an indicator to observe the transformation of this society of consumption over the years and periods.

The society becoming acquainted with advanced digital technology in their peaceful lives begins to be controlled by the authority through signs and codes transmitted by the media as an outcome of high technology. In this way, their life changes totally, in other words, their life is dispossessed from them since they lose their own identity and become the individuals exactly the system aspires. Their way of thinking, living, loving, believing and even eating or drinking, most importantly, their habits of consumption are determined and altered by the system. As the artificial individuals resembling the robots both in *I, Robot* and *Westworld*, they become the consumer society. As it is witnessed in the book and tv-series, they

execute everything to satisfy their needs or to attain their desires and the only significant thing for them is their well-being. They care just themselves rather than caring the others or they ignore social norms, values and respect.

The magical world or simulation created by the media and offered by the system seems so entertaining, attractive and delightful that they disconnect from the reality and devote themselves to this enchanted life. This bewitched life is crammed in several devices evolving as technology advances. It is presented as a black box at first, then as a square screen, and finally, as a tiny mobile device which becomes one of the organs of human beings. They are able to reach this world whenever and wherever they desire as addicts. Thus, they begin to consume all the things including body, time, emotions, relationships, values by the effect of this world as if they are mesmerised. In the end, they transform into a violent and relentless community defined as the consumer society.

These violent consuming habits turn to a digital disease as technology progresses and more advanced technological tools are invented. In the series, the statement mentioned in several scenes; “These violent delights have violent ends” may refer to this digital disease (Nolan et al., “Westworld” 2016:01.01). As technology progresses, reality and virtual reality created by mass media become inseparable, which leads to appear new types of diseases in the digital age. “Even possibility of VR and augmented reality (AR) will nearly become the competitor of tourism that we know is a striking example in terms of the extent of digitalization” as the tourism in *Westworld* (Karadağ, 2020:9). Besides, “in today’s world, individuals have accepted and internalized the television world just like people in *Truman Show* and animals George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* and people in George Orwell’s *1984*” (Karadağ, 2020:121). In this circumstance, the emergence of digital diseases, consciously or unconsciously, is inevitable. They become an indispensable part of people’s life and accordingly, the number of people suffering from these diseases start to increasing day by day.

Among these diseases, cybersickness, digital ecstasy as escapist fantasy field, being digitally addicted, digital game addiction, binge watching, online narcissism and digital cynicism are the main examples. People hooked on virtual reality or augmented reality begin to disconnect from real life and relatedly, some physical disorders appear. This situation may also resemble the situation of the addicted

guests of *Westworld* visiting the park consistently. Their disordered behaviours may refer to cybersickness, or anomalies or anomie witnessed both in *I, Robot* and *Westworld* also symbolize cybersickness. Especially, digital diseases; creating a fantasy world, being digitally addicted to this fantasy world such as games and being satisfied like ecstasy are interrelated with ungrateful attitudes of the guests in the theme park considered as references of these diseases. Besides, excessive eating and drinking scenes are representatives of the digital disease; binge watching, and it is directly bounded up with consumption. In a way:

“As the viewer under such psychological influence watches the TV programs such as competition, TV shows, or celebrity news in order to relieve the stress of his/her daily responsibilities, they find themselves misguided into symbolic consumption. In other words, the audience does not watch with the sole purpose of meeting their needs but also enjoys this situation” (Karadağ, 2020:123).

In brief, the elements of the consumer society are deeply connected with these digital diseases. In fact, they may be taken into account as one of the fundamental reasons to bring them into life. Besides, apparently, the behaviours of the characters or the events in both works referring to digital diseases show up in *Westworld* more than *I, Robot*. This situation displays the corrupted point of technology reached in the consumer society as the significant medium of it from the first stage of postmodernism to the last stage called as digital age. In another words, it presents the shape technology takes over years as the medium and the subject of consumption patterns and its transformation into digital diseases.

Both works comprises characters awakening and rising up to the system. In *I, Robot*, this character may be the unnamed interviewer since h/she reveals all the facts and stories from beginning to end to inform the readers. In a sense, s/he is as if a writer or journalist uncovering the truth. In *Westworld*, Dolores realizing that the world in which she maintains her existence is not real, but a magic utilized to entertain the authorities and to satisfy their desires takes on this task. As she reveals the truth, she resorts to violence more to attain her freedom. This also indicates that even the character symbolizing the enlightenment is depicted as violent and brutal in *Westworld* displaying the latest form of the consumer society in the recent era. From this point of view, it can be expressed that the individuals trying to get rid of their

chains are so attached to the system that the form of attitudes, feelings approved by the system spread deeply to them unconsciously. All in all, *I, Robot* and *Westworld* are great works to examine the characteristics of postmodernism and the consumer society generated by postmodernism through their characters and contexts.

The contribution of this thesis to the department of English Language and Literature is to present an interdisciplinary study combining literature and media through postmodernism by examining *I, Robot* by Asimov, one of the significant works in the field of literature, and *Westworld* as a prominent media production. Because of the fact that they possess the same content and plot, they can be considered as complementary works. This thesis also presents a science-based outcome that guides further studies.

In the further studies, it is recommended that digital diseases as the transformed form of the consumer society may be analysed along with the shape it will turn into in the future. Besides, a compare and contrast study of *I, Robot* and *Westworld* can be carried on in terms of their characters, storyline and themes.

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