

**T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**TECHNOCULTURE AND HYPERREALITY IN DON DELILLO'S
AMERICANA, GREAT JONES STREET AND WHITE NOISE**

Ph.D. THESIS

Muhsin YANAR

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

Thesis Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ferma LEKESİZALIN

June, 2018

**T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**



**TECHNOCULTURE AND HYPERREALITY IN DON DELILLO'S
AMERICANA, GREAT JONES STREET AND WHITE NOISE**

Ph.D. THESIS

**Muhsin YANAR
(Y1314.620013)**

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

Thesis Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ferma LEKESİZALIN

June, 2018



28/06/2018

T.C.
İSTANBUL AYDIN ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ MÜDÜRLÜĞÜ
DOKTORA TEZ ONAY BELGESİ

Enstitümüz İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Anabilim Dalı, İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Doktora Programı Y1314.620013 numaralı öğrencisi Muhsin YANAR'ın "TECHNOCULTURE AND HYPERREALITY IN DON DELILLO'S AMERICANA, GREAT JONES STREET AND WHITE NOISE" adlı doktora tez çalışması Enstitümüz Yönetim Kurulunun 01/06/2018 tarih ve 2018/16 sayılı kararı ile oluşturulan jüri tarafından oy birliği ile Doktora tezi olarak ..~~kabul~~... edilmiştir.

	Unvan- Ad-Soyad	İmza
Danışman	Doç. Dr. Ferma LEKESİZALIN	
Üye (TİK)	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Öz ÖKTEM	
Üye (TİK)	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Cemile Günseli İŞÇİ	
Üye	Prof. Dr. Veysel KILIÇ	
Üye	Dr. Öğr. Üyesi Gamze SABANCI UZUN	

Tezin Savunulduğu Tarih : 28/06/2018

Sosyal Bilimleri Enstitüsü Yönetim Kurulu'nun tarih ve sayılı kararı ile onaylanmıştır.

Prof. Dr. Özer KANBUROĞLU

Enstitü Müdür Vekili



*To my father, brother, my
strong mother, and affectionate
and caring sisters and nephews
and nieces...*

FOREWORD

This dissertation examines the impact of technology, mass media culture, and hyperreality in Don DeLillo's *Americana*, *Great Jones Street* and *White Noise* using theories of postmodernity developed by François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Marshall McLuhan, Zygmunt Bauman, and Fredrick Jameson. It also benefits from the Frankfurt School theorists' ideas of mass culture and ideology. Lyotard's ideas about commodification of information, Baudrillard's 'simulation and simulacra' and ideas about the masses, Marshall McLuhan's media theory, Zygmunt Bauman's 'liquidity' and theories of consumption make the backbone of this dissertation, which focuses on the postmodern subject and reflects upon the causes of the 'end' of the subject in the light of the theories in question.

This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Istanbul Aydın University. The study described, argued and analyzed herein was conducted under the supervision of Associate Professor Ferma Lekesizalın in the Department of English Language and Literature, İstanbul Aydın University, between 2015 and 2018.

I would like to thank my supervisor Associate Professor Dr. Ferma Lekesizalın for her endless support, enthusiasm, knowledge, and positive attitude. Besides, I would like to thank my dissertation committee members, Prof. Dr. Günseli İşci, Assist. Prof. Öz Öktem, Assist. Prof. Gamze Sabancı, and for their helpful guidance and positive approach. I also thank my close friend Mehmet Kavlak for his kindly and patiently support, Gordon Marshall for his helpful and understanding approach.

June 2018

Muhsin YANAR

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
ABBREVIATIONS	v
ÖZET	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Don DeLillo and Contemporary America	1
1.2 From Modernity to Postmodernity: Capitalism, Mass Culture, Media, and Consumerism.....	4
2. <i>WHITE NOISE: BEDLAM</i>	23
2.1 The End of the Subject as an Effect of Media and Consumption.....	24
3. <i>GREAT JONES STREET: PANDEMONIUM</i>	50
3.1 Commodification of the Subject in the Postmodern Consumer Culture.....	51
4. <i>AMERICANA: SANITARIUM</i>	73
4.1 Postmodern Suffering	73
5. CONCLUSION	97
REFERENCES	104
RESUME	109

ABBREVIATIONS

WN : White Noise
GJS : Great Jones Street
A : Americana



DON DELILLO’NUN *AMERICANA*, *GREAT JONES STREET* VE *WHITE NOISE* ROMANLARINDA TEKNOKÜLTÜR VE HİPERGERÇEKLİK

ÖZET

21. yüzyılda ‘gerçek’ ile temasın birçok açıdan koptuğunu ve bu durumdan zevk aldığımızı, tarih anlayışımızın tamamen kaybolduğunu ya da başka anlayışlarla yer değiştirmeye zorlandığını, tüketim toplumunun hâkim olduğunu, ‘gerçek’ olandan ziyade onun kopyasının ve kopyasının da kopyasının ‘gerçek’i belirlediğini, medya araçlarının kitleleri yönetme ve yönlendirmedeki baskın gücünü birçok postmodernist yazar, kuramcı ve eleştirmen dile getirmekte ve tartışmaktadır. Özellikle içinde bulunduğumuz yüzyılda dünya çapında kitleler medya teknolojileriyle yönetilip, reklam, film, TV dizileri ve benzeri içeriklerle tüketmeye yönlendirilmektedir. Tüketim ihtiyaç kavramından çıkarılıp tamamen doyurulamayan bir arzu ve sınırsız isteğe dönüştürülmüştür. Bu durum bireylerin kendi benlik ve kimliklerini unutarak kitle benliği ve kimliğini benimsemesine yol açmış ve öznenin sonunu getirmiştir.

Çağdaş toplumsal, politik ve kültürel gelişmelerle yakından ilgilenen günümüz Amerikalı yazarlarından Don DeLillo’nun yazdığı oyun ve romanlarda geç dönem kapitalizm ve kültür endüstrisinin yansımaları, tüketim toplumunun etkileri ve bireyin ölümü öne çıkar. Bunu göz önüne alarak tezimde, Don DeLillo’nun *Americana*, *Great Jones Street* ve *White Noise* adlı romanlarındaki karakterlerin içinde buldukları fiziksel ve ruhsal halin sebep-sonuç ilişkisini tekno-kültür ve hipergerçeklik gibi kavramlar üzerinden değerlendireceğim. Romanları genel anlamda postmodernist eleştirel teoriye dayandırırken, özellikle François Lyotard’ın ‘Postmodern Durum’a dair incelemeleri, Jean Baudrillard’ın ‘simulacra’ kuramı, tüketim toplumu ve kitle kültürü anlayışı, Marshall McLuhan’ın medya kuramı, Zygmunt Bauman’ın ‘likidite’, ‘ihtiyaç’, ‘arzu’ ve ‘istek’ kavramlarından yararlanacağım.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Don DeLillo, Postmodernizm, Hiperrealite, Tekno-kültür, Geç kapitalizm, Medya teorileri, Likidite, Tüketim toplumu, Metalaşma.*

TECHNOCULTURE AND HYPERREALITY IN DON DELILLO'S *AMERICANA*, *GREAT JONES STREET* AND *WHITE NOISE*

ABSTRACT

In 21st century, many postmodernist authors, theorists and critics point out that the contact with the 'reality or real' have been lost and people are fascinated with this loss. Losing the touch with reality also damaged our sense of historicity which has disappeared or forced to be replaced with a superficial perception of the present. The dominant consumerism and proliferation of simulacra have come to define 'reality or real'. Mass media is chiefly responsible for the proliferation of the images and with its unlimited power, it dominates people's lives. The masses around the globe in the 21st century are forced to consume the media and their contents such as the Internet, the social media, advertisements, movies, TV shows, and so forth. The dominant ideology of consumption is evident in insatiable desires that are marketed as needs. As a result, in the postmodern age, individuals forget their 'authentic self' and assimilate into the masses.

Don DeLillo's plays and novels reflect the effects of the late capitalism and postmodern culture industry that result in the death of the subject. This dissertation looks into the themes of technoculture, consumerism, and hyperreality in Don DeLillo and discusses the physical and psychological causes and effects of these on the characters that appear in *White Noise*, *Great Jones Street* and *Americana*. The arguments developed in this dissertation are based on the postmodern theories of François Lyotard, Jean Baudrillard, Fredrick Jameson, Marshall McLuhan, Zygmunt Bauman and the Frankfurt School theorists' criticism of culture industry. Baudrillard's theories of the consumer society and the masses, Marshall McLuhan's media theory, Zygmunt Bauman's concepts of 'liquidity', 'need', 'desire', and 'wish' and François Lyotard's explorations of 'the Postmodern Condition' constitute the backbone of the discussion.

Keywords: *Don DeLillo, Postmodernism, Hyperreality, Technoculture, Late capitalism, Media theories, Liquidity, Consumer society, Commodification.*

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Don DeLillo and Contemporary America

‘Everything dies because there is too much of everything’ says Baudrillard in *Le Monde* issue of 10 June 1996. The world is on the verge of exhaustion¹ in the sense of belief and manna². The contemporary subject is surrounded by proliferation of objects or commodities. Media and advertising industry promote this proliferation by means of the technologies it uses. Media saturates the individuals with its daily contents. The media-saturated society brings the end of the subject. The bombardment of images and objects means the production of too many necessary or unnecessary needs for the subject. S/he is imposed on an overabundance of needs. ‘There is too much everything’ for the subject now. What triggers the subject’s dissatisfaction and whether s/he can fulfill their dissatisfaction are critical questions. Besides, whether s/he is aware of the fact that the pervasive consumption engenders dissatisfaction as well as exhaustion or not is another key question waiting to be answered. Philippe Petit (1998) asks Jean Baudrillard, ‘why is there nothing rather than something?’ (Petit, 1998). Petit’s question suggests the end of the contemporary subject.

‘I have an idea, but I am not sure I believe it. Maybe I wanted to learn how to think. Writing is a concentrated form of thinking. I don’t know what I think about certain subjects, even today until I sit down and try to write about them,’ says Don DeLillo in an interview with Adam Begley (1993, Fall). When he was twenty years old, Don DeLillo published his first short story. Since then, he has published fourteen novels.

Don DeLillo’s novels center on the main events of the twentieth century such as the Cold War, John Kennedy assassination, and the domination of mass-media. More

¹ This word is intentionally used to emphasize the state of people in postmodern period. Therefore, it serves to emphasize: ‘a state of extreme physical or mental tiredness’, and ‘the action of using something up or the state of being used up’.

²The word *manna* is used in its connotation implying ‘an unexpected divine and spiritual help a divine, rather than in the basic meaning of ‘a spiritual food’.

specifically, he explores the themes of nuclear apocalypse, rock music, porn industry, football, terrorism, baseball, environmental catastrophe, and consumerism in his novels. In his recent works, DeLillo focuses on easy availability of the electronic media, advertising, movies, television, pornography, WWW, and hyperreality of theme parks. According to Joseph Dewey, 'such invasive technologies create a narcotic addiction for the larger-than-life and thus aestheticize hapless consumers' (Dewey, 2006). DeLillo creates characters whose thoughts and feelings, behavior and motives are shaped by the narcotic effects of today's culture. Depicting media domination, excessive consumerism and commodification, DeLillo foreshadows some fundamental aspects of postmodernity. His novels implicate the loss of authentic self as a result of the mass culture produced by the late capitalism, and its most powerful instruments, media and advertising, which are responsible for the bombardment of commercialized images and creation of the doping effects on masses in *fin-de-millennium* America.

The American novelist, playwright and essayist Don DeLillo is born to an Italian family of immigrants. He views the American society objectively and claims that 'Americans living abroad feel a self-consciousness that they do not feel when they are at home. They become students of themselves. They see themselves as people around them see them' (DeCurtis, 1991, p.58). In his novels, *White Noise* (1986), *Great Jones Street* (1998) and *Americana* (2006), he portrays Americans' unconsciousness of their condition and suggests that unless Americans become aware of their condition, they will be entrapped in the loop of their houses, in front of TV, which will bring their end. Americans, in *White Noise* (1986), are trapped in a life in which they imagine 'the supermarket as a sacred place', as a form of 'Tibetan lamasery' and as a sense of transcendence', which lies beyond their touch. It represents their so-called salvation for their self-unconsciousness and their alleged escape from their end (1986).

DeLillo's novels, in fact, represent a savage American society and culture. As a collective indictment, American society inhabits 'lonely, bored, empty, fearful people injured to abominations and complicit in the destruction of what they ostensibly revere. Perceived from abroad, America signifies ignorant, blind, and contemptuous corporate power. It connotes big business, army, and government, all visiting each other in company planes for the only purpose of playing golf and

talking money' (Aeron, 1991, p.73). As an 'outsider,' Don DeLillo's novels 'breathe a kind of historical essence' that traces the reasons for the subject's end. The novels emphasize another specific American reality such as violence (DeCurtis, 1991, pp.57-8). 'Contemporary violence, according to DeLillo, is a kind of sardonic response to the promise of consumer fulfilment in America (Ibid). This violence is, in fact, people's desperation against 'the backdrop of brightly colored packages and products and consumer happiness and every promise that American life makes day by day and minute by minute everywhere we go' (Ibid). DeCurtis argues that violence in contemporary America is related to the indirect effects of consumption. People are over-exposed to mass products; 'brightly colored packages and products everywhere they go' (Ibid). They cannot distance themselves from this exposure. In other words, they enforcedly participate in the act of consumption. This inevitable involvement is a sort of violence.

DeLillo's novels also explore the relationship between American identity and the mediascapes, and the ways in which the media manipulates the American dream as the ideological instrument of the dominant consumerism. The novels, more specifically *White Noise* (1986), *Great Jones Street* (1998) and *Americana* (2006) portray the condition of the postmodern subject in 'the technological-semiotic regime' (Wilcox, 1991, p.97). DeLillo's protagonists sometimes try to escape from the impact of technoculture, hyperreality, and consumerism. They prefer voluntary 'seclusion and emergence, entrapment and escape, and their metamorphoses render them temporarily monstrous, malformed, or moribund before they die or end' (Osteen, 2008, p.137). To understand the condition of the contemporary subject, theories can help. Mostly postmodern theories focus on the end of the contemporary subject. My central argument here is that the novels, *White Noise* (1986), *Great Jones Street* (1998) and *Americana* (2006), criticize the postmodern American consumerist society, depicting the doping effects of the media and mass culture on the contemporary subject. These novels respectively foreshadow the end of the subject as a result of the effects of the media, consumerist culture, and commodification. The novels reflect the suffering of the subject in the media-saturated contemporary America. In my discussion of the reasons of the subject's suffering, I refer to the theories of Karl Marx, Antonio Gramsci, Theodore Adorno, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Jean Baudrillard, François Lyotard, Marshall

McLuhan, Zygmunt Bauman, David Harvey, and Fredric Jameson. I try to explain and argue the condition of the contemporary subject that Don DeLillo portrays in his three novels. In my discussion of *White Noise* (1986), I argue that the end of the subject is brought about by the media and consumption, and support my points drawing from the theorists such as Adorno and Horkheimer, Marcuse, Baudrillard, McLuhan, Bauman, and Jameson. I investigate into the condition of the subject in the 'Bedlam', which I use as a reference to the American consumer society. The second chapter is about *Great Jones Street* (1998) and discusses the commodification of the subject in the consumer society referring to the particular theories of Jean Baudrillard, Marshall McLuhan, and Zygmunt Bauman. In the last chapter, *Americana* (2006), I look at the suffering of the postmodern subject in the contemporary America. In all three novels, it appears that the more a subject consumes, the more he is/becomes consumed. Ultimately, in my dissertation, I hope to provide a perspective to view Don DeLillo's depiction of the condition of the subject in the contemporary 'wasteland'. I believe that my discussion significantly helps to understand the 'wasteland' that determines the postmodern subject depicted by Don DeLillo.

1.2 From Modernity to Postmodernity: Capitalism, Mass Culture, Media, and Consumerism

According to Douglas Kellner and Steven Best, modernism is a historical term which starts with the Enlightenment that glorifies the reason and rational mind (1991). Modernity questions the validity of traditional societies, and symbolizes innovation, novelty, and dynamism. Modernity since Descartes acknowledges that reason is the source of knowledge and the truth and the basis of precise knowledge. Within the boundaries of systematic understanding of the reason and rational mind, the introduction of modern art, industrialization, mass production, consumerist and conformist society, new technology, new modes of transportation and communication lead to individualization, secularization, cultural differentiation, commodification, urbanization, bureaucratization and rationalization generally speaking (Kellner & Best, 1991, p.3).

Modernity, although it has provided materials and goods, and an environment to process and manufacture products and goods for people, does not appear to fulfill

people's sense of belief and *mana*. For Karl Marx, the major transformative power that shapes modernity is capitalism. Capitalism elevates private property and profit in a globally expanded market economy. It is a market-based exchange system that depends on the production and exchange of commodities. These market exchange relations are performed around the globe searching for new and expanding markets. As Marx claims 'the need of a constantly expanding market for its products chases the bourgeoisie over the entire surface of the globe. It continuously must settle everywhere, form and strengthen its connections everywhere' (Marx, 2002, p.223). Capitalism expands its territory, and surrounds the globe with its transformative power. It exploits the world market creating 'new wants', continuous satisfaction in 'distant lands and climes'. Capitalist exploitation 'compels them to introduce... civilization into their midst...to become bourgeois themselves' (Marx, 2002, p.224). People 'in distant lands and climes' therefore come to participate in the modern system. However, this participation has negative outcomes. Marx says, '...money as the medium of exchange... the mediating activity or process...becomes alienated and take on the quality of a material thing, money, eternal to man. By externalizing this mediating activity, man is active only as long as he is lost and dehumanized' (Marx, 1844). The process of commodity production and its exchange is primarily dehumanizing for the laborers. It alienates the laborers from their labor and their products. It enslaves the laborers, in other words, they become the slaves of the bourgeois class. It creates a modern society where there is the oppressor and the oppressed. In modernity, capitalism reduces all aspects of life to commodities, their consumption and exchange.

For Marshall Berman, modernity means finding ourselves in an environment of adventure, power, joy, growth, and it also means the transformation of ourselves and the world – it, at the same time, threatens to destroy everything we have, we know, we are' (Berman, 1983, p.15). Berman argues that modernity crosses the boundaries of geography, ethnicity, class, nation, religion and ideology. It unites all human beings. However, it is a unity of disunity. It is rather a loop of 'disintegration, renewal, struggle, contradiction, ambiguity and anguish' (Ibid). Modernity is 'all that is solid melts into air' (Ibid). He claims that solid values are melting. This solidity, as Marx states, is that 'all fixed, fast-frozen relations...are swept away, all new-formed ones become obsolete before they can petrify...all that is holy is corrupted,

and man is forced to face with serious senses his real conditions of life, his relations with his kind in effect' (Marx and Engels, 1967, p.83). Similar argument is found in W.B. Yeats's poem 'The Second Coming'; 'things fall apart, the center does not hold' (Yeats, 1919). For David Harvey, modernity 'can have no respect even for its own past' (Harvey, 1990, pp.11-16). Modernity, though it is an implementation of creativity and development, it is a 'recreation of the wasteland' according to Berman (1982). Both Berman and Harvey argues that modernity project became popular during the Enlightenment. Although modernity incorporated 'objective science development, universal morality, and law, and autonomous art according to their inner logic', and although it pursues the 'demystification and de-sacralization of knowledge and social organization so as to free human beings from their inevitable chains', the project was in fact the domination and oppression of human beings through its glorification of rationality (Harvey, 1990). Modernity resulted in anarchy, destruction, individual alienation, and despair. According to Harvey, '...there were wild, primitive and entirely unmerciful energies beneath the surface of modern life' (Harvey, 1990, pp.13-15). In modern capitalist society, alienated people are dominated and oppressed by way of mass culture and media. The modern capitalist society has created a culture that directs people into standardized or mainstream practices. Adorno and Horkheimer in *Culture Industry* (1927) argue that popular mass culture has emerged in the capitalist society popular and it operates like an industry. It reproduces the mass-produced goods or objects for one-dimensional people. So what they call as 'culture industry' is a phenomenon related to modern capitalism. It means that cultural forms such as literature, film, and music are also reflections of the relations of production that emerged in the capitalist system. For Adorno and Horkheimer, the capitalist cultural forms shape consumers who involve in the consumption of these products. Television is an example that displays bourgeois lifestyles, set of values, and standardized forms of being and identities for its consumers. According to Adorno and Horkheimer, mass culture and corporate business control and exploit people through their contents. They create mass-produced and standardized consumers. Culture industry, in short, enslaves people through mass-produced forms of culture. It creates mass-produced 'one-dimensional' masses (Adorno and Horkheimer, 2005).

For Herbert Marcuse, in the capitalist society, 'one-dimensional' is the person who is subjected to new kind of totalitarianism; consumerism and technological capitalism (1994). Modern rationality – the argument that the world is understood and managed through a rational mind in the rational system where objective theories and data exist and accessible – is a form of oppression, and it does not accept the change. For Marcuse, capitalism uses media and its content as a means of social control, and consequently produces conformity that people necessarily desire. The commodities such as automobiles, hi-fi set, split-level homes, kitchen equipment and so on are the reflectors of their possessors' soul and identity. The mechanism that ties the individual to his society is anchored in the new needs that it has produced (Marcuse, 1994, p.9). People define their identity with the commodities they have. In DeLillo's *White Noise* (1986), the Gladneys feels the security and well-being after shopping, and their spending time in the supermarkets is a revelation for them. According to Marcuse, this is the reflection of 'a comfortable, smooth, reasonable, democratic unfreedom in advanced industrial civilization' (1994, p.1). Although a technologically advanced industrial society provides a comfortable and easy life for people, it actually suppresses them with its rationality. It encompasses culture, politics and the economy. It spreads its dominance over people, and enslaves them. Marcuse claims that we are slaves, voluntarily obey a system which keeps us distracted and numb. A man under a capitalist system is one-dimensional because he, through comfortable temptation, does not deny the false needs that are 'determined by external powers which the individual has no control' (1994, p.5). 'False needs' for Marcuse are the ones that are not the vital needs or basic needs of human. 'They are to relax, to have fun, to behave and consume in accordance with the advertisements. People love and hate what others love and hate, and all these belong to this category of false needs' (ibid). For Marcuse, one-dimensional man emerged as an effect of consumerism and media which promote conformity and prevent resistance by producing inevitable consent.

On the other hand, postmodernity, as a historical shift or an escape from modernity, involves the outgrowth of a new social totality with its certain and basic principles. According to Douglas Kellner, it is the previous modern period which means social stability, rationalism, and progress – a typical bourgeois middle-class conception of an era known as the cycles of crisis, war, and revolution. The postmodern era,

however, is a time of problems marked by the collapse of rationalism and the ethos of Enlightenment (Kellner, p.3). Modernity is a ‘catastrophe for established conventional values, institutions, and forms of life’ (Ibid). It means the domination of new technologies and power over nature and self. The contemporary technology and media transforms the society. We now live in a postmodern society which is a new stage and a new social formation in the historical process. Theories and ideas have risen that try to understand and clarify the postmodern phenomenon. Jean Baudrillard, François Lyotard, Marshall McLuhan, and Zygmunt Bauman, and Fredric Jameson interpret historical and cultural changes in their writings. These theorists, generally speaking, claim that media, as a new form of knowledge, has a significant impact on the postmodern social formation. The media as the new form of knowledge produces cultural fragmentation and global homogenization at the same time.

Postmodernist theorists, such as Baudrillard and Lyotard, who try to clarify the postmodern human condition, claim that the mass media, developments in the forms of knowledge, and the global capitalist socioeconomic system created a postmodern sociocultural formation characterized by homogenization, increasing cultural fragmentation, and alternative ways of experience, and subjectivity (Kellner and Best, 1991). From the postmodern perspective, identity becomes unstable and fragile with the pace, extension, and complexity of modern societies. In this sense, the concept of identity becomes a myth and an illusion. Baudrillard points out that the subject in a new mind is facing the danger of fragmentation and disappearance in the consumerist mass society and media culture (Baudrillard 1983c; Jameson 1983, 1991).

In late capitalism, the condition of the postmodern individual subject is described as fragmented and disconnected, depthless, insubstantial, and incoherent. The subject has imploded into masses and become fragmented. Jean Baudrillard relates the condition of the subject with the implosion of meaning in the media. He argues that the sense is devoured by the media. Information is thought to produce meaning, but it causes loss of signification, it has nothing to do with significance. Information produces a fast circulation of purpose, and the production of too much information through media means the implosion of sense and the end of the subject. The

implosion of meaning or too much information in effect brings the end of the subject because it devours his sense of reality or real that provides guidance to him.

Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* (1984) examines the condition of knowledge in the postmodern computerized societies. Lyotard asks some fundamental questions on how we define knowledge in the post-industrial media-saturated society and how scientific knowledge can be legitimated and points out that postmodern knowledge is both 'a tool of the authorities, and it refines the sensitivity to differences and reinforces the ability to tolerate the incommensurable' (Lyotard, 1984, xxv). He argues that technical and technological advancements that arose right after the Second World War have a significant effect on the state of experience in the most developed countries in the world. The 'computerization of the society help us to highlight certain aspects of the transformation of knowledge and its possible effects on public power and civil institutions' according to Lyotard (1984, p.7). According to him, however, knowledge and power are closely related. Who decides what knowledge is decides on the power and authority. He therefore associates knowledge with power, and states that the ruling class is now the decision-maker and will be the decision makers in the future (Lyotard, 1984, p.14).

The relationship between the authorities and users of knowledge can be associated with the relationship between commodity producers and consumers. Knowledge, in this light, is produced to be sold, and it will be consumed to be valorized in a new production. In that sense, it manifests an essential point that the people – the public in the postmodern computerized societies are or will be authorized, controlled and governed by the knowledge provided by these authoritative productive forces in its culture, and with both computerization and authorization/legitimation of the experience, people –the public is and will be gradually and smoothly transformed into the masses, passivized, depersonalized and commoditized in the end. He points out that an end-effect of computerization is losing touch with reality and real and also, 'incredulity toward metanarratives'. He argues that incredulity is doubtlessly a product of the process in the sciences (Lyotard, 1984, xxiv). He considers narratives as the backbone of the old culture but he argues that 'the narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great dangers, its great voyages, its great goal' (Ibid). He concludes that meta-narratives are totalizing stories about history and the goals of authorities. These stories define and legitimize knowledge and cultural practices. For

Lyotard, history, as a metanarrative, means social enlightenment and emancipation, and experience, as a metanarrative, implies a sign of progress in totalization. In postmodern age, history has become a problematic concept. Historical depth has disappeared and for this reason, people feel like living in a constant present, which causes shallowness, depthlessness.

The authorization and legitimation of the knowledge through computerization in the post-industrial western societies has been anticipated by Antonio Gramsci who developed the concept of hegemony of media. Gramsci argued that the relationship between authority and the press was interlinked. Stuart Hall (1997), who adopted Gramsci's concept of hegemony, also called attention to the relations between mass media, public information, intercommunication and exchange of knowledge in the society. Hall agreed that the mass media and communication revolution have changed individual experience and power relations by expanding and deepening the effects of hegemony. As a result, media and technology have become hegemonic forces that have the capacity to reshape the western society.

Hegemony originates from the Greek word *hegemony* which is leader, state or ruler. In other words, it means that a social class authority in one society is dominating the rest for its benefits. The concept of hegemony is a way of understanding of culture, power, and ideology within a society, and of their interrelationships. Hegemony in *Selections from Prison Notebooks* (1971) means that the dominant fundamental group imposes the spontaneous consent to the great masses of the population, and this consent historically creates the prestige for the dominant group, and the dominant group enjoys the prestige (Gramsci, 1971, p.145).

For Gramsci, hegemony is performed through the consent of the masses for the benefits of the domineering group. The masses take the advantages of their positions in the mass productive capitalist society. Besides, the oppressive class controls the working and subordinate classes through their dominant socio-cultural values, and ideology to justify their positions by some institutions such as churches, trade unions, schools and political parties. Furthermore, intellectuals play a significant role exercising the functions of hegemony, reproducing ideology, and reinforcing authority. That is to say, hegemony transmits the dominant forms of thinking, and exercises an imperceptible power on people by guaranteeing their consent. Gramsci's

hegemonic ideology also means that the dominant social group in a society has the ability and authority to exercise intellectual and moral values and attributions over the nation. It has the power to build a new social system to support and reinforce its aims. In this respect, media is an alternative way of producing, reproducing and transforming hegemony. It is, no doubt a powerful tool that affects not only individuals but other institutions (McQuail, 2010, p.90). For Stuart Hall, media 'helps produce consensus and manufactured consent' (Hall, 1977), and it is trustable for people because it emphasizes independence and impartiality from the political or economic interests of the state. The content of the media, although it is independent in political and economic sense, functions as the medium for the social conflict. Participation and involvement in the media content inevitably creates consent (Ibid).

Lee Artz and Y.R. Kamalipour argue that once a particular political and economic structure of media institutions and associated production, distribution, and ideological practices are dominating over the public, media hegemony occurs because producers, regulators prefer them, and the public, and become the social norm (Artz & Kamalipour, 2012, p.336). Artz and Kamalipour emphasize that consent is the key ingredient of hegemony. Although hegemony cannot be narrowed down to its domination or manipulation, and it displays a consensual mutuality between groups and classes, it is a compulsory consensus. That is to say, authoritative groups with their ideologies dominate and manipulate the public and reinforce their credibility. In short, according to Gramsci, hegemony is related to consent, which is also related to benefit. Both benefit and profit from the media advertising are plentiful. It emphasizes and reinforces the hegemony of those who own and operate privatized media (Ibid). It means that authoritative groups have their ideologies that dominate and manipulate people. Media in that sense is an important instrument. Media advertising is an example of manipulation and domination since its content requires total involvement of people. This participation is involuntary and inevitable. In addition, it is necessary to be actively in the content of the media to take the advantage of it. Therefore, this active participation in the content creates an inescapable and immediate consent of people.

Marshall McLuhan and Jean Baudrillard point out the condition of the postmodern subject shaped by the media in their works. Media, according to McLuhan, 'eliminates the possibility of simple, clear meaning' (McLuhan, 1997, p.2). It translates, transforms the reality, and produces its message. So, when he says that 'medium is the message' in *The Medium is the Message*, he emphasizes the importance of the medium over the message (McLuhan, 1967). He argues that the media is pervasive in personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical, and social fields and destroy us; they leave no part of us untouched, unaffected, unaltered.

McLuhan wants to emphasize that the media bombards the masses/people, and it leaves no one untouched, unaffected and unaltered. In other words, the masses/people are transformed by the contents of the media – the message. According to McLuhan, in the post-industrial society, 'all media are the extensions of some human faculty; the wheel is the extension of the foot, the book is the extension of the eye, clothing is the extension of the skin, and electric circuitry is the extension of the central nervous system' (McLuhan, 1967, pp.32-40). To explain the historical change of automatic process and media, McLuhan says that in pre-alphabet societies back in the history, the ear was the key medium for people in these societies which means hearing was believing (McLuhan, 1967, p.44). The phonetic alphabet put the importance on the eye rather than the ear. 'Man was given an eye for an ear' (Ibid), the eye meant to be understanding and comprehension. For McLuhan, it was as follows:

Until writing was invented, man lived in acoustic space: boundless, directionless, horizon-less, in the dark of the mind, in the world of emotion, by primordial intuition, by terror. Speech is a social chart of this blog (Ibid).

On the other hand, printing device provided an opportunity for a commodity. It made reading in privacy and isolation easier for the masses. Printed book took the idea of individualism a step further since the activity was private, detached, and uninvolved. However, the development of the electronic informational media means involvement, and 'no detachment or frame is possible' (Ibid). Now, it is, for McLuhan 'a total involvement in which everybody is so profoundly involved with everybody else and in which nobody can imagine what private guilt can be any

more' (Ibid). The postmodern subject is separated from his social environment, dissociated from the social unity and distilled by means of media. The individual subject, though detached from his social environment, becomes the active participant of the media, and it creates an environment where everybody knows everybody. In other words, the postmodern subject actively participates in the media environment that destroys his privacy and individual subjectivity. Modern man, though fragmented, alienated, disillusioned, and isolated because of the serious impacts and effects of the WWI, and WWII, kept his individual subjectivity and privacy, but the postmodern subject lost these through the effects of the media and techno-culture. The media, in other words, caused the subject to be assimilated in the system; brought the end of the subject.

According to McLuhan, electric circuitry is the extension of the central nervous system (McLuhan, 1967, p.123). It is a fascination of the human central nervous system. In other words, the electronic media and the media technologies are the reflections of the human nervous system. The wheel, an extension of the feet, the book, an extension of the eye, clothing, an extension of the skin, electric circuitry is an extension of the central nervous system for McLuhan (Ibid). It emphasizes the involvement of all people – the masses with one another. In this electric circuitry, the outpouring of overabundant interdependent information created a world, a global village, and the global village, for Eric McLuhan, 'makes us all nobodies desperate for identity' since we all become the same, just very like a mass-produced commodity (Ibid). In other words, we become commodities with no identity, and the search for an identity, with the individual suffering, may cause personal violence, chaos or self-annihilation. In effect, the 'electric circuitry, transforms the whole world into a 'neo-tribal resonance' which is similar to the 'archetypes of deep human experience' (Ibid). The transformative electronic media, in other words, create primitive people. McLuhan compares printing technology with electronic technology, and he indicates that 'print technology creates the public' because the public is more individualized, private, and isolated; electronic technology, on the other hand, creates the masses as they are passivized, depersonalized and commoditized, and he says; 'as technologies come into play, people are less and less convinced of the importance of self-expression' (McLuhan, 1967, p.123). Television, for example, demands people's active participation and involvement. McLuhan gives

the funeral of President Kennedy to prove the power of television over the masses. He says that television envelops the entire population in its ritual process. Images are projected at you. You become the screen. The images surround you. You become the vanishing point. This creates a sort of inwardness, a sort of reverse perspective... (Ibid).

Jean Baudrillard takes McLuhan's 'vanishing point' a step further in his book *America* (1988) by calling attention to the simulacra taking over reality and turning it into hyperreality. He argues that the most significant example of such shift in reality is America itself, which, for Baudrillard, is so close to 'vanishing point', a 'primitive society of the future', 'a society of complexity', 'hybridity', 'superficial diversity', and a society which 'lacks a past through which to reflect on' (Baudrillard, 1988, p.16). Furthermore, 'America is neither a dream nor reality'. It is hyper-reality since everything in there is all the stuff of dreams', and a perfect 'simulacrum', and all values are transcribed as materials (Baudrillard, 1988). Joan Kirkby in 'The Noble Savage as Continent' says that the 'glorious form of American reality is in the immoral dynamic of images, in the orgy of goods and services, an orgy of power and use less energy' (Kirkby, 1960, p.70). America as the vanishing point has some reflections of the postmodern consumer society. It signifies an obsession with the signs, images, and looks. For example, McLuhan says 'Americans may have no identity, but they do have wonderful teeth' (1988, p.34). In addition, America is a place where he 'spends his time in the deserts and on the roads', and he goes 'in search of astral America, not social and cultural, but empty America' where there is 'an absolute freedom of the freeways, not the deep America of mores and mentalities, but the America of desert speed, of motels and mineral surfaces' (Baudrillard, 1988). With 'the deserts', he means 'emptiness', 'radical nudity', 'the perpetuity of the simulacrum', the reflections of the spectacle's suffering (Ibid).

Jean Baudrillard writes about the new postmodern consumer, media and high-tech society, and discusses the impact of the media and information on the society. As Douglas Kellner explains in his article on Jean Baudrillard, 'Baudrillard's books from the 1960s and 1970s concentrate on the idea of postmodern consumer society and its system of objects, provide critical perspectives on people's everyday lives after the WWII. These books are centered on 'production, consumption, display, and the use of consumer goods' (Kellner, 2003). Baudrillard's study on the 'political

economy of the sign' provides a deeper and better understanding about the system of signs and values in the postmodern consumer societies, and about the importance of organizing postmodern consumer societies utilizing manufactured needs and values via consumer objects, needs and practices (Ibid). Therefore, Baudrillard emphasizes the disappearance of the subject, meaning, reality, and the social in the postmodern consumer society. Besides, he points to the transformation of the postmodern subject into an object or a commodity, the end of the social, hyperreality in the new postmodern consumer society, and the effects of signs and the effects of technology on the spectacle's social lives. His books give an indicative framework to intensely argued suffering of the postmodern man who is excessively exposed to a simulated society and simulacra, namely, the proliferation and domination of signs. DeLillo's novels, *White Noise* (1986), *Great Jones Street* (1998), and *Americana* (2006), depict the effects of simulacra on the postmodern subject and his/her assimilation by the system of signs and suffering. Just like the subjects in Baudrillard's postmodern consumer society, his characters are exposed to a system of signs from which they cannot escape. The characters in DeLillo's novels cannot distance themselves from inevitable consumption of media signs and symbols even if they change their physical environment. They face the consuming loop sooner or later, and become the vanishing points of the postmodern consumer society.

Douglas Kellner, in 'Baudrillard: A New McLuhan?' questions whether or not Baudrillard is a new McLuhan, he states that Marshall McLuhan, as a 'technological reductionist and determinist' is alienating people in a technical society with his dictum 'medium is the message' (Kellner, 1996, p.1). As stated earlier, McLuhan's notion of medium transforms the masses into a commodity, and TV, as a medium, is a means of the rapid spreading of signs and simulacra in the realm of social and everyday life. The media, for Baudrillard, 'reproduce images, signs, and codes'. It also brings out a hyper-real society and annihilates the social (Ibid). With his concept of hyperreality, Baudrillard analyses the social within the context of media, cybernetic, and information society (Ibid). His analysis provides certain information for the suffering condition of the postmodern man. Media as the representation of a 'hyperreality' or 'anew media reality' – 'more real than real', reflects the 'collapse of meaning and the destruction of distinctions between media and reality', and a 'collapse into meaningless noise' (Ibid). As an outcome of 'the media, the mass

media, dissolution and dissuasion of information’, the loss of meaning destroys communication and the sociability of the subject, may bring about his suffering’ (Ibid).

Baudrillard in the *Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, states that ‘TV is becoming the center of the household, and has an essential function for the people in the consumer society’ (Kellner, 2003, p.3). Similarly, Douglas Kellner in ‘Boundaries and Borderlines: Reflections on Baudrillard and Critical Theory’ states that the rise of the broadcast media, especially TV, and signs, and simulacra in every part of the society and everybody’s everyday life is significant (Kellner, 1988). Baudrillard (1983b, 1983c) argues that television is pure noise in the postmodern ecstasy and an absolute implosion. Television is a black hole. All meaning and messages are absorbed in the whirlpool. It liberates incessant images and information, and saturates people with these images. In addition, television creates total inertia and apathy. It dissolves meaning. Only the fascination of discrete photos glow and flicker in a media scape. Superfluous, meaningless images are projected (Kellner, 1990a).

Baudrillard’s primary focus is, in the light of developments of the consumer, media, information, and technology, a rethinking of radical social theory and politics. He argues that simulations and simulacra, media and information, science and new technologies, and implosion and hyper-reality are the foundations of the new postmodern world. They remove all the boundaries, categories, and values. Baudrillard points out that today American society has reached a point of an endless proliferation. In this light, Baudrillardian simulacra and simulation play an important role in dissolving the previous boundaries and social theory categories. Kellner states ‘appearance and reality, surface and depth, life and art, subject and object duality change into a functionalized, integrated and self-producing universe of ‘simulacra’. It is controlled by ‘simulation’ models and codes’ (Kellner, 1988, p.77).

Simulacra means the reproduction of signs and this reproduction has been through changes historically and phenomenologically. In the feudal era, the simulations represent the reality of the society. There is no difference between the sign and the reality. In the modern industrial society, simulations reproduce identical objects, the mass production of the signs. In the postmodern post-industrial era, the society is

dominated by images, signs, codes, and models. The relation between the sign and the reality is lost. Today, media signs, simulacra, have taken replaced reality. There is a cancerous proliferation of images, signs, codes, and models, but it does not refer to any reality. In DeLillo's *White Noise* (1986), Jack Gladney and his family inevitably are exposed to media and mainly TV commercials. They enjoy watching TV and shopping. 'Shopping for its own sake' is a sort of revelation for them, and it gives them 'a sense of replenishment', a regeneration and renewal, a sense of 'well-being', 'security'. It also represses their fear of death (DeLillo, 1986). However, their active involvement in the consumption brings their destruction. In DeLillo's *Great Jones Street* (1998), the Rock-n-Roll star, Bucky Wunderlick escapes from the exhaustive concert tournament and prefers to be a recluse in his apartment in Manhattan. Although he runs away from the idea of being a commodity consumed by the masses and takes shelter in his unfurnished apartment, he faces the inevitable fact; the music market economy dominates his identity and self, and passivizes Wunderlick. DeLillo's *Americana* (2006), likewise, reinforces the idea that the postmodern subject is dead. The subject is an object now. He/she is commoditized. David Bell, 28-year-old television executive, travels to the mid-west of America to find his true and authentic self and identity. Tired of the media-saturated America with its images, signs and symbols, he wants to pursue a true self, an authentic self far from the postindustrial, postmodern America. Yet, Bell's spiritual pilgrimage proves that there are no authentic identities and authentic-self left behind. The postmodern subject is already in the process of media saturation and commodification.

Marshall McLuhan, in *Understanding Me: Lectures and Interviews*, states that the medium is the message means that the motor car is not a medium. The medium is the highway, the factories, and the oil companies. In other words, the medium of the car is the effects of the car. The car does not operate as the medium, but rather as one of the major effects of the medium. The medium is the message is the environment that changes people, not the technology (McLuhan, 2003). It is the effects of the medium that changes people. The effects of the media and its contents alter the way people think, act, and behave. Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1986) portrays a typical American family who alters their perception and lifestyle through the impact of the media and its contents. They cannot escape from the media bombardment of

consumerism; in fact, their needs are imposed by the media. 'The kind of radiation that surrounds us every day; the radio, TV, microwave oven, power lines just outside the door, radar speed trap on the highway' gives off radiation (DeLillo, 1986, p.174). It is also the effects of the medium. McLuhan's 'message' is the effects of these technological media even though they 'told us these low doses aren't dangerous' (Ibid). DeLillo adopts McLuhan's ideas on media and society, reflecting them in his works.

McLuhan uses the concepts of 'hot' and 'cool' media as he argues the subject's participation in and interaction with the media. He foreshadows a possible 'end' for the postmodern society. According to McLuhan 'hot' media refers to radio, movies, lecture, and print, full of information, and therefore, allows less participation or involvement, as an extension of a physical sense such as eyes in high definition. A 'hot' medium gives high definition to a single sense. It violates your senses with a complete image, and it leaves little for the person to fill in on his own. 'Cool' media, in contrast, refers to the seminar, telephone, and television, lack information, and therefore, requires higher sensory participation or involvement of the subject. A 'cool' medium screens its imagery in lower-definition. It leaves more to the receiver to fill in, and demands more participation. Participation or involvement in the 'hot' and 'cool' media reflects the transformation of the subject into someone or something – a commodity, different. Especially conscious participation of the subject in the 'cool' media such as cartoons, telephone, and most important television will lead to his end as s/he, as the subject, will be objectified and commoditized after indulgence in the contents of the media such as advertisements.

Similarly, Zygmunt Bauman emphasizes the shifts in the postmodern society, arguing that in the contemporary age, the individual and society relations are altered with the shifting notions of identity, individual and individuality. The role of the individual subject is defined by some parameters for standardizing and being a subject involves a task, which means becoming good consumers as well as competitive commodities in the global market. It is an identity/subject who buys 'fashionable items' to become a 'fashionable body'. Consumption as a form of relief in the consumer's anxiety determines his social integration and produces a collection of isolated individuals. Bauman argues that our postmodern society is a consumer society. All people are consumers since long past, and all the consumers are judged

by their eagerness to participate in this role. Consuming objects – the goods should bring instant gratification, requiring no learning of skills and no lengthy groundwork (Bauman, 1999, p.37). To increase people's consumption capacity, Bauman says, people must be kept busy with a state of perpetual suspicion and steady disaffection (Ibid). It implies people's endless greed for new attractions and fast boredom with these attractions. In that sense, shopping centers or supermarkets offer the ideally imagined community which offers no real reality outside can give. It reflects a perfect balance between liberty and security. When consumers find what they are searching outside uselessly and inexhaustibly, they get the comfortable feeling of belonging. They reassure being part of a community (Palese, 2013).

People's eagerness to participate in the consumption determines their identities in the consumer society. They are too much eager to fulfill their appetite for the instant gratification. This promotes the idea of belonging to a community. Therefore, the supermarket is full of elderly people who look lost among the dazzling hedgerows. Some people are too small to reach the upper shelves; some people block the aisles with their carts; some are clumsy and slow to react; some are forgetful, some are confused (DeLillo, 1986, p.167). Supermarkets are full of people that desire to fulfill their appetite for the instant gratification, rather than their basic needs.

In this respect, Bauman points out that those consumers must distinguish between 'need', 'desire' and 'the wish'. For a long time, consumerism has meant to be the satisfaction of the needs, but today it is not satisfactory to fulfill the needs since they are 'self-generated' by the consumers themselves. For Bauman, need has an objective ground, desire is more subjective and short-lived. The concepts of need and desire are transformed into the concept of the wish, and it is based on fantasy rather than reality (Bauman, 2007, p.72). Therefore, people shop to satisfy their wish, and they shop for their security. People's search for their security utilizing shopping construct 'fake identities although they imagine that they 'aim to get the real person' (Bauman, 2007, p.82). 'Unpackaged meat, fresh bread, exotic fruits, rare cheeses'. 'Products from twenty countries' are not the basic needs for Murray Siskin and the Gladney family in *White Noise* (1986). These products become their desires and wishes, and they are subjective and short-lived (1986, p.169). Individually, both Siskin and Gladney determine their own false needs in relation to the content of the media.

In his article, 'Consuming Life', Zygmunt Bauman points to an ancient story of 'wildly ambitious King Pyrrhus³ who never feels satisfied with his dreams of new and ever new conquests', and concludes that 'all unhappiness or 'end' comes from the subject's inability to stay quietly in his room' (Bauman, 2001, p.9). The story related by Bauman is relevant to the contemporary subject's uneasiness with himself and his unending pursuit of the pleasures. However, there is a catch. The postmodern subject faces his end as an effect of his conscious participation in the media and consumer society. It can be concluded that the subject is replaced by the commodities. Bauman echoes Blaise Pascal who said that 'there is no escape' for the subject. He is totally assimilated by the consumerist media culture. Bauman points that what is wrong is to seek things in the hope that their possession will bring veritable happiness, rather than his own end (Bauman, 2001, p.10). He claims that it is a misconception that products will bring veritable happiness (Ibid). People falsely believe that whenever and whatever they consume, buy and possess, they become relaxed. However, they ignore that 'whatever relaxes (them) is dangerous' (DeLillo, 1986, p.102). For example, although Jack Gladney in the supermarket 'begins to grow in value and self-regard', and 'brightness settles around, and feels expansive' it becomes dissatisfactory, and brings him unhappiness (DeLillo, 1986, p.84).

Pointing to the effects of late capitalism, Frederic Jameson defines postmodernism as the cultural dominant, or cultural logic of late capitalism that has emerged in the period after the WWII. According to Jameson, postmodernism is a feeling of evil to come. This evil is 'the end of ideology, art, or social class. It is also the crisis of Leninism, social democracy, or the welfare state, etc., and it originates at the end of the 1950s or the early 1960s according to Raymond Williams (2014). This means the end of the hundred-year-old modern movement, and the beginning of Andy Warhol and pop art, photorealism; in music, John Cage, punk and new wave rock, Phil Spector and Terry Riley; in film, Godard, post-Godard, experimental cinema and video, and commercial film; Burroughs, Ishmael Reed, French nouveau roman in literature.

³ King Pyrrhus: Pyrrhus (also Pyrrhos or Pyrrhus, c. 319 - 272 BCE) was the king of Epirus in northern Greece between 306 and 302 BCE and again between 297 and 272 BCE. Winning great victories against the armies of Macedon and Rome, he is considered one of the finest military commanders in history. Due to the large losses suffered during his battles he has famously given his name to the expression a 'Pyrrhic victory' which refers to any military success which comes at a high cost to the victor.

Jameson argues that postmodernism is the fascination with precisely the degraded landscape of schlock and kitsch, of TV series and Reader's Digest culture, of advertising and motels, of the late show and the Grade-B Hollywood film, of so-called para-literature. It is also the fascination with airport paperback categories of the gothic and the romance, the popular biography, the murder mystery, and the science fiction or fantasy novel. This reflects that postmodernism destroys the wall between high and low culture. It also shows that post-modernity brings 'a new depthless-ness'. This creates a 'schizophrenic subject' who lost his touch with reality in effect, who suffers from 'breakdown of signifying chain' in the language usage. The sense of historicity and reality resemble schizophrenic situation of the subject.

'Products from twenty countries' in the supermarkets exchanges Jack Gladney and Murray Siskin's basic needs with their technologically constructed desire and wishes. The new technology such as computers, digital culture and so on, is a figure for a whole new economic system that concentrates on reproduction rather than production of products. In the postmodern society, people are subjected to face the effects of this whole new technology. 'It made me feel that something hovered. But how could this be? A simple brand name, an ordinary car. How could these near-nonsense words, murmured in a child's restless sleep, make me sense a meaning, a presence? She was repeating some TV voice. Toyota Corolla, Toyota Celia, Toyota Cressida. Supranational names, computer-generated, more or less universally pronounceable' (DeLillo, 1986, p.155). Jack Gladney's daughter Steffie murmurs a brand name in her sleep. It is nonsense for Gladney. However, it explains how new technology surrounds and dominates people's lives. People embrace the new technology to enhance their lives. Yet, it enslaves them through their total participation in the consumption of the content.

It is now a post-industrial society. It is, as social evolution, the economic shifts from producing and providing goods and products to mainly offering services. In a post-industrial society, technology, information, and services are much more significant than manufacturing goods. Furthermore, a new type of society, 'post-industrial society' inaugurates. It is 'a consumer society', 'a media society', 'an information society' and 'a high-tech electronic society'. It addresses a postmodern society which consists of a 'new depthless-ness', a new culture of 'the image' or 'the simulacrum', an incidental 'weakening historicity, both in our relationship to public

History and in the new forms of our private temporality' (Ibid).

In short, with the rise of global economy the idea of the subject and individualism in the 19th and early 20th century began to fade away and reduced the subject to a consumer or a worker. The subject has little role in the era of the market economy. It means, according to Jameson, the alienation, anxiety and then fragmentation of subject or death of the subject. Therefore, the subject loses his ability to create a sense of continuity between past and future. Now, he has difficulties in organizing his coherent existence in the postmodern consumer society. He may be longing for the past, a desperate desire to return to the past. It is an escape from the postmodern loop since it closes the circle of contemporary subject's end. Therefore, the subject would like to escape from the loop.

2. *WHITE NOISE*: BEDLAM

Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1986) is still fascinating the critics and scholars around the globe. For Stacey Olster, for example, it deals with 'the (postmodern) way we live now' (Oyster, 2003, p.79). She argues that in *White Noise* (1986) the postmodern world is a place where people have a sense of union within the crowds. As the reflection of 'the cannibalization of the mind by the media', the crowds create a collective perception, and create 'a sense of communal recognition', 'like-mindedness' and spiritually akin people among which they feel comfortable and have identity (Oyster, 2003, pp.81-5). For John N. Duvall, *White Noise* (1986) addresses the problem of lack of historicity. Duvall argues that it is difficult to think historically because of 'the pressures of the advertising and capital market', and because the logic of television neutralizes the very structures of thought. It represses the individual and public freedom through these television genres (Duvall, 2008, p.2). For Frank Lentricchia, *White Noise* (1986) is a sort of 'tale/s of the electronic tribe' (Lentricchia, 2003, p.73). The tribe is created by the people who sit in their armchairs in front of the TV. He says 'sitting in front of TV is like a perpetual Atlantic crossing – the desire for and the discovery of America constantly reenacted in our move from first-person consciousness to third: from the self we are, but would behind, to the self we would become' (Lentricchia, 2003, p.73). For him, America is a New World now, and it invents new people out of those sitting in front of TV.

American consumer society can be associated with the 'Bedlam'⁴. It locks 'the patients' with the 'chains' of consumption and media. The more they consume, the tighter they are chained, and become trivialized and isolated. Then, the patients are left aside alone to 'come to their senses' in the 'Bedlam'. However, the isolation will close them in the loop of 'Bedlam' and bring their end in effect.

Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1986) depicts a 'Bedlam' through an American family, the Gladneys, whose habitual action is to 'shop for its own sake'. The more they distance themselves from the idea of death by shopping, the closer they come to the idea of death. It is the fact that shopping consumes the Gladneys even if they strongly hold on to the misleading idea that it provides security, safety and well-being. Shopping as the chains of consumption and media places the family in the Bedlam, and they have difficulty in escaping from Bedlam. The Bedlam in that sense symbolizes contemporary American society, and the Gladneys and professor Murray Siskin are the inhabitants of this consumerist society.

2.1. The End of the Subject as an Effect of Media and Consumption

Harold Bloom describes the novel as 'high romantic in the age of virtual reality and related irrealisms' (Bloom, 2003, p.1). For Bloom, DeLillo is a 'comedian of the spirit, haunted by omens of the end of our time', and DeLillo's novel, *White Noise*

⁴ The word 'Bedlam' is intentionally chosen to emphasize the condition of the contemporary subject in the post-industrial, consumer American society. The word 'Bedlam'⁴ has a long past historical reference. In the 13th century, the Priory of St Mary of Bethlehem was structured to heal impoverished people. Then, it was known as Bethlehem Hospital, and it was later named as 'Bethlem' and often called as 'Bedlam'. The patients with mental illness symptoms were examined. 'Those who became patients were usually the poor and marginalized who lacked friends or family to support them'. The hospital meant both a 'punishment' and 'religious devotion'. For example, 'chains, manacles, locks, and stocks appear', and 'the shock of corporal punishment were the means or the ways of cure for some conditions, isolation was also believed to cure a person 'come to their senses' (Historical England, 2018).

(1986), is disturbingly funny, and another of the American comic apocalypses' (Ibid). Bloom writes about Don DeLillo's woes and wonders of the postmodern condition of America. In DeLillo's postmodern America, it seems there is fear of death, adultery, airborne toxic events, family troubles, advanced supermarkets, and whatever you wish to name. He points that everything becomes anxious, and no peace in the minds, and 'it is hard to know how we should feel about this', and 'most of us do not know how to feel, are ready to go either way' (DeLillo, 1986). In this sense, in *White Noise* (1986), DeLillo would like to emphasize the end of the subject by pointing that 'there is awe, it is all awe, but we don't know whether we are watching in wonder or dread, we don't know what we are watching or what it means' (DeLillo, 1986, p.324). The postmodern subject can be defined as someone who does not know what it means to watch his end, and s/he becomes busy with watching his/her condition. For DeLillo, the end, is similar to a postmodern sunset, and it looks like 'dark has fallen, the insects screaming in the heat, that we (people) slowly begin to disperse, shyly, politely, car after car, restored to our separate and defensible selves' (DeLillo, 1986, p.325).

Postmodern condition is not a philosophical proposition that you can legitimately ground onto, but instead, it is an inescapable and inseparable social and economic relationship. The assertion of laissez-faire is the key feature of late capitalism or neoliberalism, which can be associated with this relationship. Peter Knight argues that 'global market culture now cynically recuperates everything, including', and it creates a process of commodification of the aesthetic and its consumerism (Knight, 2008, p.35). In this respect, Jameson's analysis of postmodernism brings out the production not as content but as form, which will be resulted as a process of commodification. Another key theorist to argue and understand 'the end of the subject' is Jean Baudrillard. Baudrillardian concepts such as simulation and simulacra, hyperreality, and the arguments on the consumer society, symbolic value of the signs and the implosion of meaning, provide a strong underlying argument and rationale for the end of postmodern subject. Furthermore, the argument of the end of the subject will explain the effects based on Marshall McLuhan's dictum 'medium is the message', his hot and cool media concepts. Zygmunt Bauman will be the last significant theorist to explain the end of the subject in postmodern America. Bauman's arguments based on 'the self in a consumer society' and 'identity' in the

Liquid Modernity (2000) provides insights for the issues dealt with in this chapter. DeLillo in *White Noise* (1986) shows the plight of the subject in the consumer society. He describes the postmodern subject as constantly exposed to hot and cold media. Then, he displays the significant effects of his exposure to the media.

DeLillo's in *White Noise* (1986) demonstrates that the 'fragile' and 'unstable' subject faces an end when s/he is exposed to 'flat' and 'depthless' streaming of images developed through media technologies and an obsession with shopping that characterizes the contemporary consumer society. The novel shows how s/he is consumed as long as s/he consumes. In other words, the postmodern subject is invalidated, nullified and reduced to become an object as an effect of his/her over-exposure to media and his involvement in consumption through media. Assuming this, Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1986) can be associated with Bedlam, which is, in its archaic meaning, an asylum or a mental hospital, but is a scene or state of wild uproar and confusion defining our age.

Don DeLillo's *White Noise* (1986), generally speaking, touches on both academic life and American domestic life, but I focus on its representations of the contemporary American experience and people's exposure to the media. The novel has three different parts. These are 'Waves and Radiation', 'The Airborne Toxic Event', and 'Dylarama'. As a canonical work of postmodern literature, *White Noise* (1986) is a critique of media and consumer culture mainly in America. But it can also be acknowledged as a criticism of media and consumerism around the globe. The novel is set in Blacksmith, where Jack Gladney is the 'chairman of the Hitler studies department at the College-on-the-Hill' (DeLillo, 1986, p.4). Professor Murray Jay Siskin, whose primary focus is on American popular culture and consumer products, is his colleague. Professor Jack Gladney, Babette, his fourth wife, and his four children live a quiet life in suburbia. His children are Steffie, Denise, Wilder, and Heinrich and they are from different marriages. The novel represents a typical domestic family life in the US.

In the first section of *White Noise*, *Waves and Radiation*, Jack Gladney introduces himself by giving a brief professional background information saying that he is the 'chairman of Hitler studies department at the College-on-the-Hill', and that he 'invented Hitler studies in North America in March of 1968' (DeLillo, 1986, p.4).

Then, professor Gladney portrays an American family picture; for example, his children, Steffie and Denise, are engaged in what they are interested in the house. Babette, his wife, is busy with her lunch. She says she is planning to eat yogurt and wheat germ. Then, Steffie says that her mother keeps buying these products and never eats them. Her mother sometimes throws these away before she eats them as they go bad. Her buying routines repeat itself since Babette feels guilty if she does not buy these and other products. She also feels guilty if she keeps buying these and does not consume. Babette feels unhappy and guilty when she sees the products in the fridge, and she feels unhappy and guilty when she has to throw these away (DeLillo, 1986, p.7).

From the beginning, DeLillo draws the outlines of the life of a conformist family in which some of the members are obsessed with shopping. They 'keep buying', 'never eating', and 'throw(ing)away' and even sometimes without consuming or finishing what they buy. The shopping or buying 'ritual' repeats itself as part of their everyday routines. The novel introduces a new world of consumption which can be interpreted as the end of the subject.

In *Consumer Society*, Jean Baudrillard analyses this new world saying that people are enveloped by the idea of consumption and affluence. This is promoted and reinforced by the proliferation of objects, services, and material goods. They all create a sort of fundamental mutation or transformation in the ecology of the human beings. These affluent and wealthy individuals are no longer surrounded by other human beings as it was in the past. They are now enveloped by the objects (Baudrillard, 2016, p.17). Baudrillard argues that we are manipulated by the materials, goods, and products in our everyday life, and we are busy with these powerful interactions with the products we are surrounded. Babette, Gladney's wife, does not see these products, goods or objects as her basic needs. She becomes manipulated and consumed by them. The fascination of the products causes to forget her authentic self and replaces it with artificial one. Just as 'the wolf-child becoming a wolf by living among them', she is herself 'becoming a functional object', which is like her 'living by their rhythm, and according to their incessant succession' (DeLillo, 1986, p.18). Babette places consumption in the center of her life. This is seen from her shopping/buying habits of keeping buying and throwing away without consuming or finishing them. It is difficult to distinguish her true and false needs,

and therefore she has to follow the way that the society she is living produces her needs through socialization, conditioning and the media. Therefore, she becomes a total passive victim of the consumption system in her society. Thus Babette's consumption becomes her ultimate social activity and habit as Baudrillard argues (2016, p.102).

Baudrillard says in *The System of Objects* that '99 percent of the population in the United States would like to have the experience of possessing that other people possess' even though they do not have any need for it (Kellner, 1989). Zygmunt Bauman, likewise, claims that consumption means 'using things up, eating them, wearing them, wearing them, playing with them and otherwise causing them to satisfy one's needs or desires... the consumed things cease to exist, literally or spiritually' (Bauman, 2001). Babette's, as a good consumer, feeling guilty when she doesn't buy indicates how she defines her identity or individuality by her act of consuming. Babette's consumption habits also show the concept of having and not of being. The act of consumption is the most important for today's prosperous industrial society according to Emma Palese (2013). She also says 'consumption alleviates the anxiety, but it also requires increasingly nonstop consumption since the previous consumption loses its importance' (Palese, 2013, p.2). This suggests that 'consumer society, with its objects, products and ads gives the individual the opportunity for total fulfillment and liberation by forming an authentic language, a new culture' (Palese, 1991, p.12). Therefore, Babette would like to alleviate her anxiety of being and living in the consumer society. She wants to relieve her tension of death in the city she is living as the Airborne Toxic Event scares her, and she does not want to die earlier than her husband Jack Gladney and her children. That is why she keeps buying even if she does not need. She even secretly shops for a drug, Dylarama, which will minimize or stop her fear of death. Not only shopping for food but also for a drug, Babette, in fact, would like to escape from the idea of death. However, she comes close to death with her consumption of products. Neither shopping for food and other house products nor Dylarama will save her life and bring her end.

On 'Friday night', the family 'orders Chinese food and watches television together, which becomes a 'rule' or becomes a family ritual for Babette, already knowing that when the kids 'watch television with their parents and stepparents, it will de-glamorize the medium in their eyes, and make it wholesome domestic sport'

(DeLillo, 1986, p.16). Babette's 'domestic sport' reinforces the idea of the media consumption as a whole family. She struggles to unite the family members. Family gatherings on every Friday make the family members forget the idea of death. However, she forgets that the attempt to create a family ritual usually fails because each member of the family would like to do something else. Watching the image of a plane crash, 'watching houses slide into the ocean, whole villages crackle and ignite in a mass of advancing lava' make them unite. Because 'every disaster makes them wish for more, for something bigger, grander, and more sweeping' (DeLillo, 1986, p.64). As Duvall argues the Gladneys television-watching activity reflects that electronically reproduced image constantly nullifies its content, and it turns the content into a pure form, and this form invites aesthetic contemplation (Duvall, 1994, p.173). Television turns the news into a game of entertainment for people, and the disasters on TV become aestheticized for the viewers, so the viewers need more – expect more disasters from the television. It means that TV embodies the individual freedom, and it controls and produces the consumers that consumer society needs.

In postmodern culture, the subject is fragmented and disconnected, and ... reified and alienated, shallow and dumb and no longer possesses the depth (Baudrillard 1983c; Jameson 1983, 1991). In *White Noise* (1986), Babette's family 'domestic sport' as watching television all together on Fridays, shows their disconnection from the close family relationship. 'That night, a Friday, ordering Chinese food and watching television together, the six of them' as a rule, actually glamorizes the medium in their eyes, and increases its 'narcotic undertow and eerie diseased brain-sucking power' on each one of them (DeLillo, 1986, p.16). However, Babette ignores the fact that every one of them becomes the victims of the media by their too much exposure to TV. As a result, each subject becomes highly unstable;

The TV self is the electronic individual *par excellence* who gets everything there is to get from the simulacrum of the media: a market-identity as a consumer in the society of the spectacle; a galaxy of hyper fibrillated moods...traumatized serial being (Kroker and Cook, 1986, p.274).

Being exposed to too much TV creates an electronic individual as the contents of television mesmerize the individual. It's a kind of dope. Because the content of television screens out an artificial, unauthentic and a hyper-real world, and this

artificiality, unauthenticity, and hyper-reality creates a society of the spectacle, who are traumatized serial being. Being exposed to TV is becoming part of the aura at the same time. 'It's glow, its soul, and it is us. We are part of the aura' says Frank Lentriccia (1991, p.76).

Jack Gladney, with his family, 'ran into Murray Jay Siskin at the supermarket, the visiting professor in the American Environments Department at the college who also read 'the TV listings', 'the ads in *Ufologist Today*', and who 'wants to immerse himself in American magic and dread, and his basket was full of 'generic food and drink, non-brand items', such as 'canned peaches', 'a white package of bacon without a plastic window', 'a jar of roasted nuts' (DeLillo, 1986, pp.18-19). Siskin, the visiting professor at the College-on-the-Hill, prefers to be absorbed by American consumer culture with his habits of reading 'TV listings', and 'the ads in *Ufologist Today*, and with his shopping habits. Siskin thinks that 'a realm of meaning beyond surfaces, networks, and commodities is not necessary' as the information society provides its divine manifestation. Rather than reading serious books, Murray Siskin is mesmerized by watching TV, and from (his) armchairs in front of television, Murray Siskin dreams of a new self from the first-person consciousness to third; 'from the self he is, but would leave behind, to the self he would become' (Lentriccia, 1991, p.74). Television and its contents exploit Siskin's self and transform his authentic self into a media-saturated being. Modernity claims that there is authentic self, self with an essence; but according to postmodern theorists, the self is an empty shell, it is decentered long time ago, it is a product of language, culture, and now, the media.

John N. Duval in 'The (Super)Marketplace of Images: Television as Unmediated Mediation in DeLillo's *White Noise*' argues that 'the imagistic space of the supermarket and shopping mall coincides with the conceptual space of television', which means shoppers/viewers 'step outside death' by consuming in the supermarkets and shopping malls. He says 'the production and consumption of the electronic image of desire is a simulacrum of the images contained in the supermarket and the mall' (Duvall, 1994, p.170). It means television aestheticizes the act of shopping since it provides a world of images and signs. People consume in the supermarkets and shopping malls through the images of the products. These images, rather than satisfying their basic needs, satisfy their desire and wish. People shop

because they want security, they want certainty, but the security is not in the final product, their security is in the act of shopping, which steps them outside death. In that sense, both Babette and Jack Gladney are in pursuit of their security in their disastrous and dangerous environment, poisoned by Air Borne Toxic Event, and certainty in their act of shopping. Therefore, their act of shopping becomes like a sacred ritual, and it is very similar to their watching television rituals on every Friday.

The relationship between the supermarket and the television is reflected in Siskin's shopping habits and interest in watching TV. After shopping, professor Jack Gladney's argues why people, in general, go shopping, why they are in the 'mass and variety of purchases', why they are exposed to the 'sheer plenitude those crowded bags in vivid designs and lettering', 'with giant sizes', and 'DayGlo sale stickers. When people consume these unending and unnecessary products, they become in the 'sense of replenishment', 'in the sense of well-being', and they feel 'the security and contentment' and they 'achieve a fullness of being in effect. It is not at all preferable and acceptable for people who need less, expect less, who plan their lives around lonely walks in the evening' (DeLillo, 1986, p.20).

Media emerge as a medium for persuading and forcing people to consume. People lose their sense of decision and become slaves to their desires. They lose their mechanism for making up their minds. Moreover, they do not trust their feelings and become slaves of media. For example, to understand how the weather is going to be on that day or the next day, Heinrich, rather than her senses, prefers to believe in the weather report on the radio. It seems that there is no belief and trust in the senses. The dialogue between Heinrich and Jack indicates a concern with the influence of media. It also reflects that mediated reality contends with material existence. Heinrich's belief in the media and the radio can be explained with Baudrillard's argument that 'in the media society, the era of interiority, subjectivity, meaning, privacy and the inner life is over; a new era of obscenity, fascination, vertigo, instantaneity, transparency, and exposure begins: welcome to the postmodern world!' (Baudrillard, 1996, p.72). People in the postmodern consumer society consume signs, and these transform and shape them. Their involvement and participation in the hot media engage their sense thoroughly. Because it demands little information from them, and it spoon-feeds them with its contents. In effect, they

are transformed into passive beings. Rather than trust in their five senses, they prefer to trust in the media even if it numbs them.

Bombarded with the products, Jack Gladney addresses his disturbance with the situation he is in, and he feels tired of possessing and being exposed to sounds the supermarket atmosphere. It does not provide a quiet and authentic environment for people, instead a place in noise. To explain his disturbance, he says;

A voice on the loudspeaker said: 'Kleenex Softique, your truck's blocking the entrance'. Apples and lemons tumbled in twos and threes to the floor when someone took fruit from certain places in the stacked array. There were six kinds of apples; there were exotic melons in several pastels. Everything seemed to be in season, sprayed, burnished, and bright. People tore filmy bags off racks and tried to figure out which end opened. I realized the place was awash in noise. The toneless systems, the jangle and skid of carts, the loudspeaker and coffee-making machines, the cries of children. And over it all, or under it all, a dull and unlocatable roar, as of some form of swarming life just outside the range of human apprehension (DeLillo, 1986, p. 36).

The supermarket reinforces consumption with attractive shelves and products on the shelves. Fascinated by the attractiveness of the shelves and the products on them, they forget their physical tiredness. However, later they understand that people feel tired and consumed by that noise in the supermarket while they shop for the products there. Although people alienate or isolate themselves by their act of shopping, they are in fact engulfed by shopping noise and supermarket buzz. However, people intentionally or unintentionally ignore the noise in the supermarket and insist on becoming tired and being consumed by that noise there.

In the *Consumer Society* (1970; 2016), Jean Baudrillard argues that in our everyday life, we interact with the objects more than with people, and commodities and messages manipulate our lives. Consuming commodities is similar to being alive or living (2016, p.17. For example, as Murray Siskin says 'here we don't die, we shop. But the difference is less marked than you think' (DeLillo, 1986, p.38). For Bauman, people are regenerated by their act of shopping in the supermarkets as 'a rite of exorcism' (Ibid). People need to be active to maintain their health, and the only way of maintaining your health is more shopping. People's obsession with shopping

manifests their materialistic and hedonistic instincts. At the same time, people's shopping addiction reflects deep down their nerve-breaking uncertainty, annoying feeling of insecurity. According to Bauman, there are consequences of living in the consumer society; uncertainty and anxiety, and your shopping ability depend on your local in society. This is bad for the poor because, in the consumer society of shopping and watching, the poor cannot avert their eyes, and they too feel the need of shopping and involve in this loop (Bauman, 2000, pp.80-82).

Baudrillard argues that consuming commodities bring happiness, well-being, affluence, success, prestige, eroticism, modernity, and so on. For him, consumerism or consuming is a 'magical thought' (Baudrillard, 2016, pp.29-30), and people feel alive and enthusiastic about it rather than feel consumed and dead. On the other hand, consumption is culturally and socially structured, it means culture defines the notion of consuming rather than nature, and this cultural pursuit involves 'active labor, incessant curiosity, and search for novelty, and conformity to the latest fads, products', and it needs more consumption (Baudrillard, 2016, p.47). Although consumers feel new, curious, affluent, happy, successful, prestigious and modern, their tiresome consumption, growing competition for more goods, brand new goods and services make them feel alienated, lonely, dissatisfied, and although they feel alive by buying or shopping, they die in big cities without being noticed:

'Supermarkets this large and clean and modern are a revelation to me. I spent my life in small steamy delicatessens with slanted display cabinets full of trays that hold the soft wet lumpy matter in pale colors. High enough cabinets, so you had to stand on tiptoes to give your order. Shouts, accents. In cities, no one notices specific dying...To die in an apartment instead of a house can depress the soul, I would imagine, for several lives to come. In a town, there are houses, plants in bay windows. People notice dying better. The dead have faces, automobiles. If you don't know a name, you know a street name, a dog's name. He drove an orange Mazda' (DeLillo, 1986, p.39).

The supermarkets are similar to sacred places for people where they feel the revelation. However, in the urban consumer environment, people die, and they are fast forgotten as they have already been turned into objects with their acts of shopping and buying. In other words, in the urban consumer environment, people

become the participants of masses. Each of them looks alike. Besides, there is uniqueness and originality. However, even if people are known and recognizable with their products or goods in the rural consumer environment, they are also recognized by their products or goods that they already have or have bought, which means that people become recognizable or known with what they have and possess. However, what they own trivializes their uniqueness and individuality.

As ‘mortals and miserable, it might be impossible to find consolidation in anything, and the only comfort available is an absorbing venture that would divert our attention and prevent us from thinking about death and the brevity of life, the genuine reason for our misery’ as Marshall McLuhan argues (2001, p.10). He says people enjoy ‘hustle and bustle’, and they do not seem to have any purposes and rewards. (Ibid). Babette seeking comfort or happiness in the supermarkets prevent her from thinking about death and the brevity of life. Shopping and buying from the supermarket and her expectations that the products she buys will bring her happiness is her illusion or her escape from death. Surviving in a consumerist society, and being exposed to constantly changing new products nullify Babette day by day, and her individuality and subjectivity become fragmented and objectified. In this respect, dying in cities is closely similar to consumption of products in supermarkets. Consuming is equal to death. Likewise, Babette pursues her happiness with almost no hesitation. She prefers objects, products or materials which will provide her with the maximum gratification. It is, in fact, is her illusion or escape from the reality of death.

Marshall McLuhan argues that media beat people up completely. The media penetrates in their personal, political, economic, aesthetic, psychological, moral, ethical and social environment. It also touches, affects, and alters these environments as a whole (McLuhan, 1967, p.26). Media alters our environment, and evokes in us unique ratios of sense perceptions. This alters the way we think and behave, in other words, it changes the way we perceive the world. We change when these ratios change (Ibid). It means that we are often distracted by the content of the media or medium.

As Murray Siskin says ‘TV is a problem only if you’ve forgotten how to look and listen. It is better to learn how to look, see and understand as it contains ‘codes and messages’ (DeLillo, 1986, p.9). Otherwise, it might be easier to be assimilated,

brainwashed and nullified with by the content as it may blind us (DeLillo, 1986, p.50). Murray Siskin means there is no way out. He says he would rather be in any period at all as long as people are going to leave it alone for a while. In the postmodern consumer society, people are enveloped by objects, images, and signs. This produces little hope for the future and he says 'melancholy is the quality inherent in the mode of the disappearance of meaning' (Kellner, 1989, p.127). Murray Siskin would like to address sadness, hopelessness, and nostalgia in the postmodern consumer society. These are the inevitabilities, and individuals should surrender to the world of objects, learning their rules and strategies, should give up the project of sovereignty and control because when they control the world of objects, they turn into objects. (Kellner, 1989, p.129). Participation in watching TV makes people lose their identity. Kellner says 'buy this, for it is like nothing else!' (the meat of the elite, the cigarette of the happy few!' etc.), and 'buy this because everyone else is using it', and everyone else owns it (Kellner, 1989). People's being exposed to media and its contents such as ads make them feel fulfilled. Buying what other people buy and use make them feel satisfied.

There is another significant impact of advertising on people. It is to convince people that consuming freely makes their life enjoyable, and make their existence meaningful since consumption provides individuality and personality for people. Therefore, McLuhan's famous dictum gives an alternative way for us to rethink, re-read and re-understand the media that we are exposed to in our everyday life. Professor Murray Siskin appears to be aware of the consequences of the media on him and the American family. He knows that medium is blurring him, and produces quite a lot of simulacra. It is a representation or imitation of people or things, 'sealed-off, timeless, self-contained and self-referring'. He says; 'I'm very enthused, Jack'. He feels tired of 'this incredible amount of psychic data that TV offers' to them anytime and anywhere (DeLillo, 1986 p.20). Murray Siskin, on the other hand, is shocked and captivated and mesmerized by the network of little buzzing dots that make up the picture pattern, and he says;

'There is light; there is sound. I ask my students, 'What more do you want?' Look at the wealth of data concealed in the grid, in the bright packaging, the jingles, the slice-of-life commercials, the products hurtling out of darkness, the coded messages and endless repetitions, like chants, like mantras. 'Coke

is it; Coke is it; Coke is it'. The medium practically overflows with sacred formulas if we can remember how to respond innocently and get past our irritation, weariness, and disgust' (DeLillo, 1986, pp.50-51).

American family or people in a general sense, as Murray Siskin portrays, is bombarded with media and its content. One of them includes advertising with its 'bright packaging, jingles, the slice of commercials, coded messages, and endless repetition' (DeLillo, 1986). It is clear that media has grasped the whole of American family or people's lives with its consumption strategies or tactics. Therefore, it is better to read the media carefully. Otherwise, people will be brainwashed and depersonalized. Similarly, consumption as a mode of being, a way of gaining an identity, meaning, and prestige in its society is championed and glorified through media and more specifically advertising. In short, media appears to be worshipping the commodification with its contents.

Commodification constitutes a totalizing social process that penetrates into social life. It homogenizes, alienates and exploits people as the part of the reification process. The objects dominate subjects, and rob them of their human qualities and capacities. He also argues that objects govern people, and they as subjects are transformed into objects, and these objects become dominant in their social life. This is, in fact, the reflections of the domination of signs and the system of objects by which people define themselves. Mark Poster in *Jean Baudrillard Selected Writing* says that the code creates socialization and the signs, as the total secularization, create recognition among people. Objects not only exist as materials, but they also promote the reciprocation of status among people (Poster, 2001 pp.19-20).

From another perspective, Baudrillard says that 'meaning implodes in the media, and for Baudrillard 'we live in a world where there is more and more information, and less and less meaning' (Baudrillard, 1983, pp.95-96). It argues that in postmodern era people are provided with more and more information and less and less meaning in fact. In *White Noise* (1986) Alfonso says people want more, more. 'It's natural, it's normal'. He adds that people suffer from brain fade. Only a catastrophe can prevent the incessant bombardment of information (DeLillo, 1986, p.66). Murray Siskin exemplifies Baudrillard in the sense that media does not say anything to us. It means meaning is lost and devoured faster that it can be re-injected (Baudrillard, 1994, p.9).

Although people, as Murray Siskin says, want more and more from the media with no hesitation or questioning. The contents of it have no meaning, and this causes brain fade as the content itself brainwashes people. Murray Siskin also says that media pours an incessant bombardment of information, that is desensitizing, and this 'information has nothing to do with signification' according to Baudrillard (1994, p.79), and the overflowing information from media signifies nothing. Besides, for Baudrillard 'information destroys meaning, in other words, information devours its own content' (1994, p.79). That is to say; information bombardment makes people passive participants in fact. However, people imagine that they involve in the media while watching TV or listening to the radio. Otherwise, they feel out of the loop, and their socialization is measured by their exposure to the media (1994, p.80). Alfonso in *White Noise* (1986) says;

'The flow is constant. Words, pictures, numbers, facts, graphics, statistics, specks, waves, particles, motes. Only a catastrophe gets our attention. We want them, we need them, we depend on them. As long as they happen somewhere else...This alone warrants their doom' ... If a thing happens on television, we have every right to find it fascinating, whatever it is' (DeLillo, 1986, p.66).

Too much information from the media desensitizes people, and they are stupefied, and nothing gets their attention except the disasters such as 'mudslides, brush fires, coastal erosion, earthquakes, mass killings, et cetera' (1986, p. 66), and they 'relax and enjoy these disaster' (1986, p.66). Alfonso also says 'for most people, there are only two places in the world. Where they live and their TV set. If a thing happens on television, we have every right to find it fascinating, whatever it is' (DeLillo, 1986, p.66).

Instant and continuous bombardment of information media, especially from TV fascinates people regardless of its significance and meaning. Ferdinand de Saussure states that information can be understood through the meaning that words, as signifiers, have attached to them. However, media devours the meaning, in other words, too much information destroys the meaning as Alfonso says. Too much information from the media causes brain fade because people;

'have forgotten how to listen and look at children. They've forgotten how to collect data. In the psychic sense, a forest fire on TV is on a lower plane than a ten-second spot for Automatic Dishwasher All. The commercial has deeper waves, deeper emanations. But we have reversed the relative significance of these things. This is why people's eyes, ears, brains and nervous systems have grown weary. It's a simple case of misuse' (DeLillo, 1986, p.67).

The content of the media exhausts itself, and it cannot or maybe will not compensate for the loss of meaning. Outpouring information has no relation to the signs, symbols, signals, signifiers. They are used for the message or meaning. It means this may bring out too many words or too much sense for every single person to be interpreted differently at the same time. On the one hand, the meaning is lost as the consequence of too much information in the media, on the other hand, it creates the silent majority, the mass or the masses, because the incessant bombardment information from the media trivializes and nullifies, desensitizes and objectifies them. Baudrillard in *In the Shadow of Silent Majorities* says:

'Bombarded with stimuli, messages and tests, the masses are simply an opaque, blind stratum, like those clusters of stellar gas known only through analysis of their light spectrum - radiation spectrum equivalent to statistics and surveys - but precisely: it can no longer be a question of expression or representation, but only of the simulation of an ever inexpressible and unexpressed social' (Baudrillard, 1983, p.21).

He argues that the masses are not the defining authority any longer. Media is the dominant authority over them. They are rather withdrawn into their silence, and no longer the subject since they are ignored and neglected, and are no longer spoken for, represented, articulated, nor pass through the political mirror stage (Baudrillard, 1983, p.22). It means that the subject is not left alone. He does not feel alienated or isolated because the media engulfs and envelops himself with its contents such as advertising, and defines his identity with the content. Professor Gladney's wife Babette, though she does not need, feels guilty if she does not buy. 'She feels guilty if she buys it and doesn't eat it, she feels guilty when she sees it in the fridge, she feels guilty when she throws it away' (DeLillo, 1986, p.7). Babette is already in the act of consumption. She and her family spend (wastes) most of their time watching

television as the so-called family gathering ceremony. Television-watching ritual as family and their inevitable exposure to the hot media creates new people – media-saturated people; neglected, no longer spoken for, represented and articulated.

Baudrillard also argues that information may be the inevitable power that manipulates people to release their social energy. In other words, information canalizes people to constitute more masses. (Baudrillard, 1983, p.25). The bombardment of the media and information will result in creating ‘atomized, nuclearized, molecularised masses, and it will bring the end of the social, specifically, the subject, because the masses take all the social energy in. the masses in other words only take every sign and every meaning, but they do not reflect them (Baudrillard, 1983, pp.27-28).

Baudrillard’s argument on the masses might be accepted as a stable ground for Murray Siskin’s argument about death that maintains that ‘to become a crowd is to keep out death. To break off from the crowd is to risk death as an individual, to face death alone. Crowds came for this reason above all others. They were there to be a crowd’ (DeLillo, 1986, p.73). For the silent masses, isolation and alienation from the society make them feel insecure. Rather than becoming an individual, becoming in the masses or being in a group-subject is their conformity and security.

All media and information today, with interviews, live coverage, movies, and TV produce new real, this extra new real since there is too much of the new reality, ‘we (people) fall into obscenity and porn’ according to Baudrillard (1983, p.84). Jack Gladney, his wife, and Murray Siskin escape from the idea of death with their family unity and shopping-at-the-supermarkets. By shopping, they flee from the individual death. However, they know that they come close to the loop by becoming the active participants of shopping. Jack Gladney in *White Noise* (1986) ‘seeks refuge from the largeness of things – the complexities of information and communication that envelop him’ as Tom LeClair states (1987, p.6). His fear of death comes from the fact that electronic media pollute Gladney’s life. Jack Gladney and his wife, Babette seem to ‘resist knowledge, and regress into nostalgia while their children go towards the age of information’ (DeLillo, 1986). Being bombarded with the knowledge and progress in his time means madness.

From another perspective, the concept of lifestyle has a more restricted sociological meaning. It talks about the certain lifestyle of the specific group of people. In the postmodern consumer culture, it refers to 'individuality, self-expression, and a stylistic self-consciousness' according to Mike Featherstone in *Consumer Culture and Postmodernism* (2007, p.81). Therefore, a person's body, fashion, language, speech, leisure pastimes, food and preferences, choice of house, car, holidays and so on show his/her individuality in a consumer society. Now it is the time of mass consumption. There are some changes in productions techniques, market segmentation, and consumer demand for a variety of products. This also entails a greater choice for the consumers. From Stuart and Elizabeth Ewen's perspectives, it means that today there is no fashion: there are only fashions. They also say that there are no rules, only choices, and lastly, they say that 'everyone can be anyone (Ewen, 1982, pp.249-51). The ongoing movement in postmodern consumer society mostly based on the idea of incessant bombardment of information, the proliferation of images, but they are not stable as Featherstone addresses (2007). In effect, people's lifestyles and consumption are controlled or influenced by these profusions of information and signs outside in the society. In this sense, Jack Gladney says:

People swarmed through the boutiques and gourmet shops...We smelled chocolate, popcorn, cologne; we smelled rugs and furs, hanging salamis and deathly vinyl. My family gloried in the event. I was one of them, shopping, at last. ... I shopped with reckless abandon. I shopped for immediate needs and remote contingencies. I shopped for its own sake, looking and touching, inspecting merchandise I had no intention of buying, then buying it...I began to grow in value and self-regard. I filled myself out, found new aspects of myself, and located a person I'd forgotten existed. Brightness settled around me... I traded money for goods. The more money I spent, the less important it seemed. I was bigger than these sums. These sums poured off my skin like so much rain (DeLillo, 1986, p.84).

As Mark Poster argues the drugstore is the synthesis of profusion and calculation. The drugstore or the new shopping malls make the act of shopping possible for all consumer like flirting with objects such as smelling chocolate, popcorn, cologne; smelling rugs and furs, hanging salamis and deathly vinyl, and wander idly. Large numbers of people can get access to *everyday* consumables wandering between the

floors. People shops for its own sake, and by shopping, being lost among the proliferation of images, people begin to grow in value and their self-regard. The more they spent, the lighter they feel, they become nullified, and emptied out (Poster, 2001, p.32). As a consequence, they leave the drugstores and 'drive home in silence'. 'They go to their respective rooms, wishing to be alone' (DeLillo, 1986, p.84). Although people know that they 'are the highest form of life on earth, yet, they are ineffably sad because they know what no other animal knows, that they must die' (DeLillo, 1986, p.99). They are still always in need of buying and shopping for its own sake, which is quite ironic. Jack Gladney, his wife, and children go to Mid-Village Mall, and spend much time shopping and consuming there. Gladney 'shops with reckless abandon, for immediate needs and distant contingencies'. He 'shops for its own sake, looking and touching, inspecting merchandise', and the more he shops, the more valuable he feels (DeLillo, 1986, p.84). With this act of shopping, Gladney trivializes the value of his sense. The more he buys, the more he nullifies the use value of his money and glorifies the exchange value of the products. The more he obtains, the more he satisfies the sense of his existence.

Besides, people feel relieved when they possess objects and other people or their children. In other words, people's being together with other people, belonging to a group, and being among the masses make them feel that they prevent and distance their destruction or ruin from themselves. Don DeLillo's protagonist, Jack Gladney says:

'The kids are a guarantee of our relative longevity. We're safe as long as they're around. But once they get big and scatter, she wants to be the first to go. She sounds almost eager. She is afraid I will die unexpectedly, sneakily, slipping away in the night. It isn't that she doesn't cherish life; it's being left alone that frightens her. The emptiness, the sense of vast darkness. MasterCard, Visa, American Express' (DeLillo, 1986, p.100).

Being left alone or left behind make people feel empty. Although people intentionally ignore their emptiness, the sense of cosmic darkness by making themselves busy with consuming the objects, products, materials and the signs, they know that it, their incessant exposure to media, and consuming by MasterCard, Visa and American Express, will empty their subjectivity out, and will create an object

instead. We also understand that Babette's identity is made by first and most importantly, her family, and second, by MasterCard, Visa, and American Express. Concerning this, Jack Gladney says:

'She claims my death would leave a bigger hole in her life than her death would leave in mine. This is the level of our discourse. The relative size of holes, abysses, and gaps' (DeLillo, 1986, p.101).

It argues that being exposed to the profusion of information and proliferation of images on television threatens our sense of reality. For Kroker, it is similar to the death of the social, the loss of the real, which goes to the idea of nostalgia for the real: a fascination with and desperate search for real people, real values, real sex (Kroker, 1985, p.80). In effect, when people are exposed to television, and with its illusionary and hyper-real contents, they lose their sense of reality and perceive the outside world from the perspective of television's illusion and hyper-reality. When Jack sees his daughter Steffie's uttering two audible words, familiar and elusive at the same time, words that have a ritual meaning, part of a verbal spell or ecstatic chant, Toyota Celica, he does not understand at first. A long moment passed before he realized this was the name of an automobile, and he says:

'The truth only amazed me more. The utterance was beautiful and mysterious, gold-shot with looming wonder. It was like the name of an ancient power in the sky, tablet-carved in cuneiform. It made me feel that something hovered. But how could this be? A simple brand name, an ordinary car. How could these near nonsense words, murmured in a child's restless sleep, make me sense a meaning, a presence? She was only repeating some TV voice. Toyota Corolla, Toyota Celica, Toyota Cressida. Supranational names, computer-generated, more or less universally pronounceable. Part of every child's brain noise, the sub static regions too deep to probe. Whatever its source, the utterance struck me with the impact of a moment of splendid transcendence' (DeLillo, 1986, p.155).

In the second section of the book, entitled *The Airborne Toxic Event*. A lethal black chemical floats over their lives and they have to leave their homes with the news coming from the radio transmissions, sirens, and TV. Although Babette and Jack Gladney get pills in order not to die before its time, they neglect that the radiation

coming from these electronic gadgets is killing them instead of the lethal black chemical clouds over their lives. Jack says;

‘The real issue is the kind of radiation that surrounds us every day. Your radio, your TV, your microwave oven, your power lines just outside the door, your radar speed-trap on the highway. For years they told us these low doses weren’t dangerous...It’s the electrical and magnetic fields... ‘Forget headaches and fatigue’, he said as he chewed. ‘What about nerve disorders, strange and violent behavior in the home? There are scientific findings. Where do you think all the deformed babies are coming from? Radio and TV, that’s where’ (DeLillo, 1986, p.175).

Jack Gladney makes his argument about technology’s effects on people. He says that people are surrounded by some electronic devices such as radio, TV, and microwave oven, which are in fact the medium that brings out a lot of problems such as depression, suicide, headaches, fatigues (though they have little importance), nerve disorders, strange and violent behavior. The electronic devices in Jack Gladney’s house transform their lives into nothingness and meaninglessness. Because family is exposed to the overabundance of information, and images, they lose the sense of identity and existence.

Don DeLillo, with the conclusion of the second section of the book, ‘The Airborne Toxic Event’, manifests the television as a medium constructive of postmodernity as John N. Duvall argues (1994, pp.171-2). After their evacuation to the small college town of Blacksmith, one of the evacuees holding a tiny TV set in his hand says to other evacuees there the following;

‘There’s nothing on the network’, he said to us. ‘Not a word, not a picture. On the Glassboro channel, we rate fifty-two words by actual count. No film footage, no live report. Does this kind of thing happen so often that nobody cares anymore? Don’t those people know what we’ve been through? We were scared to death. We still are. We left our homes, and we drove through blizzards, we saw the cloud. It was a deadly specter, right there above us...Do they think this is just television? ‘There’s too much television already—why show more?’ Don’t they know it’s real?’ (DeLillo, 1986, pp.161-162).

The point is that the evacuation is not reported on network television. The absence of TV, which is aestheticized by the evacuees, makes them experience a lack, a sense of emptiness. The absence of the medium (television) means the invalidation of the toxic event and evacuation through the electronic media. It is also the invalidation of their identity and security. In *White Noise* (1986), it is understood that Don DeLillo's postmodern people look for an affirmation from the medium/television according to Duval (1994, p.173).

This argument of exposure to the proliferation of images and overabundance of information and its effects on consumerism may also be argued using Jean Baudrillard's concepts of simulation and simulacra. To explain his simulation, Baudrillard uses Borges tale, which is cartographers drawing a map of the Empire in its details, and it covers the territory. However, after the fall of the Empire, the map is worn away and destroyed in the end. Just a tiny or scarcely detachable amount in the desert is seen. For Baudrillard, this fable is an inspiration for the second-order simulacra. It means that there is no faithful representation of the original. Simulation, for Baudrillard, is the generation of models of a real without their original or their reality. It is, in fact, a hyper-real. The territory no longer precedes the map, nor survives it (Baudrillard, 1983, p.3). It entails that the map does not refer to the reality any longer. It is, in fact, a referential illusion. Besides, he argues that the substitutions of the signs that the signs of the real substitute for the real. To be clear, he makes the definition to simulate. He defines it as to feign to have what one has not (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 5). To simulate, for him, is not only to feign. It threatens the difference between true and false and real or imaginary (Baudrillard, 1983). He categorizes the stages of the image throughout centuries as

- It reflects the basic reality
- It disguises and distorts the fundamental reality
- It hides the absence of the underlying fact
- It has no reference to any truth, which is a simulacrum.

Besides, in *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard gives Disneyland as a model for the orders of simulation. According to Baudrillard, Disneyland is a game of 'illusions and phantasms', which includes Pirates, The Frontier, Future World and so on. This imaginary and illusionary world draws the American crowd to this small social microcosm, the miniaturized and collective religious pleasure. People park their cars

outside, line up, and feel lost right at the exit. The warmth and affection of the American people's crowd, and all these toys, and gadgets keep all these people there inside. However, these people feel the absolute solitude when they return to their cars in the car park (Baudrillard, 1994, p.24).

In *Simulacra and Simulation*, Baudrillard interprets the characteristic hysteria of the age, and he points the frenzy of production and reproduction of the real. In other words, he touches on the proliferation of images, not the output of goods and commodities. The contemporary material production, for Baudrillard, is now hyper-real. Via media, this material production; the creation of images and profusion of information are displayed and presented to the people/viewers or the consumers. Baudrillard gives an example of the Loud family to compare and contrast with Jack Gladney's family later in this chapter, who experiences '7 months of uninterrupted shooting', '300 hours of direct non-stop broadcasting, without script or scenario. It is a kind of the odyssey of a family, its dramas, its joys, ups and downs' (Baudrillard, 1994, p.49). However, the family falls apart during the shooting. At this point, Baudrillard poses some question about the condition of the subject. He asks whether TV is responsible for Loud's family fragmentation and destruction or not, and if TV is not there, what the consequence will be. Baudrillard finds it interesting and intriguing that the producer's saying that they (Loud family) lived as if they (the producer and his crew) were not there because it is, for Baudrillard, this paradox that fascinated 20 million viewers, much more than the perverse pleasure of prying. In fact, the truth is the aesthetics of hyperreality, thrill of alienation, and of magnification, of distortion in scale, of excessive transparency all at the same time according to Baudrillard (1994). Loud family reality is the hyperreality. The real here in this story has never existed. This is joy in the microscopic simulation which transforms their reality into hyperreality.

The Loud family is a typical 'California-housed, 3-garage, 5-children, well-to-do professional upper middle class, ideal American family' (Baudrillard, 1994, pp.50-51). The destruction of an idealized American family is intentionally chosen. The media glorifies this destruction for its consumers. From the producer's perspective, it is 'the Loud family who agrees to deliver themselves into the hands of television and agreed to die from it' (Baudrillard, 1994). The Loud family is, in fact, the drama of a mass society/consumer society. It is the reality of TV, which is the Louds' truth.

Loud's family is the confusion of the real and the model. Baudrillard concludes that 'we are all Louds, doomed not to invasion, to pressure, to violence and to blackmail by the media and the models, but to their induction, to their infiltration, to their illegible violence' (Baudrillard, 1994, p.55).

In *White Noise* (1986), Gladney family is similar to the Louds concerning their exposure to media and their illusion of reality. They spend most of their time in front of the TV, being exposed to advertising images such as Steffie's uttering some advertising slogans in her sleep like 'Toyota Corolla', 'Toyota Celia', 'Toyota Cressida' (DeLillo, 1986, p.155). Their exposure to the overabundance of information from the radio and television; make them lose their sense of individuality and subjectivity. This makes them become slaves to their desires. They lose their decision-making mechanism, and they do not trust their senses and transforms them into media-slaves in the end.

What another example of Gladney family destruction resulted from the media exposure is shopping for its own sake. Babette's endless shopping for unnecessary products is also another reflection of her murder because her shopping habit shows her facing with the real and authentic self that she has been neglecting.

In Disneyland people park outside, line up and are abandoned at the exit. In this imaginary world, the only phantasmagoria is in the inherent warmth and affection of the crowd and in that sufficiently the serial number of gadgets used there to specifically maintain the multitudinous effect (DeLillo, 1986, pp.23-4). On the other hand, for the Gladneys and Murray, the supermarket can replace Disneyland. The Gladneys and Murray park their cars outside, go inside and feel amazed with the supermarket shelves and the products arranged on each of them. Professor Murray Siskin says that 'large, clean and modern supermarkets are revelation' to him (p. 38). The Gladneys and Murray Siskin are mesmerized by the overabundance of images, self-referential products. The more money Murray Siskin spends, the less important it seems. Murray Siskin feels bigger than the money he pays. He feels expansive, generous. According to Baudrillard, people are trapped in a world of the proliferation of commodity signs, media images, references, and simulations that there is no way out to the reality (Kellner, 1989, p.64). The Gladneys and Murray Siskin, as in Disneyland, feel a sense of emptiness in the supermarket.

This emptiness, at the right end of the book, *White Noise* (1986), is displayed with the physical description of the supermarket and the facial expression of the consumers. Although the supermarket seems to be organized, and the shelves are arranged as they are always; ‘there is agitation and panic in the aisles, dismay in the faces of older shoppers. They walk in a fragmented trance, stop and go, clusters of well-dressed figures frozen in the aisles, trying to figure out the pattern, discern the underlying logic, trying to remember where they’d seen the Cream of Wheat’ (DeLillo, 1986, p.325). These people are forced to evacuate their homes because of Airborne Toxic Event, namely, the lethal black chemical clouds looming over their lives. They are consumed by overabundance information or news of the media related to the toxic event. When they return their homes, going to the supermarkets and shopping there for its own sake relieves their mind and eases their pain;

‘A slowly mowing line, satisfying, giving us time to glance at the tabloids in the racks. Everything we need that is not food or love is here in the tabloid racks. The tales of the supernatural and the extraterrestrial. The miracle vitamins, the cures for cancer, the remedies for obesity. The cults of the famous and the dead’ (DeLillo, 1986, p.326).

Like the sufficiently excessive number of gadgets used in Disneyland to specifically maintain the multitudinous effect, the excessive number of products, images, and self-referential signs will satisfy not their needs but desires and wishes. According to Stacey Olster, ‘it is consuming that attaches people to the things whose reproducibility indicates immortality’ (Olster, 2008, p.87). However, Jack Gladney does not realize that the sense of well-being, the security, and contentment that comes from consumption offers no real protection for himself even if he is a college professor at the Department of Hitler Studies as Olster mentions (2008, p.88). In the end, he realizes that he is just like every man in the city.

In *White Noise* (1986), people are trivialized and dehumanized by supermarkets and technology. The images are powerful to alter and affect the subjectivity, and they confuse the difference between reality and its reflections which means that consumer capitalism has a totalizing effect on people. At the same time, media aestheticizes the American consumer culture. People would like to have experience the eternally present of instant gratification and consumer fulfillment.

In *The Ecstasy of the Communication*, it is argued that media is obscene, transparent, and ecstatic. In this postmodern society, people's domestic and private environment is exteriorized and becoming translucent, 'in a sort of obscenity where the most intimate processes of our life becomes the virtual feeding ground of the media' (Kellner, 1996). It means that there are no more secrets, no privacy, no depth or hidden meaning. An individual subject, in the media society, is over. Privacy of the individual subjectivity is over; inner life is over. Individual subjects, saturated with information, images, and events, are now like the bright television screen. This proliferating obscenity, technological growth, the overabundance of information, images and signs pass beyond the individual subject's limits and dehumanizes him.

The media, especially television manipulates, seduces, alienated and dehumanized the individual subject, and it brings the end of the subject. There is no subject left behind, only objects. Individual subjectivity now becomes a set of useless functions. 'All traditional functions –the critical, the political, the sexual, the social functions – becomes useless in the virtual world. Or they survive only in the simulation' as Baudrillard says in *The Vital Illusion* (Baudrillard, 2000, pp.64-5). He also notes that 'if the real is disappearing, it is not because it is missing, there is too much of it. The overabundance of the reality puts an end to it, just like the overabundance of information ends the information, or the overabundance of communications ends communication's itself' (Baudrillard, 2000, p.66).

The Gladneys and Murray Siskin face with the end of their subjectivity as a result of their excessive exposure to the media, especially TV and its contents such as ads, the supermarket illusion. This displays that they are fooled by the images, signs, and models screened out. They are on the horns of a dilemma with the incessant bombardment of information from television, and especially from advertising. The Gladneys have to endure the aestheticized American consumer culture, which is produced by the imagistic space of the supermarket and the conceptual space of television. Both the supermarket and TV make people, like the Gladneys and Murray in *White Noise* (1986), participate in the aestheticized area of consumerism. Both the supermarkets and television contains the production and consumption of the image of desire rather than needs according to Duvall (1994, p.170).

Within the aestheticized space of television and the supermarkets, consumers in a general sense and more specifically the Gladneys and professor Murray Siskin, in fact, acknowledge the mass consumption, consumption of the proliferation of images, sign, and models. They also recognize that their participation and involvement in the use of the contents of the media will bring their end. They will lose their *manna*, and this is a reflection of the Bedlam in the postmodern consumer America.



3. GREAT JONES STREET: PANDEMONIUM

Don DeLillo's *Great Jones Street* (1998), according to Mark Osteen, depicts 'the lure silence and exile', and this silence and exile is the redefinition of DeLillo's protagonist Bucky Wunderlick's artistic practice (Osteen, 2008, p.137). However, the novel, for Osteen, handles a key figure whose exile and 'hope to embrace silence' in a tiny room far from the market economy brings an exploitation to him (2008, p.138). In addition, for Anthony DeCurtis, Don DeLillo's *Great Jones Street* (1998) shows a rock star, Bucky Wunderlick, who abandons his tour midtour in Houston. Wunderlick's reflections on his celebrity make him seek an escape. His motivation is not to be transformed into a product for Decurtis.

In this chapter, I will try to argue Don DeLillo's *Great Jones Street* (1998) as the commodification of rock and roll star Bucky Wunderlick's image by the crowds and market economy in the *Pandemonium*. The word *pandemonium* was first made up by John Milton (1608) in his *Paradise Lost* (1667). The word originates from the Greek prefix *pan-*, which means 'across' or 'all', and *demon*, means 'evil spirit', 'inferior divine spirit' and the suffix *-um*, indicates that the word is a toponymal, a place name. One meaning once ascribed to the word was 'Hell' or 'the capital of Hell'; which is, in fact, the meaning that John Milton attributed to the word in *Paradise Lost* (1667). However, the meaning, Milton once attributed, refers to 'a chaos' or 'a state of extreme confusion and disorder', and at the same time, refers to the noise related to chaos, and more specifically the noise made by large deafening crowds, hysterical teenagers and other groups of people crying, screaming in the stadiums, on the streets, and in the concerts.

In DeLillo's book, this appears as the crowds crave for a famous rock 'n' roll star, Bucky Wunderlick. Deafening and hysterical crowds make a chaotic noise which shows their worshipping to their favorite music star. They, rather than giving importance to his music, admire his physical existence, in fact, his image.

Wunderlick's image becomes a sign or symbol that they idolize and glorify, rather than his rock 'n' roll music. This creates a *Pandemonium*, a place where the insane crowds cry and scream in big concert areas.

3.1 The Commodification of the Subject in the Postmodern Consumer Culture

To understand the word *pandemonium*, from the modern, maybe from a postmodern eye, firstly it will be associated and compared with the 'theory of commodification' put forward by Karl Marx. In postmodern theory, terms such as sign, Baudrillard's 'sign-value' and 'exchange-value', and Guy DeBord's 'spectacle' are some of the concepts that I use in my investigation of the novel. I will try to discuss the concept of commodification by referring to Adorno and Horkheimer's arguments of 'culture industry'. I apply their ideas in my reading of Don DeLillo's Bucky Wunderlick, a famous rock and roll star in *Great Jones Street* (1998).

A famous rock & roll star, who is dissatisfied with his life full of fame and fortune, decides to live in voluntary seclusion from society in his unfurnished apartment in New York, leaving his band mid-tour. Bucky Wunderlick's refusing to be a commodity can be explained through the notions of commodification, commodity, sign, spectacle, sign-value and exchange-value. Commoditize as a verb means to turn something into a commodity. For commodification, it is, as Macmillan Dictionary says, the transformation of goods, services, ideas and people into commodities or products. Although the word commodification implies the ancient idea of trading, like trading objects, food, and raw materials, it is now the metamorphosis of that ancient idea. To explain, commodification, broadly speaking, is not only for grown and manufactured goods, but also for ideas, social relationships, and individual or subjects. In other words, commodification means now that it turns individuals or subjects into products/goods and machines. Historically, we come to know the word commodification from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels in the *Communist Manifesto*. They argue that almost everything is in fact commoditized in a modern, industrial and capitalistic society, and the value of a commodity is measured not by its use, but by its exchange in the market. According to Marx and Engels, modern working class people, like their products or goods that they produce, are commoditized. They claim that people 'live longer as long as they find work, and they will find work as long as their labor increases capital' (Marx and Engels, 1848, Chapter 1).

There is an abstraction or alienation between laborers and the commodities that they produce. It means that the laborers do not consume the products, and they are disconnected from the commodities, their work, from what they provide, and they are abstracted from their community or society in the end. Lukacs objects this alienation effect of the mechanically rationalized labor process, and in *History and Class Consciousness* (1971) he argues that the individual or the subject functions as a mechanical part in a mechanical system. He finds it already pre-existing and self-sufficient, it functions independent from him, and he cannot escape from the mechanical system any longer (Lukacs, 1971).

The development of the individual also means the event of productive forces which brings a class system. Within a class system, it is a highly possible fact that one class can have the control over the means of producing and over the people within a particular class. It is, for Marx, the consequence of domination of the land. This domination of the property from one class over another may cause alienation for the workers/laborers. As Judy Cox states that 'they cannot use the things they produce to keep alive or to engage in further productive activity... the laborers' needs, do not give them a license to lay hands on what these same hands have produced, for all their products are the property of another' (Cox, 1998, p.4). In short, the products/goods dominate over the laborers/workers. As Rubin states that 'in exchange of for his creative power the laborer receives a wage or a salary. With this money, the laborer can only buy products, rather than his own creative power (Cox, 1998, p.26). This passivity of laborers serves to prove that they are cheaper alienated commodities.

Karl Marx also states that mass production exploits laborers/workers for its profits. He implies in *Early Writings* that human beings are categorized as inferiors and superiors. Their abilities are also evaluated as profit and loss. Each attempt is to establish power over others. Human beings 'depraved fancies' and 'weaknesses' are taken advantage (Marx, 1964, p.359). In this light, human labor is commoditized and reified. Simply put, a labor/worker produces a product. However, he remains as a commodity for the system. The system/boss who possesses the wealth and commodity is the bourgeois, and the bourgeois determines the use-value and exchange-value of the commodity as Marx defines in *Capital* (1867, p.45). The use-value for Marx is the utility of a thing. However, this utility, he means, is closely

connected to commodity's itself. So this commodity is independent of the amount of labor. By its use and consumption by consumers, the use-value becomes a reality (Marx, 1867, p.46). Commodity means for Marx that, a product must be transferred to another, whom it will serve as a use value, through the exchange. When the thing is useless, then the human labor is also useless. 'The labor does not count as labor, and therefore has no value' (Marx, 1867, p.51). In other words, the value of human labor is determined in relation with the use-value of the commodity in its society.

In addition to Marxian concepts, Jean Baudrillard argues that commodities obtain a symbolic value that attributes their status and power to their existence. Besides, in this society, production undergoes a developmental transformation, and the production and then consumption changes the conditions of social and political institutions/structures. Baudrillard explains this with his notions of 'symbolic exchange' and 'sign exchange'. With 'sign exchange', he says that goods being exchanged as commodities with a new value or status.

Jean Baudrillard argues that possession of objects defines social and political status, and the production of these objects is closely linked to the distribution of status and power in the society (Koch and Elmore, 2006, p.4). In *Simulations* (1983), Baudrillard explains the symbolic order in their different categories such as counterfeit, production and simulation proper. Baudrillard points out in *Symbolic Exchange* that the concept of 'object' is now the concept of 'code', and the 'network'. He argues that the visibility of the objects is now possible with the new network environment, not in the sense of real environment. The object is a fetish now. Initially, there is a close relationship between an object and its, but later, the objects lose its significance, there is no reference between the object and its sign, and finally, it is outside representation: a fetish. No longer have an object to the power of the sign, but an object to the power of the object - a pure, un-representable, un-exchangeable object— yet a nondescript one. An object of a 'nondescript singularity' like sexual fetishes which themselves become objects of desire' (Baudrillard, 2016, p.129).

Consumerism creates the idea of fetishism. In this consumer society, as Baudrillard asserts that commodities are defined by what they signify rather than their use. And what they signify is defined not by what they do, but by their relationship to the

entire system of commodities and signs (Baudrillard, 2016, p.7). In other words, people consume objects not for the useful values or practical reasons, but more for their significances or symbols. Furthermore, objects –all commodities now have their own symbolic and sign values, and historically structured or constructed referential values of objects are now replaced with their symbolic and sign values. In other words, the fascinations of objects with their symbolic and sign values bring out the notion of fetishism, which is in its zenith in America, the center of fetish production and consumption. In America, objects are fetishized, and the people are commoditized as it is for all commodities or objects.

In *Great Jones Street* (1998), the rock and roll star, Bucky Wunderlick becomes as a prominent commodity for his consumerist fans and the people in the music market. In other words, his fame and physical being – body are commoditized by the consumer society. From the first page of the book, Bucky Wunderlick touches on the matter of fame and its outcome as a commodity. He says;

‘FAME REQUIRES every kind of excess. I mean true fame, a devouring neon, not the somber renown of waning statesmen or chinless kings. I mean long journeys across gray space. I mean danger, the edge of every void, the circumstance of one man imparting an erotic terror to the dreams of the republic. ... he is sure to be destroyed by the public’s contempt for survivors. Fame, this special kind, feeds itself on outrage, on what the counselors of lesser men would consider bad publicity—hysteria in limousines, knife fights in the audience, bizarre litigation, treachery, pandemonium and drugs’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.3).

Bucky Wunderlick has an uncomfortable feeling of being a famous person since it requires some qualities such as taking ‘long journeys’, having ‘hysteria in limousines’, facing ‘knife fights in the audience’, ‘bizarre litigation’, and facing or being exposed to ‘pandemonium’ and ‘drugs’. Fed up with these, Wunderlick may also be ridiculing the fame as his fans, and the music industry commoditizes his existence. Consequently, he feels like a product in the consumer society. Mark Poster agrees with the Marxist idea that Marxism convinces men that the sale of their labor power alienates them, and adds men, from the Marxist perspective, is conceptualized

as a producing animal (Poster, 2001, p.3). Bucky Wunderlick alienates himself from the society because it commoditizes his existence as a human being.

Wunderlick points another fact that his audience ‘wants more than music, more even than its own reduplicated noise’, and he concludes that ‘it is possible the culture had reached its limit, a point of severe tension’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.3). Wunderlick, for Anthony DeCurtis (1990), is a notion from which DeLillo get his ideas upon the function and condition of the culture between the period of 1965 and 1975. During this period in America, the activism, especially for women and other minorities, continued. Between the 1960s and 1970s, the hippie culture, who opposed to the Vietnam War, the nuclear weapons, hostility to the authority of government and big business, and who struggled for the advocacy of the world peace. As the Vietnam War came to its end, new social cases came out such as environmentalism. The environmental movement was successful in raising people’s awareness about protecting the environment. Women campaigned to get their political and economic equality through such organizations as the National Organization for Women (NOW).

Furthermore, Wunderlick’s condition maybe mentions people’s ‘dreadful cynicism, deep alienation, and desperate privatism’ of the late 60s and early 70s (p.133). In the late 60s and early 70s, there were people in America, African Americans, who were struggling for absolute equality before the law, which is Civil Rights Movements, and women were also fighting for their equality on pay disparity and work. Besides, a lot of people were protesting against the start of the Vietnam War, and compulsory military service for the sake of the war, and gays, lesbians, transgender Americans also complained to obtain their equality in the society. It was triggered after Stonewall Rebellion, and people marched against the idea of sexual discrimination. In this light, the reason why Wunderlick necessarily prefers voluntary recluse from the society originates from these social facts.

As a rock and roll star, his fans desire more than music, and they are not satisfied with his music. In other words, he may be pointing to the idea that rock music cannot communicate with people meaningfully after the 60s. Rock music is perceived as a commercial product rather than in its artistic form. Bucky Wunderlick, as a

commercial product, prefers his self-destruction by isolation from the conformist and consumerist society. He says:

‘In Houston I left the group, saying nothing, and boarded a plane for New York City, that contaminated shrine, place of my birth. I knew Azarian would assume leadership of the band, his body being prettiest. As to the rest, I left them to their several uproars—news media, promotion people, agents, accountants, various members of the managerial peerage. The public would come closer to understanding my disappearance than anyone else. It was not quite as total as the act they needed, and nobody could be sure whether I was gone for good. For my closest followers, all it foreshadowed was a period of waiting. Either I’d return with a new language for them to speak or they’d seek a divine silence attendant to my own’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.4-5).

All of a sudden, he leaves his music band, and prefers to distance himself from the society, closes himself in his apartment in Great Jones Street in ‘contaminated shrine’. It can be inferred that he feels exhausted in the ‘pandemonium’ of ‘news media’, ‘promotion people’, ‘agents’, ‘accountants’, ‘various members of the managerial peerage’, These all are the reflections of his exhaustion. The public obsessed with the products will be asking for Wunderlick. From the public eye, Wunderlick can be associated with Karl Marx’s ‘use’ and ‘exchange value’ concepts, and Baudrillard’s notion of ‘sign value’. Use value in itself refers to people’s needs and wants, and exchange value is based on its having the use value for other, which is, in fact, social use value. The use value of the product can exist concerning bare human need without exchange value. However, exchange value is only explained in comparison to use value. Therefore, it is concluded that the consumption is closely linked to use and exchange value of the product. From the Marxist perspective, Wunderlick’s rock and roll music, as use-value, is, in fact, something that will satisfy the public’s demands and needs as an art form. However, Wunderlick is transformed into a product by the uproar of ‘news media’, ‘promotion people’, ‘agents’, ‘accountants’, ‘various members of the managerial peerage, and by the public. Wunderlick’s constant music production explains his exchange value as it means to produce use values. In *Encyclopedia of Consumer Culture* (2011), Dale Southerton states that the act of exchange is the objectification of the value as a quantitative relation between objects. Wunderlick seems to be objectified. In that sense,

Wunderlick's music value is objectified and transformed into an object to be exchanged for money. Southerton says:

'By making everything exchangeable for everything the universal use of money deprives concrete objects of their unique character; they lose the personal significance they used to have in pre-monetary times...An exchange-value dominated culture will offer more individual freedom and opportunities to develop a personal style of life – but it will also be more blasé and superficial' (Southerton, 2011, p.1501).

Wunderlick lacks his unique character, and loses his personal significance in an exchange-value dominated culture. Although people in this exchange-value dominated culture may have more freedom and opportunities, they are all illusion. However, Wunderlick does prefer to be exchanged in this illusionary culture, and therefore he prefers his voluntary recluse from the public and the society. His music, rock, and roll, as an art form, and the existence of his music is not a need for people, but an exchange directed or sold by 'news media', 'promotion people', 'agents', 'accountants', 'various members of the managerial peerage', and by the public (DeLillo, 1998). Furthermore, the existence of Bucky Wunderlick and his music have a sign value in the consumer society. Rather than satisfying the need of the public, Wunderlick and his music are transformed into an object-product which has no signifier/reference. The public makeup stories once they lose their 'product' that they commoditize and fetishize. On the other hand, his music manager Globke encourages Wunderlick to return to join his band, and make music for the insane crowds. He says:

'There's a rumor you're dead, Bucky'. 'Contractual matters. Studio dates. Record commitments. Road arrangements. We go when you say go. Until then we sit with our legs crossed. What the hell, an artist's an artist. Bookings. Interviews. Press parties. Release dates' (DeLillo, 1998, p.8).

The manager Globke, as money exchanger, or a product exchanger, does not seem to understand and accept Wunderlick's leaving the band behind. He tries to convince Wunderlick to be back, and he treats him as an understanding manager. Globke's

insistence on the requirements of being an artist reflects his anger for Wunderlick's sudden and unexpected leaving. He says:

'You attack even the things I hold dearest, Bucky, but I forgive you because I know you're on the threshold of something extra-extra-ordinary or you wouldn't be here in this cold dark room far from the hue and cry. Or am I wrong?... 'The boys are confused. What can I say? The boys are confused, hurt and bereaved' (DeLillo, 1998, p.10).

Globke produces some reasons why Wunderlick needs to return to his band. In fact, he does not prefer to lose his 'product' go waste, and rather he would like to make money over Wunderlick. Globke, with all his words, exploits Bucky Wunderlick by managing his 'contractual matters, studio dates, record commitments, travels, bookings, interviews, press parties, release dates' (DeLillo, 1998). With all these, he centralizes Bucky Wunderlick, and as he is no longer able to control the powers of the public outside, he instead concentrates on Wunderlick, as the product, and tries to force him to join the market outside with his music and his physical existence. Bucky Wunderlick, as a product, must sell himself like every other article of commerce, and he is exposed to all the changes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market. However, Wunderlick is aware of the fact that he loses all his character and all his charm. Besides, he does not want to become an external body part of the machine. Globke, by contrast, pushes him into a monotonous and restricted life. From the Marxist perspective, Bucky Wunderlick as a laborer is exploited by his manufacturer, the manager Globke. As a 'productive force', Bucky Wunderlick augments Globk's capital.

Bucky Wunderlick knows the condition of consumerist American society and therefore alienates himself 'returning the idea of privacy to American life' (DeLillo, 1998, p.17). He legitimates his alienation saying the following:

'Americans pursue loneliness in various ways. For me, Great Jones Street was a time of prayerful fatigue. I became a half-saint, practiced in visions, informed by a sense of real economy, but deficient in true pain. I was preoccupied with conserving myself for some unknown ordeal to come and did not do work by engaging in dialogues, or taking more than the minimum

number of steps to get from place to place, or urinating unnecessarily' (DeLillo, 1998, pp.19-20).

In this passage, he sounds like he has the feeling of exhaustion and the sense of beaten up. In *Great Jones Street*, Bucky Wunderlick withdraws from the consumer and capitalist society. *Great Jones Street* (1998), in this light, portrays a consumer and capitalist culture whose members are obsessed with the lives of a few. The insane and deafening crowds outside are obsessed with Wunderlick's life and lifestyle rather than his music as an art form. Maybe, therefore, with this in mind, Bucky Wunderlick isolates himself from the society as he is seen as a celebrity fetish.

Globke can be associated with the notion of media. Guy Debord argues that people are mediated by images, and the spectacle is a social relationship among people that is mediated by images (Debord, 2012, p.12). Globke's making up stories about Bucky Wunderlick's unexpected loss in order to take the public pulse is perhaps similar to the idea that media produces tons of stories such as news; like assassination news, war news, accidents, explosions, and advertisements, violence, talk shows, reality shows and etc. to keep the consumers' pulse. Bucky Wunderlick's made-up stories mediate the 'spectacle', and as it is in images, they are bombarded with the stories, and now busy with these days and night. Debord says that this sector is the center of illusion and false consciousness (Debord, 2012, p.12). The 'spectacle' does not realize that they are in fact exploited or oppressed. The 'spectacle' – the public does not realize that 'they are themselves 'a product of real activity' (Debord, 2012, p.14). In other words, they are also commoditized by the images created and stories produced. In this respect, Debord argues that the 'spectacle' is, as a matter of fact, the reflection of power and dominance. In a modern sense, it is the media which bombards and blurs the 'spectacles' mind with its images. With this image bombardment, the 'spectacle' cannot read between the lines. Furthermore, the 'spectacle' is the outcome of technical development. For Debord, it is a sort of a form that chooses its technical content. Mass media as a technical development actually answers to the needs of the spectacle's internal dynamics (Debord, 2012, p.19).

There is no unity, but a massive expansion in the spectacle in the modern period. With this enormous expansion, the idea of the individual is abstracted. Although the concept of 'the spectacle' is the common language to unite the abstracted individuals, it unites its separateness. This is associated with the public in the society that Bucky Wunderlick inhabits. They are, in fact, abstracted from the society with the bombardment of the products, or images of Wunderlick recreated by Globke. In effect, Globke is the producer of these images which causes both Buck Wunderlick's fetish and commodity in for the masses.

Lukacs foreshadows the future modern condition that rationalizes, and mechanizes man. Individuals become less active and more contemplative in this future modern condition. (Lukacs, 1971). They are mechanized, with their lack of will. Lukacs states directly that they are being transformed into an object. In this connection, Bucky Wunderlick prefers his alienation and isolation from the society in order not to be destructed or annihilated. Rumors or made-up stories about Bucky Wunderlick, in fact, popularize his existence and reinforces his commodity both for the public – spectacle and for Globke;

'...An accident. You were in an accident, and you're hidden away in some rich private clinic in south-central Maryland. The accident thing was interesting to us, ideologically. An accident for somebody like you is the equivalent of prison for a revolutionary. We were rooting for an accident. Which is, wow, really weird. But that's what happens...This is pretty sophisticated stuff, Bucky. I mean there's a rumor, there's counter-rumor, there's manipulation, and there's, you know, this ultra-morbid promotional activity. What's it all mean?' (DeLillo, 1998, p.23).

These so-called accident rumors, on the other hand, fetishizes Bucky Wunderlick since these rumors dominate the public –spectacle. Real Wunderlick is, in this sense, replaced by a set of his images that are superior to the real one. It also means that real experiences with/about Wunderlick are changed with the pictures or models of them. According to Guy Debord, the logic of the commodity world is 'one with men's estrangement from one another and from the total of what they produce' (p. 26). On this point, both Wunderlick's himself and the public – spectacle are estranged from one another. However, Bucky prefers his estrangement intentionally,

in order not to be commoditized, but it is a point of no escape as ‘the world we see is the world of commodity’ says Debord (2012, p.29).

The growth of the dictatorship of modern economic production is both intensive and extensive, and besides, in this modern economy, social space is bombarded or engulfed with commodities. The whole labor is sold for the sake of commodities, or they all are transformed into commodities, and the public – spectacle, as another facet of money, is the abstracted and equal to all commodities (2012, p.33):

‘The market is a strange thing, almost a living organism. It changes, it palpitates, it grows, it excretes. It sucks things in and then spews them up. It’s a living wheel that turns and crackles. The market accepts and rejects. It loves and kills’ (DeLillo, 2012, pp.27-28).

The modern economic production, first of all, makes creation easier and faster and, secondly, it brings easy access to products for people which has no or zero use value. Furthermore, the market in the consumer culture forces people to shop for its own sake, and to buy even if they do not need, and after that depersonalizes these people through media, and advertising in the media, and the glorification of these unnecessary products. With this connection, the market, at the same time, commoditizes people who are within the ongoing process of consumption. In other words, people, busy with shopping/buying or consuming are abstracted and transformed into passivity and commodity in the end. The people’s acceptance in the market is closely associated with their *busy-ness* with their conforming to standards of consumption. Their rejection is their seclusion, alienation or isolation from the conformist society. In *Great Jones Street* (1998), Bucky Wunderlick is accepted with his exchange value or sign value by the public and by his manager Globke in the market. However, he rejects market conformity, and prefers his alienation in the Great Jones Street in America since he feels consumed by the market, and denies his being commoditized. He says:

‘Jet lag, fear, anxiety, depression. You know my history’ ... ‘Tell your people I don’t know anything. That’s ‘more or less the truth. I’m just a tired old figure of the entertainment world. You know that. Music industry wore me down’ (DeLillo, 1998, pp.32-36).

Once he looks back in his history, he sounds exhausted and beaten. The necessities he has to do for the music industry, such as never-ending travelling, 'contractual matters', 'studio dates', 'record commitments', 'road arrangements', 'bookings', 'interviews', 'press parties', and 'release dates' give rise to his exhaustion and alienation. Bucky Wunderlick believes that all these essentials for the music market/industry commoditize him, and reinforce the idea of his commodity, and he says that the big full of lights and bright colors and crazy sounds destroy him (DeLillo, 1998, p.48).

Bucky Wunderlick is a famous rock and roll star. The word 'fame' is a commodity and fetish in the eye of the public or the masses in the market in a general sense. The masses, for Jean Baudrillard are passive, always a potential energy, a mute referent. Maybe tomorrow, they will not become the 'silent majority'. They have no past, no future, no virtual energies to release, and no desire to fulfill (Baudrillard, 1983, p.3).

Baudrillard's words reinforce the argument that the masses are abstracted and passivated in the world where sign-value bombardment is dominating the market. The masses, as a potential energy besides, are nullified, and transformed into commodities, and mute referents. According to Baudrillard, the 'silent' masses have no 'attribute', 'predicate', 'quality', 'reference, and no social 'reality' (Baudrillard, 1983, p.5). He implies that the masses are fragmented, and there is 'no polarity between the one and the other in the masses', and the masses cannot be alienated because neither the one nor the other exist there any longer' (Ibid). In other words, where there is fragmentation, there is no alienation since the masses do not exist any longer, which, in effect, is the annihilation or the death of the individual or subject. The subject is commoditized; it becomes his/her end – death as it is for Bucky Wunderlick.

The taste of music has changed according to Theodor W. Adorno. As he puts in *The Cultural Industry*; 'the current musical consciousness of the masses cannot be called Dionysian, so it has nothing to do with taste' (Adorno, 2005, p.29). For Adorno, the notion of taste is outdated, and the reason of declining taste is the degeneration of the masses. Besides, 'musical fetishism takes possession of the public valuation of singing voices' rather than the music's itself, and music, for Adorno, has a function of an advertisement for commodities which one need to possess to listen to it (2005).

What makes one song an idol song is its exchange value in which the smallest quantity of enjoyment disappeared. Rather than the music's itself, the fetish character of the commodity is alienated from the product and glorified. Rather than his music itself, his physical existence becomes a fetish commodity. This is, in fact, the reflection of the masses. As Adorno echoes Baudrillard, 'messages are given to them, and they want some sign, they idolize the play of signs and stereotypes, they idolize any content so long as they are mystified, and mystified, the masses are not allowed their behavior' (Adorno, 2005, pp.11-13). Furthermore, they are called as the silent majority as they do not have any referential signs, and they are no longer a subject because they are nullified, and emptied out. As they are no longer a subject, their alienation not possible since they have no language (Adorno, 2005, p.22). Therefore, it says that they are produced to demand and consume. For an extended period, political, ideological, cultural and sexual meaning has been created by some people in power, and the sense in question produced in specific supply was sufficient for people back then. However, today, there is too much meaning being created everywhere, and the masses are absorbing every sign and every sense with no response or participation, they are dumbed, like silenced dumbs. The silent majorities are neither a subject nor an object. They are nullified, they do not choose, they do not produce differences but a lack of differentiation. They are only fascinated by the medium that has lost its meaning (Adorno, 2005, pp.30-35).

Feeling on the verge of being commoditized, Bucky prefers his alienation from the consumer society. He is aware of the social evolution, and 'the silent majorities – maybe the pandemonium, would like to consume, not his music as an art form, but his physical existence, in other words, the silent majorities would like to satisfy their sensual desires through Wunderlick. He says:

Look at me. What have I become in the scheme of human evolution? Luggage. I'm luggage. By choice, inclination, and occupation. What am I if I'm not luggage? I open myself up, insert some very costly items and then close up again and get transported to a timeless land. Do you want to know who knows I'm a thing? Customs knows (DeLillo, 1998, p.87).

Bucky Wunderlick visualizes himself as a product – the consumer silent majorities product (luggage) rather than an artist, a product which does not differentiate, chooses, decides and participates. Once Mrs. Olmstead asks him if he considers himself an artist, he says:

‘The true artist makes people move. When people read a book or look at a painting, they sit there or stand there. A long time ago that was okay, that was hip, that was art. Now it’s different. I make people move. My sound lifts them right off their ass. I make it happen. Understand. I make it happen... Maybe actually kill some of them. They’d come here knowing full well. Then we’d play and sing, and people in the audience would be frozen with pain or writhing with pain, and some of them would die from the effects of our words and music...People are collapsing in pain. They’d come here knowing full well. People are dying from the effects of all this beauty and power. That’s art, sweetheart. I make it happen’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.100).

As Baudrillard says, Bucky Wunderlick can be associated with media in that he envelops the masses (1983, p.44). Media as a sign or a symbol manipulates people. People ignore their needs, ignore use value, and consume the signs and symbols. Bucky Wunderlick is the medium, and the message is Wunderlick image. People are fascinated, captivated and mesmerized by his image.

According to Robert K. Logan, ‘the age of information and communication media create an environment full of events that all men inevitably participate’ (Logan, 2010, p.248). People all participate in the media and its contents. They are depersonalized and passivized by the content of the media. It can be addressed that communication era may be associated with the memorization and captivation of the crowds by the music of Bucky Wunderlick. As the medium, his music, and concerts create events for the groups to participate. The masses, though not a subject individually participates in the abstraction and depersonalization, and Wunderlick’s music, as a medium neutralize social relations and the society itself. In other words, the social is destroyed by the media, by Wunderlick, and the information from the media, his music. His exposure to this destruction exhausts Bucky Wunderlick. He says:

‘The more I make people move, the closer I get to personal inertness. With everybody jumping the way they do and holding their heads in the manner they’re inclined to hold their heads, I feel in kind of a mood of melancholy because I am kind of tired of all the movement and would like to flatten myself against a wall and become inert’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.101).

The crowd transforms Wunderlick into a product – a commodity. Their consumption of the commodity signifies and reinforces their happiness, well-being, affluence, success, prestige, and exorcism. The consumer mentality of the crowds rules their everyday life, and they strongly believe that their possession of the commodity, Wunderlick, will bring real happiness and ecstasy. Wunderlick believes that the crowds, as consumers, represents a completely passive victim of the system, and therefore, he would like to flatten himself against a wall and become inert. Furthermore, being in the system of production and consumption is exhausting, and the increasing competition for more production and consumption consumes the producer. In *Consumer Society* (1970; 2016), Baudrillard highlights that *busy-ness* with producing and consuming gives rise to anomie, a personal state of isolation and anxiety (Baudrillard, 2016, p.278). Wunderlick’s wish to flatten himself against a wall and becoming inert can also be explained with Baudrillard’s description of fatigue, which is ‘lifelessness, disaffection and generalized passivity (Baudrillard, 2016, p.294).

While Bucky Wunderlick’s fame brings him ‘riches, greatness, immortality’, he is ‘sitting there in this dead person’s apartment suffering untold agony’. While ‘America is out there, just beyond this bridge, it’s full of people who are passivized, depersonalized, and commoditized, waiting to be told what to do, ‘they’re waiting out there, just the other side of this bridge. It’s America. The whole big thing. Popcorn and killer drugs. You can’t just sit there’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.136-9). Baudrillard argues that the society is organized around consumption and display of commodities. People obtain prestige, identity and fame (Kellner, 1989, p.21). Wunderlick addresses that America, the ‘whole big thing’, reinforces consumption and people establish and reveal their identities by participating in the act of consuming. People watch TV, eat popcorn and use drugs to alleviate their suffering and madness, which is resulted from consumption:

‘We got stuck in new levels of madness every day. All over the country, there was nothing but folly. America was the sheer peak. They were all crazy one way or another. It was guns, sex, and politics. It was dope and color. It was motorcycles, garbage, and hand-to-hand fighting. The one thing I couldn’t take was polluting the environment’ (DeLillo, 1998, pp.146-7).

The press and fans speculate whether Wunderlick is kidnapped, lost or dead. His marketing department gives rise to some speculations about his loss to keep up their interest in his music so that they can make the profit out of it. Wunderlick’s manager Globke persuades Bucky to return to make money out of his product, Wunderlick. Rather than appreciating his music as an art form, he concentrates on delivering his product to his subsidiaries and affiliates all over the place. He addresses that there is a big market out there in America, and he would like to negotiate his product and make money out of his product. He would like to convince Wunderlick to return to the market to get a share of the cake. Otherwise, Globke will have to pull out of the market. In this fashion, he argues with Wunderlick to persuade and give him back to the market. He says:

‘Do you know what they’re constantly doing? They’re yowling for their food. Feed me, feed me. Enormous sums of money were involved in your disappearing act. All these companies with their mouths opened wide for the worm breakfast, the worm lunch, the worm dinner. I needed the tapes to keep some action going. Create demand for the exotic product. Keep the public salivating. So I had a man hang around from time to time’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.178).

Globke would like to produce more commodities out of Wunderlick, and he is more concerned with the profit extracted from the product, Wunderlick, and his exchange in the market, rather than his actual use. Globke, on the other hand, does not seem to give importance to the fact that his product will dominate people, and become more thing like, in other words, he ignores people’s reification with his product bombardment. His actual intention is to make money over his product by homogenizing, alienating, and exploiting people in the consumer culture. Wunderlick supposedly is convinced that Globke has to make money over him, and he ironically says:

‘That’s what amazes me,’ I said. ‘The fact that you’d go to all that trouble. Your money, your position, your reputation. You more or less own this building, Globke’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.179).

Globke finds Wunderlick illogical since he does not necessarily understand the point of his participation in the system. This system is the system of the objects by which Baudrillard would like to address the structures and the functions of the organization of the objects of everyday life. The objects in a traditional environment are too personalized, expressive, and a sort of symbol of familial history, taste and tradition. However, the objects in the modern environment have many functions, are mobile, expressive depthless, and more personal. In other words, the functions of the objects are liberated according to Douglas Kellner (1989, p.9). In this fashion, the new organization of objects in the new world of objects needs an organizational man who can master, control, and order the objects in different combinations and permutation (Kellner, 1998, p.10). In this respect, Globke seems to be an organizational man who controls and masters Wunderlick in the consumer America. With Wunderlick’s tapes as an object, Globke would like to be a participant in the system of objects. In this new type of environment, Globke forces Wunderlick to participate in the order of signs, and this system of symbols will lead both Globke and Wunderlick to adopt a new, modern world which will reinforce the idea that traditional and material environment transforms into a more-rationalized and cultural system of signs. Besides, in this new system of symbols, objects and individuals are liberated from their use-value and perform with their exchange value (Kellner, 1998, p.10).

Another thing is that Wunderlick is a commodity fetish for Globke and the crowds since Wunderlick is perceived to be a ‘natural fulfillment of their needs’, and his human labor to produce music is ignored both by Globke and the crowd in pandemonium (Kellner, 1998, p.22). He attempts to convince Wunderlick to participate in the system of the signs as a commodity fetish, and Bucky Wunderlick is the/ ‘an image – sign’ for his band. Although what Globke says in the quotation seems to be a persuasion of Wunderlick participation in the system of signs, he – Globke would like to stress that Bucky’s privacy and isolation actually strengthen the people in the music band. In this light, Bucky’s demythologization himself arouses the masses curiosity, and Globke turns this into his advantage of making money over Wunderlick:

‘...But we believe you’re the last person we have to defend ourselves too. We’re your group-image, Bucky. You’ve come inside to stay. You’ve always been one step ahead of the times, and this is the biggest step of all. Demythologizing yourself. Keeping covered. Putting up walls. Stripping off fantasy and legend. Reducing yourself to minimums. Your privacy and isolation are what give us the strength to be ourselves. We were willing victims of your sound. Now we’re acolytes of your silence’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.185).

Wunderlick becomes a dominating object in the music market with his recluse from the consumer society since it is very similar to *pornography*. It means that in postmodernism, there is human-machine. In other words, man does not have a productive function any longer, rather he performs his consumer function. In this fashion, postmodern culture, as it makes pornography the cultural fetish the consumer public needs, objectifies human body, and the body is offered for consumption. In pornography, the female is treated as an object, as an object for the male desire, which manifests the male supremacy and dominant capacity over the female. With the female sexual submission, the female is transformed into an object, and the female is treated as an object according to Aura Schüssler in her article ‘Pornography and Postmodernism’ (2013, pp.9-13). Schüssler also states that the status of consumption objects changes in such a way that human nature is treated as an object, and an object as human nature (2013, p.14). It emphasizes the idea that anything and anybody has the possibility of consumption. Maybe, therefore, it can be said that pornography is based on the notion of consumption. In this fashion, Don DeLillo’s Bucky Wunderlick stands for an example of the objectification of the body in the name of pornography. His status of consumption object as in the pornography can be associated with fascism in the sense that it manipulates the subject, transforms it into an object, and then it suppresses and oppresses the objectified subject:

‘Every pornographic work brings us closer to fascism. It reduces the human element. It encourages antlike response. I the writer suffered these things myself’ (DeLillo, 1998, p.212).

In *Great Jones Street* (1998), objectification and commodification of Wunderlick's body in the postmodern consumer society is reinforced with Globke's words: 'Everything that takes place is taking place solely to mislead you. Others manage your reality. Logic is inside out Events are delusions' (DeLillo, 1998, p.240). It portrays a postmodern consumer society in which human power/labor is neglected, depersonalized, passivized and abstracted. Bucky Wunderlick, as an artist, is revealed as an object of consumption at the end of the book. Once Watney tells Wunderlick 'your life consumes itself', it reinforces the idea of commodification and consumption of his body in the market economy.

From another perspective, DeCurtis addresses Great Jones Street is a society which does not accommodate any other choice, but the cash nexus and the exchange of commodities for its people, and he also states that everything such as murder, suicide, exploitation or self-destruction is consumed, and the human body is commoditized (DeCurtis, 1990, p.140). Buck Wunderlick, at the end of the novel, causes his self-destruction or destroys his commodification by taking the ultimate drug with which he experiences weeks of deep peace. Wunderlick manifests his reaction by taking the last drug to the postmodern commoditizing and annihilating consumer society.

Don DeLillo's *Great Jones Street* (1998), the condition of the human subject is associated with the notion of *Pandemonium* since it represents a situation or an atmosphere in which there are chaos, confusion, and disorder. In the first place, Karl Marx's theory of commodification and reification explain the postmodern human condition, which turns individuals and subjects into products/goods and machines. To clarify, he emphasizes that its use value does not any longer measure the cost of a commodity, but its exchange value. To put it differently, industrialization increases the number of products not because human subjects are in need of them, but for their exchange standpoint, which, on the one hand, neglects the human labor and commoditizes it, and champions the products – commodities produced on the other.

In this light, in *Great Jones Street* (1998), the rock and roll star Bucky Wunderlick is a character commoditized by his fans, the music crowds, and the manager Globke who tries to convince Wunderlick to return the stage so that he will be able to make money over him. As an individual, Wunderlick does prefer his recluse from the

social interaction and relation with the masses and seems to reject the notion of commodification. Wunderlick, in addition to that, is being abstracted and alienated from the music he produces, and from the market economy since he understands his self-destruction and self-annihilation as long as he provides as a music laborer. In other words, he does reject to put his effort or labor into the circulation of commodification, and maybe, therefore, he prefers his self-destruction in his dingy and unfurnished apartment in Great Jones Street in America.

In the same fashion, Jean Baudrillard expands Karl Marx's concepts of use value and exchange value. He emphasizes that commodities in the postmodern consumer society obtain a symbolic or sign value which puts much more importance on status and power. Symbolic /sign exchange of goods creates a power relation between the products and people who possess the goods. Rather than use value of the products, their sign exchange/value establishes a commodity fetish which in fact signifies its significance, and also leads to the human subjects' or individuals' commodification fetish in the postmodern consumer society.

In this respect, Bucky Wunderlick's body as a commodity fetish, is reinforced as commodification and consumption in the market economy. According to Mark Poster (2001) reemphasizes Baudrillard's idea that hysteria in the postmodern consumer culture is to produce and reproduce commodities for human subjects or individuals. Although this postmodern consumer society searches for its reality with this, it seems that there is no reality left behind, but hyper-reality. Moreover, continuous sign production by the power and its *busy-ness* with forcing people to participate in this production of signs neglects human subjectivity and individuality. Therefore, in order not to be in this participation of sign production, Don DeLillo's Bucky Wunderlick voluntarily prefers his self-annihilation, and destroy his commodification by the market economy by taking drugs, and manifest his subjectivity in spite of his self-destruction in his apartment in New York.

From another perspective, Peter Boxall in 'DeLillo and Media Culture' associates DeLillo's way of approach to the 'clamor of the marketplace' with Samuel Beckett's 'drawing away from the messiness of the world toward the stillness and silence of the classic artwork in *Great Jones Street* (1998). In his approach, it is obvious that Bucky Wunderlick is as a protagonist whose seclusion is very similar to Beckett's

seclusion from the disordered world, and his preference to stillness and silence (Boxall, 2008, p.44).

On the other hand, Anthony DeCurtis emphasizes that it is impossible to escape from commoditized media culture. A super famous rock and roll star, Wunderlick abandon his fame to take shelter in his unfurnished apartment in New York. However, he, in the end, understands that 'it is finally impossible to withdraw' from the music market and market economy. DeCurtis also states that the novel manifests that 'there are no alternatives' to the market economy so that Bucky Wunderlick is subject to be consumed.

Inspired by from Ingmar Bergman's *Persona* (1966), Don DeLillo in *Great Jones Street* (1998) reflects 'nature of diminishing existence' (Osteen, 2008, p.46). For Mark Osteen, besides, as Boxall echoes, it is a 'deliberate movement towards silence and oblivion' (2008, p.46). This 'silence' and 'oblivion' is accomplished by Bucky Wunderlick's self-destruction or self-annihilation with the help of Happy Valley Farm Commune's, a terrorist organization, giving 'a lobotomizing drug to him that attacks the speech-forming areas of the brain' (Boxall, 2008, p.51).

Mark Osteen in his article 'DeLillo's Daedalian Artists' relates Bucky Wunderlick to Daedalus, a figure in Greek mythology who imprisons himself in a labyrinth unintentionally, and in order to escape from the labyrinth, he tries to fashion his wings from feathers and wax, and escapes from the labyrinth with his son Icarus, but this escape results in Icarus death, approaching the sun. For Osteen, Bucky Wunderlick abandons the labyrinth, the market economy, but 'loses something priceless in his flight to freedom' (Osteen, 2008, p.137). Wunderlick abandons his band and shelter in his apartment in New York, hoping to enjoy the silence. However, he later understands that his withdrawal from the music market and market economy mean to permit his exploitation and commodification by the market economies itself. According to Mark Osteen, Wunderlick's withdrawal is, in fact, an attempt to free himself 'from servile bondage to the world, which appears as patron, client, consumer, antagonist, arbiter, and distorter of his work' (Osteen, 2008, p.138). Although it is according to Osteen Wunderlick's recluse from the society and his silence is his passivation or abstraction, it is his way of communication or 'dialogue with his fans, agent, his girlfriend, and finally with himself' (2008, p.138). However,

it is clear at the end of the novel that he permits his passivation and commodification with the drug Happy Valley Farm Commune provides for him. His muteness under Happy Valley dominancy, dominance over his tapes and music, manifests that he accepts the market economy dominancy over his passivation and commodification, and he surrenders.



4. AMERICANA: SANITARIUM

4.1 Postmodern Suffering

Carl Gustav Jung, a psychoanalyst, and the analytical psychology founder states in his book *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* that ‘it is one of the most difficult and thankless of tasks to say anything of importance about civilized man of today’ (Jung, 2014, p.143). Although it is related to the plight of ‘modern man’, it is, as a matter of fact, applicable to the ‘postmodern condition’ of man; however, it is difficult to find an exact definition for his condition since it is non-directional, incomprehensible, obscure, ambiguous and fragmented. However, it is obvious that there are some alternative ways of explaining the actual condition of postmodern man. For example, Peter Boxall sees Don DeLillo’s protagonist’s, David Bell, condition in *Americana* (2006) as the reflection of the collapse of American consumer culture (Boxall, 2008, p.44). It is the collapse that does not provide any alternatives to escape from even if Bell prefers ‘to escape from the banality of advertising industry for which he works’ (Ibid). In addition to Peter Boxall, Philip Nel sees DeLillo’s *Americana* (2006) as the fascination of James Joyce’s *Ulysses* (1922). Joyce’s Stephen Daedalus becomes an inspirational character that convinces David Bell escape from the labyrinth of advertising industry. In this chapter, I will try to argue that postmodern individual man is ‘suffering’ because his mind is susceptible to fundamental alienation, fragmentation, and corruption created by media, consumerism and commodification. These transform the first-person experience into a third-person singular, and destroy the first-person experience and create ‘a universal third-person, the person we all want to be’ (DeLillo, 2006). Therefore, in this chapter, Don DeLillo’s *Americana* (2006) will portray a postmodern individual man suffering from the media-saturated America. It is the archetypal American condition of the mind or self, and it leads to an inevitable outcome of ‘no escape’ or ‘no salvation’ for the postmodern man. It is an ultimate fragmentation and alienation. His suffering will be argued, and alternative answers will be suggested or provided.

David Bell, in *Americana* (2006), a wealthy, handsome, and talented, 28-year-old television executive, suddenly decides to leave New York for America's mid-west in order to film the small-town lives of ordinary people and have a close and friendly relationship with his homeland although he later becomes aware of the fact that America has reached its end. In other words, his awareness of the 'end' reflect his suffering. David Bell's condition in *Americana* (2006) is associated with the idea that an 'authentic or unique self has been trivialized' Randy Laist states (1993, p.52). In addition, David Bell's postmodern condition is similar to 'the quest of the soul for meaning that begins in Americana' as Laist restates Michael Oriard (Ibid), and it is, for Douglas Keesey 'to separate the real from the reel in his life, truth from Hollywood fantasy ...and to get at the unmediated truth' (Keesey, 1993, p.29-30). Furthermore, his travel across America's mid-west can also be his attempt to discover some truth within the paradox of his *busy-ness* with media technology – television and film. It is intentionally called a paradox since the media technology 'undermines the value of the human subject by conceptualizing consciousness as wholly formed by its material environment' according to Laist (Ibid). As Marshall McLuhan emphasizes in *The Medium is the Message* that the effects of technology are not reflected as opinions and concepts, they are rather some changes in the sense ratios or patterns of perception' (McLuhan, 1967, p.41). David Bell emphasizes this when he says: images 'move him (a person) from first-person consciousness to third-person' (DeLillo, 2006, p.270), which actually underestimates or neglects personal individuality or 'the subject' and perceives him as an object or the masses in generally speaking.

David Bell would like to discover the authentic American heartland and destroy the inauthenticity left behind. In other words, he expects to liberate himself from the superficiality of American. For Mark Osteen (1996), Don DeLillo's *Americana* (2006) is a *kunstlerroman*, a narrative about an artist's growth to maturity. Like *kunstlerroman* heroes, David Bell shows his limitations, enlightenment, and revelation (Osteen, 1996, p.450). Being exposed to 'another dull and lurid year', and his exposure to 'the recurring news of airline disasters and military engagements', and the number of dead and missing' and 'such exactness' seem to be 'a trickle of electricity to the (his) numbed brain' (DeLillo, 2006, pp.3-4). With all these, David

Bell implies that he has to endure the monotony of his life by stressing the boredom in Western civilization:

‘The whole point was to separate for the evening and find exciting people to talk to and then at the very end to meet again and tell each other how terrible it had been and how glad we were to be together again. This is the essence of Western civilization’ (DeLillo, 2006, p.4).

David Bell stresses his boredom with his life and recurring events and conversations with the people around him; ‘it was one of those parties which are so boring that boredom itself soon becomes the main topic of conversation’ (DeLillo, 2006, p.4). He is unhappy with his life, ‘waiting for some change, some new dispensation, to complete the displacement of the older’ as David Cowart states in ‘For Whom Bell Tolls: Don DeLillo’s *Americana*’ (Cowart, 1996, pp.601-2). David Bell’s professional environment, media industry, defines his perception and mind. Cowart states that it is DeLillo’s perspective which explains the reality in the American mind with the images from television, from the film, from magazine journalism, photography, from advertisement, and images sometimes even from books’ (Cowart, 1996, p.604).

A filmmaker and successful television executive David Bell has a close interaction with the world around him with his 16mm camera, and plans to recapture his own past and converts these images and pictures into a movie to create his first-person consciousness since he feels the bombardment of media technologies around him, and would like to get replace his third-person consciousness with his first-person by creating his own film. Don DeLillo reflects Bell’s boredom and suffering as the effects of over-exposure to media technologies, and Bell is disturbed and feel uncomfortable with the American people’s trivialization of Vietnam War, and continuation of their monotonous everyday lives, and he says;

‘The war was on television every night, but we all went to the movies. Soon most of the movies began to look alike, and we went into dark rooms and turned on or off or watched others turn on or off, or burned joss sticks and listened to tapes of near silence’ (DeLillo, 2006, p.5).

In spite of the war images screening out on television, they continue enjoying their own lives. Tired of all these monotonously recurring events, the image bombardment from TV, and as 'a creator and victim of the televisual hyper-real', 'blue-eyed David Bell, as a successful executive, would like to 'go out West anyway in a few months to do a documentary on the Navahos' (DeLillo, 2006, p.10). 'As the first time in his life he feels the true power of image' when he watches *From Here to Eternity* (1953) played by Burt Lancaster, and with that, he would like to emphasize the effects of Burt Lancaster on his obsession with the images and filmmaking;

'Burt was like a city in which we are all living. He was that big. Within the conflux of shadow and time, there was room for all of us, and I knew I must extend myself until the molecules parted and I was spliced into the image. Burt in the moonlight was a crescendo of male perfection but no less human because of it. Burt lives! I carry that image to this day, and so, I believe, do millions of others, men, and women, for their separate reasons. Burt in the moonlight. It was a concept; it was the icon of a new religion. That night, after the movie, driving my father's car along the country roads, I began to wonder how real the landscape indeed was, and how much of a dream is a dream' (DeLillo, 2006, pp.12-13).

David Bell is mesmerized with Burt Lancaster image displayed and is stuck between the concept of the real and hyper-real, and between the first-person to third-person consciousness. Rather than adopting the first-person consciousness, Bell is fascinated by the illusion of Burt Lancaster. On the other hand, it may be his escaping from the false and deceptive world since his professional environment is a display of a hyper-real saturation of the mass media, and also his escaping from the artificiality and superficiality of his physical environment, and in addition, avoiding 'living in the third-person; therefore, he is in search of an authentic American heartland;

'Soon I began to understand the attraction of pathological lying. To construct one's reality, then bend it to an implausible extreme, was an adventure even more thrilling than the linguistic free falls of the network. I think I went at it fairly well for a novice. I learned that in an atmosphere of seclusion, intimacy, motel-confessional...' (DeLillo, 2006, p.58).

Living in the third-person consciousness caused by image-saturated American postmodern consumer society, David Bell would like to construct the first-person knowledge by getting rid of his father's, Clinton Harkavy Bell's bombarding lectures on the importance of advertising and media. Clinton Bell has the idea that the package of the product is much more important than the product's itself which implies the significance of the image, sign, and model. 'Images, styles, and representations are not the promotional accessories to economic products, and they are the products themselves' as Edwin Gibson states in 'The Reel and the Real: Mass Media, Technology and the American 'heartland' in *Americana*' (Gilson, 2018). However, David Bell feels uncomfortable with his exposure to media and one of its contents, the advertising products, and he thinks that people are 'no more than electronic signals and they moved through time and space with the stutter and shadowed insanity of a TV commercial' (DeLillo, 2006, p.24). Marshall McLuhan, in *Understanding Media*, says 'all media are active metaphors', and 'we see ourselves as being translated into the form of information' (McLuhan, 1994, p.64). David's metaphor in *Americana* (2006) is his third-person consciousness as 'a media apparatus'. His consciousness refers to a television transmission when he says 'I was just beginning to go black, in network parlance (2006, p. 60), and he also says 'my head seemed to be a telephone delivering an endless busy signal' (2006, p.80), plus, 'I was like a movie camera catching documentary glimpses of everyday life in a prison' according to Laist (2009).

David Bell's, as a successful television executive, *busy-ness* with the media technologies, his success story, and his passionate obsession with filmmaking come from his fifty-five-year-old ad executive father, Clinton Bell. His father and mother spend time working on commercials. For example, he 'collects reels of TV commercials' 'in the basement of the house', and his father has a 'projector and spends his time watching commercials' and 'taking notes' about them' (DeLillo, 2006). As David Bell mentions his father, after a detailed work on commercials tries to relate the commercials to the marketplace. David Bell has inherited too much knowledge about commercials and advertising from his father. He is exposed to too much knowledge, and although he gets financial support from his father, and learns the secret of the success of this job, David Bell is on the brink of losing his sanity. David Bell like everyone else in the postmodern consumer society is engulfed and

bombarded with too much information and too many signs, symbols and images. He realizes that these signs, symbols, and images have an omnipotent effects on him, which are reflected in advertising. According to Mark Poster 'advertising, with its signs, is mass society, causes to arise receptivity, mobilizes consciousness, and restructures itself with its collective process, and by advertising the masses express their agreement' (Poster, 2001, p.10). David Bell's hunger for more knowledge about media technologies and media industry, and his hunger for fame and success in this industry later brings his awareness on his suffering; suffering from his over-exposure to the world full of signs, symbols and images, and from exhaustion, and losing his first-person consciousness. Although consumer society with its objects, products, and advertising offer the individual or the subject an opportunity of total fulfillment and liberation, it transforms the individual or the subject into a third-person consciousness with these objects, products, and advertising. However, his total fulfillment and liberation do not enrich his existence and make him happy. David Bell, therefore, would like to leave New York for the mid-west. He wants to travel to an unspecified desert island in Africa as a voluntary self-exile suffering from the uncertainty of his existence. David Bell questions the uncertainty, nullity of his existence. His questioning becomes deep when he sees a man taking photographs of a photograph which shows a woman who is holding a dead child in her arms. When David Bell sees the man, in the lobby, photographing the photograph of a woman in a war zone, Vietnam War, holding a dead child in her arms, he feels irritated. Bell thinks that media access to snapshot a war scene creates an image or images for the masses, and the masses, with the help of media access, establishes another image or images. This implodes the meaning of the war from its real content.

Don DeLillo criticizes the masses in the postmodern consumer society with this structure of the novel. The relationship between the masses and the products based on the superficiality and negligence of the meaning. Jean Baudrillard criticizes the masses saying that 'the masses have neither past nor future, they have no desire to fulfill: their strength is actual, in the present, and sufficient unto itself' (Baudrillard, 1983, p.3). The masses trivialize the meaning of a war photographer and transform this photo into an everyday object to be posted on any medium which makes David Bell feel uncomfortable and suffer. Bell explains his suffering condition with a quotation taken from St. Augustine's *City of Gods*:

‘The St. Augustine thing. And never can a man be more disastrously in death than when death itself shall be deathless. I’ve committed it to memory. It overwhelms me. I’m not sure why but it hits me. It knocks me out’ (DeLillo, 2006, p. 99).

David Bell reinforces his idea that a true life needs true death or suffering in other words. ‘A life without death is the very condition that the media collects in one place for which David is working threaten to condemn him’ as Sally Bachner states in *The Prestige of Violence: American Fiction, 1962-2007* (Bachner, 2011, pp.123-4). David Bell, a television executive who would like to jump off the corporate ladder, would like to go across the country and make an experimental movie for artistic reasons. But it results in disappointment and emptiness as he cannot find what he has expected up to that time, and he is convinced that there is no heart to find out there, and therefore, changes his plan and retreats to a no-name island since this does not alleviate his suffering. He says ‘things become more real in proportion to the unreality of individual lives. The world has never been more real than it is now. I didn’t learn that at Yale. I learned it from Eldred’ (DeLillo, 2006, p.281). In other words, theoretical knowledge is not helpful for finding his reality. Spiritual knowledge, which is more than religious, belief, practices and ceremonies distance himself from the materialistic society as this materialistic environment blurs this vision to see, understand and live his authenticity and true self. Therefore, Eldred, as ‘he is way ahead of his time, is the person who opens his eyes and vision on that matter.

In contrast to what David Bell expects from his travel across the country turns out to be different, and it gives him an opportunity to compare and better understand the reality. In other words, he becomes aware of the existence of hyperreality in New York, and then across the country. David Bell at that point become aware of the fact that America is not real, but hyperreal, and seems not to obtain his salvation. His friend Brand, too, emphasizes a physical and psychological state which can also be associated with Bell’s himself as they look very similar, and Brand says:

‘To be human is to go through stages,’ ‘I’ve been through them all. But that’s over now. I eat, sleep and write...I’m working all that New York insanity and violence out of my system. I go over to the high school and play basketball

with the kids. It's beautiful here, and this is where I am. I'm purifying myself. You can help me, Davy. My brain needs cleaning out. I think the way I talk. The way I'm trying not to talk anymore. One of the things I've figured out for myself up here in exile is that there's too much slang in my head. It's insidious. It leads to violence. You can help, Davy. I want to be colorless' (DeLillo, 2006, p.113).

Like Brand, David Bell also has the experience of 'New York insanity and violence', the bombardment of images, signs, codes, and models, and maybe, therefore, he would like to escape from this *pandemonium* and shelter in a *sanitarium* to purify himself, clean his brain out of too much knowledge. Bell's postmodern condition explains with Baudrillardian fatalistic view of the world. In his reference to *Fatal Strategies* (1990), Douglas Kellner argues some key points such as objects dominancy over subjects, and he says that the uncontrollable 'obscene proliferation of an object world, and it surpasses all attempts to understand, conceptualize and control it' and he says:

'Objects and events in contemporary society are surpassing themselves, growing and expanding in power. The ecstasy of the objects is their proliferation and expansion to the degree, to the superlative; ...the real more real than the real in television' (Kellner, 1989, pp.155-6).

The 'sovereign power of the object, dominant over the 'misery of the subject' seduces human being with commodities, capital, fashion, the sexual object, media, politics, information, codes and models' (Kellner, 1989, p.157). David Bell's postmodern condition is also closely related to the growing supremacy of object, its growing fascination, seductiveness, and ultimate domination of himself. To get rid of his postmodern misery and suffering, he would like to purify his physical and psychological state from the 'supremacy of objects', from their 'charms and traps', through his travel across the country. Besides, with this, David seems to follow Baudrillard's guidance with which he would like us to 'abandon illusions about the supremacy, and to take objects seriously, to better understand their powers over us, to learn how to live with these object without much indulgence' (Ibid).

William G. Little argues Don DeLillo admits America's becoming a virtual wasteland since 'the products and byproducts of technological advance people more liable to physical ruin', and the contemporary culture has too much faith in waste which means to say that producing too much waste means too many useless products in the physical environment (Little, 2002). Furthermore, being exposed to too much waste in the so-called wasteland, the physical environment in America, reminds David Bell his misery and suffering;

'Things had changed hardly at all. Only materials had changed, technologies; we were still the same nation of ascetics, efficiency experts, haters of waste. We have been redesigning our landscape all these years to cut out unneeded objects such as trees, mountains, and all those buildings which do not make practical use of every inch of space. The ascetic hates waste. We plan the destruction of everything which does not serve the cause of efficiency. Hard to believe, he said, that we are ascetics. But we are, more than all the fake saints across the sea' (DeLillo, 2006, pp.117-8).

DeLillo's one character in *White Noise* (1986) Jack Gladney implies the impossibility of 'touching the fabric of salvation' (DeLillo, 1986, p.31). Because Gladney feels that the waste surrounds people, and this waste is done intentionally. David Bell says:

'What we really want to do deep in the secret recesses of our heart, all of us, is to destroy the forests, white saltbox houses, covered bridges, brownstones, azalea gardens, big red barns, colonial inns, riverboats, whaling villages, cider mills, waterwheels, antebellum mansions, log cabins, lovely old churches and snug little railroad depots...We wish to blast all the fine old things to oblivion and replace them with tasteless identical structures' (DeLillo, 2006, p.118).

Destruction of the physical environment and redesign of it are associated with Baudrillard's concept of simulation and simulacra that give the satisfactory explanation for the structure and restructure of the physical environment. Douglas Kellner says 'the role of style, aesthetics, and functionalism' is a sort of the 'triumph of signifying culture over nature that produces a new artificial environment and

evacuates the aesthetic dimension of any oppositional potential' (Kellner, 1989, p.77). In other words, the authenticity of the natural environment is replaced with its artificial one which has no signifier or no referential sign. According to Kellner, 'the society of simulations controls an individual's range of responses and options for choice and behavior', and the individuals need to behave within the framework of codes, messages and models in the realms economics, politics, culture, and everyday life' (Kellner, 1989, p.81). Don DeLillo in *Americana* (2006) addresses a simulated postmodern consumer society in which his character David Bell suffers from artificiality and inauthenticity of simulated America, and he is trying to find out the true meaning of life through his both physical and spiritual travel across the country.

'Men on small islands would do well to avoid the pursuit of philosophy. The island illusion that solitude and wisdom invented each other is a compelling one. Day by day I seem to grow more profound. Often I feel I am on the verge of some great philosophical discovery. Man. War. Truth. Time. Fortunately, I always return to myself. I look beyond the white lace of the surf to my unassembled past, and I decide to let others stitch together the systems. I enjoy the triteness of the situation, man an island, exile in the ultimate suburb. The surf is massing and rolling, uneven now, page after page of terrible wild words. All the colors borrow, sea from the beach from the sky, and after a while, I follow my footprints back to the house' (DeLillo, 2006, p.129).

Curtis Yehnert in his article 'Like Some Endless Sky Walking Inside: Subjectivity in DeLillo' states that David Bell, too, 'use the media to escape responsibility for their own lives, and he escapes from 'the mediated environment to flee their own inwardness' (Yehnert, 2001, p.359). David Bell uses the media to look back upon his past to remake his first-person consciousness and to recover his authentic self. Therefore, he is in search of wisdom and a more profound philosophical discovery to restore his state of good condition in recluse, in the island far away from home. With this rational discovery, David Bell would like to reflect his transformation into a wiser person who is much more enlightened and closer to his first-person singular identity.

Elise Martucci in *The Environmental Unconscious in the Fiction of Don DeLillo* says ‘David Bell’s dreams are manipulated by media images offering false promises of stability, prosperity, and happiness’ and he loses himself with the ‘image and likeness of the image’ (Martucci, 2012, p.41).

‘There were many visions in the land, all fragments of the exploded dream, and some of the darkest of these visions were those processed in triplicate by our generals and industrialists—the manganese empires, the super-sophisticated gunnery, the consortiums, and privileges. Something else was left over for the rest of us, or some of the rest of us, and it was the dream of the good life...But as a boy, and even later, quite a bit later, I believed all of it, the institutional messages, the psalms and placards, the pictures, the words...All the impulses of all the media were fed into the circuitry of my dreams. One thinks of echoes. One thinks of an image made in the image and likeness of images. It was that complex’ (DeLillo, 2012, p.130).

David Bell’s expectation for regeneration may be futile although there may be many visions in the land; his regeneration dreams are exploded, which is a great disappointment for him. A dream of the good life for Bell and other people is reinforced with the images, products, signs, and codes. However, Bell becomes aware of the fact that these advertising images and signs misleading, and this good life does not exist as a matter of fact. In this sense, *Americana*, for Elise Martucci, reflects ‘how consumerism is an extension of pastoral fantasies’, and media images capture the imagination and inform desires as traditional pastoral constructions do’ (Martucci, 2012, p.41). It is implied that the power of advertising is similar to the dream of American exploration and discovery of a new land so that you can leave the old self behind (Ibid). In this light, DeLillo argues that the postmodern media culture can be related to simple American construction. Martucci puts: ‘through David Bell’s journey across the country and his meditation on the environment of the image, DeLillo demonstrates how pastoral fantasies and postmodern advertisements each represent a willful ignorance of reality, where death and violence are present’ (Martucci, 2012, pp.42-3). David Bell is in fact in search for an idyllic America that never exists. Television as a strong medium displays a world full of products for people and fascinates people with these products. Although television screens the reality for people, the reality is produced from products, images, signs, and models,

which is resulted in as hyper-real. In the hyper-real world, the model or sign comes first, and its actual role is concealed from the postmodern consumer or from the spectacle. According to Kellner, 'the entire façade and ecosphere of neo-capitalist societies are hyper-real, in that more and more areas of social life are reproductions of models organized into a system of models and codes' (Kellner, 1989, p.83). In this hyper-real society, 'highway and urban freeway transportation systems', 'fashion', 'architecture', 'housing developments', 'shopping malls', 'media' and 'products' produce hyper- simulations for the masses. Media, especially television, is a strong 'medium' that produces hyperreality:

'The TV set is a package, and it's full of products. Inside are detergents, automobiles, cameras, breakfast cereal, other television sets. Programs are not interrupted by commercials; exactly the reverse is true. A television set is an electronic form of packaging. It's as simple as that. Without the products there's nothing. Educational television's a joke. Who in America would want to watch TV without commercials?' (DeLillo, 2006, p.270).

Television, with its commercials, has a tremendous impact on the viewer since it manipulates people and forces them change their lifestyle in such a way that they transform to the third person. In this postmodern consumer society, 'there is a universal third person. Since 'to consume in America is not to buy; it is to dream', and advertising suggests that 'the dream of entering the third person singular might be fulfilled' (DeLillo, 2006, p.270). Furthermore, television commercializes products and constitutes a new hyper-reality that is 'more real than real'. As there is nothing left behind the flow of codes, signs, and simulacra, people's thoughts and behaviors are defined within the framework of these codes, and models. Jean Baudrillard touches on 'the abyss of meaning' which emphasizes that the masses 'do resist the imperative of rational communication' since they desire spectacle, not meaning (1983). According to Baudrillard, messages are given to them, and they only want some sign, they idolize the play of signs and stereotypes, they idolize any content so long as it resolves itself into a spectacular sequence' (1983). In effect, this creates a 'superficial layer of the societies' and 'the masses living most of their times in panic or haphazardly, above and beyond any meaning' (Baudrillard, 1983, pp.10-11).

Jean Baudrillard says the silent majority is the only social referent because they do not have any representation, they do not express themselves and reflect on themselves, but they constitute a model as a representation. In other words, they do not have authority; they have withdrawn into their silence, they are no longer a 'subject' (Baudrillard, 1983, p.22). The mass – the silent majorities are transformed into 'the spectacle' fascinated by illusionary and representational identities.

'At Leighton Gage College I wanted to be known as Kinch. This is Stephen Daedalus' nickname in *Ulysses*, which I was reading at the time. But I soon learned that nobody at Leighton Gage had a nickname, except the most disparaging kind' (DeLillo, 2006, p.143).

David Bell tries to define who and what he is once he says he would like to be Stephen Daedalus, a protagonist in James Joyce *Ulysses* (1904) who is Joyce's alter ego. Rather than getting in touch with his self, Bell gets in touch with Burt Lancaster first and then with Stephen Daedalus self. Although David Bell hopes to discover his character to its fullest, he becomes busy with Stephen Daedalus character and tries to relate to him. His disillusionment with the world around him makes him discover new identities and self and adopt them. Furthermore, his disbelief in the unreality of his mental experience makes him fascinated by Burt Lancaster and Stephen Daedalus, and therefore, he grounds his self onto Lancaster and Daedalus. In this fashion, David Bell's story in DeLillo's *Americana* (2006) is similar to David's in Jack Kerouac's *On the Road* (2007), escapes from the middle-class American social conformity in search of an authentic American environment. In that sense, both *On the Road* (2007) and *Americana* (2006) seem to have some similar representations from James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1904). On the other hand, David Bell's story is inspired by Jean-Luc Godard's *À bout de souffle* (1960) that similarly records the traveling stories of a despair and criminal protagonist. Don DeLillo's postmodern protagonist struggles to respect his mental experience and selfhood in a culture increasingly hostile to individual thought and individual identity. Moreover, DeLillo maybe would like to show David Bell's self-limitations and self-transformation capacity in the postmodern consumer America where they shop therefore they are:

‘One of the important things money buys is speed. Speed and a glimpse of death. We drove sports cars and motorcycles in open competition, rode beach buggies over the desert, raced motorboats on the artificial lake near the campus. Several students owned planes and if you were friendly with one of them you could go up to L.A. for party weekends and on the return flight test your desire for an early poetic death. The force behind these activities was essentially spiritual. There were many injuries, several fatalities, and we reacted to these with professional dispassion. That's something money can't buy’ (DeLillo, 2006, pp.147-8).

It seems that physical activities, although they are bought or consumed with money, are done for ontological reasons. In other words, people are in search of their spiritual and meaningful existence since they know that media technologies trivialize or diminish their sense of self or identity. Therefore, they detach themselves from the consumerist and conformist physical activities in the physical environment. Maybe that's why they all have something we are trying to forget, and therefore, they set off on a journey across the country. The spiritual journey across the country means maybe David Bell's amnesia, his desire for loss of memory, and becoming anew, and his escaping from the vacuity of his third-person consciousness while he is in New York, and escaping from exploitation and destruction of postmodern American culture.

From another perspective of postmodern consumerist and conformist culture, David Bell would like to reflect his psychological and mental state by talking about the story of St. Dymphna who was born in Ireland and the only child of the pagan king of Oriel, and he goes on saying the following:

When her mother died, Dymphna's father decided to seek a second wife. Ultimately he concluded there was only one female worthy enough—his daughter. Dymphna, who had been baptized by a priest of the church, was fourteen years old. With all the persuasiveness he could muster, the king outlined his scheme to his trembling daughter. Dymphna sought safety in flight, settling finally in Belgium along with her confessor. Spies, however,

traced the exiles' route and it all ended when the king drew his sword and struck off the head of his only child. In time, many people with mental problems were cured due to the intercession of St. Dymphna, whose fame as the nervous breakdown saint gradually spread from Belgium to Ireland and thence to almost every corner of the globe' (DeLillo, 2006, pp.156-7).

David Bell, with St. Dymphna's story, criticizes the moral condition of the postmodern consumer society. On the surface, the story reflects an unacceptable father-daughter relationship; however, there is moral corruption, and there exist people who make use of it for their spiritual existence underneath. In other words, the story of St. Dymphna implies the fact that the postmodern consumer culture, at first, trivializes morally corrupted account and takes it as a cure their spiritual well-being, which means the masses in the postmodern consumer society struggle to find a cure or a solution for their problems in the mass-produced garbage. St. Dymphna's escape from his immoral father who insists on marrying to her own daughter becomes a sacred and healing story for people that do not take its immorality into their consideration. Don DeLillo, with this, emphasizes that the hollowness in people's being, and in David Bell's nature will not be filled with an escape from reality of world to a world of fantasy and dreams since the world of imagination and ideas have already been exploited and destructed by media technologies and their advertising bombardment. Moreover, DeLillo claims that the masses will not be able to turn from the third-person consciousness into first-person consciousness since the former is the person that people all want to be. As in the postmodern society, consumption becomes the networks of objects consume the center of life, all activities of people.

Jean Baudrillard explains his argument in *The Consumer Society* (1970; 2016) giving the wolf-child example, he says and 'a wolf-child becomes a wolf by living among them, so we are ourselves becoming functional objects. We are living the period of objects: that is, we live by their rhythm, according to their continuous succession' (Baudrillard, 2016, p.18). The relation between Baudrillard's argument about on the consumer society and St. Dymphna's incest story is that people – the masses commoditize St. Dymphna's story and make use of it for their benefits, and from this morally corrupted story, many people with mental problems were cured due to the intercession of St. Dymphna. However, like the masses, David Bell hopes for help

from her story. The story fascinates him and the notes on the primitive religions of the world is an alternative ground for his spiritual existence. 'All those magnificently people affected madness makes him feel small and well-dressed' (DeLillo, 2006, p.157). These religious notes and stories are alternatives to David's existential difficulties since electronic communication networks and media technologies trivialize his sense of self.

Another alternative argument for the trivialization of the sense of self by media is that American conformist and consumer culture empties the value for human life by exploiting and destroying the human individual and subject, and replaces it with the objectified and commoditized world of objects. Maybe, therefore, DeLillo's protagonist David Bell, like the masses in America, strives to value his mental experience and selfhood in a culture which is against the concept and the existence of subjective thought and identity. Maybe, therefore, as a psychological or spiritual journey, he drives to parts of the Southern and Midwestern United States, and then travels to North Africa in pursuit of magic:

'The more magical a race is,' my mother said, 'the less significant the individual is. Magic overwhelms everything. We in the West value human life almost desperately because we have no magic. 'God is magic,' Jane said... 'No. God is the opposite of magic...We all have magic in us, some more than others, but everything we've been taught tends to bury the magic' (DeLillo, 2006, pp.184-5).

David Bell's desire for an authentic experience and his passion and expectation for magic in the heartland far from home come from debilitation and suffering from the hyper-real productions of the media company. Consumption of commodities for Baudrillard in *The Consumer Society* (1970; 2016), refers to happiness, wealth, success, prestige, eroticism, modernity, and so on, and Baudrillard's description of the consumerism is a magical thought which reigns over-consumption, and this magical thought is also defined as a primitive mentality since it is a belief in the omnipotence of signs (Baudrillard, 2016, p.27). As David Bell says the more magical a race is, the less significant the individual is. Magic overwhelms everything. The magic in Baudrillardian respect reduces the individual to an insignificant level, and

an object. In other words, magic as a reference to the omnipotence of the signs overtakes everything and transform everything into an object.

Baudrillard, on the other hand, does not associate growth, progress and happiness with consumption; on the contrary, he emphasizes the opposite of these words on the subject of use. In this respect, he criticizes the traditional perspective which conceives consumption as the satisfaction of needs; instead, he addresses that needs are socially constructed. In other words, he means that consuming the magic does not bring happiness and fulfillment, but rather exploitation and destruction.

In order not be exploited and ruined, David Bell plans to make ‘a long messy autobiographical-type film, a long unmanageable movie full of fragments of everything that’s part of his life (DeLillo, 2006, p.205). Obsessed with framing his life as a movie, he and his ex-wife move through their life together as though Fellini is following them with a camera. With this, David Bell manifests his desire to turn his first-person consciousness from third-person singular. Seeking the foundational in self and culture, Bell is in pursuit of spiritual completeness in his mysterious and sacramental journey which, though, it started as an autobiographical-film making. With his desire for a religious journey in search of redemption or salvation for his suffering, David Bell emphasizes the nullity or emptiness of media technologies and the people’s mandatory exposure to these in their everyday lives:

‘Unable to sleep, I listened to the radio half the night, changing stations, countries, hemispheres, switching to shortwave and ships at sea, the whole nightworld scratching out there, entangled languages, voices in storms of passion and static, commercials, prayers, newscasts, poems, soccer riots, threats of death and war and revolution, laughter from the mountains and appeals to reason from the broad plains, demonstration in La Paz, landslide in Zurich, assassination in Dakar, fire in Melbourne, confusion in Toyko, tragedy in Athens. Then I heard a familiar voice’ (DeLillo, 2006, p.231).

Andrea Lombardinilo states in her article ‘The meta-language of an absent world’. Baudrillard, McLuhan and the media consumption’ that the informative consumption shaped by radio and newspapers change to the degree that electricity and digitalization modify the ratios between the sense and reality. Besides, the reality in the virtual environment demonstrates the power of the new electric devices since

they produce an experience of daily lives (Lombardinilo, 2017, p.45). David Bell's exposure to hot medium and cool medium in America explains the actual reason why he is in pursuit of his sense of self, and his first-person consciousness. While hot medium reinforces his passivity with its low participation, and overexposure, cool medium like television which uses low-definition and engages his several senses less completely in that it requires much more his interaction than the hot medium. Participation in the media reinforces the goal increases the effect of the media and its transformation and exploitation, of its participants – the spectacle, people, become the victim of the media and the means of media glorification. Media proves, spreads and increases its power with the participation of the masses, and the masses are trivialized, passivized, depersonalized and objectified, and they become the means of media hegemony. David Bell, in DeLillo's *Americana* (2006), does not prefer to participate in this process of trivialization of the media and would like set off on a sacred journey across the country, and escape from his postmodern suffering. His dreams represent his actual desire to get rid of his restlessness:

‘The bird is beginning to grimace inside the cuckoo clock. Quick—pray. Bow down to the god of your choice and pray for the end of yourself. Pray for new eyes and ears. Pray for shapes to change. Pray for fresh juice to take with you into your next climacteric. Pray for short and sunless winters. Pray for the Upper East Side, all those white tile buildings full of lonely girls quoting phony Persians to boys in love with jockstraps. Pray that we do not disappear O Lord into thy vastly impractical night mind...Pray for expressiveness, that we cast away these welder's masks we wear to hide our grief and joy’ (DeLillo, 2006, pp.233-4).

David Bell feels like ‘a million other people. Ten million. But inside (his) head the action is constant. He would like to slow it down by smoking grass, but unfortunately, he can't slow it anymore’ (DeLillo, 2006, p.252). In other words, Bell, not being able to find redemption, suppresses his suffering with some alternatives like smoking grass, as it numbs and anesthetizes him. Sullivan, Bell's friend, says ‘America can be saved only by what it's trying to destroy,’ (DeLillo, 2006, p.256). It represents that America is at the threshold of destruction; generally speaking, it destroys the authentic physical environment and replace it with simulations, second, the idea of consumerism is put forward, and the media technologies reinforces this

idea with advertising. As Marshall McLuhan states the power produces meaning politically, ideologically, culturally and sexually. He argues that the demand for more production of political, ideological, cultural and sexual meaning imploded the meaning. The meaning was left behind; all revolutionaries introduced and reinforced themselves with more and more production. Today, everything has changed: meaning is produced everywhere (McLuhan, 1983, p.27). The masses consume the meaning, however, do not reflect it, and they become the silent majorities. America, in that sense, can only be saved unless it destroys meaning, and unless it stops producing meaning for the masses. David Bell, therefore, tries to find the meaning - redemption with his sacramental journey across the country, and with his autobiographical film as they both make him reflect on his ontological existence in the postmodern consumer America. Wild, one of the members of the film-crew says:

‘...Too many people think automation is the answer to everything. This is a fallacy. I work with good men. They do their job, and they like what they’re doing, and they don’t ever squawk. Systems planning is the truly American art form. We excel at maintenance. ...A lot of countries can’t do that. ...There are three great economic powers in the world. America. Russia. And America in Europe. We have to show them where to put the nail. But the Russians still lag. They lag in industrial research, in computerization, in automated systems. They lag. We know how to plan things, like the overall corporate policy, like inventory management, like distribution, like site suitability. We’re experts in containerization, unit loads, electronic data processing, feasibility studies. We know how to zero in. What’s so terrible about that?’ (DeLillo, 2006, pp.264-5).

What Wild says supports Sullivan’s argument on American destruction. Wild and Sullivan glorify American automation or mass-production in other words. System planning, maintenance, production, management, and distribution are what America excels at. Furthermore, they champion America on containerization, unit loads, electronic data processing, and feasibility studies. In short, mass-production is exalted. This exaltation may also be ironic, and they express their disturbance with being the postmodern conformist and consumerist America. Marshall McLuhan addresses that mass-production produces the masses who do not choose, do not produce differences (McLuhan, 1983, p.35). America, with its mass-production,

becomes the hegemony on the screen of people's private life with media technologies, but there is no resistance from the masses to this hegemony. McLuhan says 'the masses do not at all constitute a passive receiving structure for media messages, whether they be political, cultural or advertising' (McLuhan, 1983, p.42). America reinforces its mass-production and consumption through the media – 'that is the media which envelops the masses'. For McLuhan, it is 'Mass (age) is the media. The masses are the mirror image of the media and the mirror image of American consumer culture. David Bell, too, is represented as a mirror image of media technologies, who tries hard to escape from with his journey across the country.

Don DeLillo's *Americana* (2006) criticizes the effect and the impact of media on people. By commercials and ads, for example, a consumer is created. The consumer actively involves and participates in these commercials and ads by buying. These commercials and ads produce new objects. Generating new objects mean making more 'sign value' and 'symbolic value'. The 'sign value' or 'symbolic value' is reinforced with these objects. It means their use value is emptied out. The object is presented and commercialized to the consumer with its 'sign value' or 'symbolic value', and the consumer identifies him/herself with its anti-image, and the consumer indulges in consuming the 'sign value' or 'symbolic value' of the object. This manipulation process brings his-her decadence in effect:

'The perfect example of the anti-image in advertising is the slice-of-life commercial. Some dialogue between dad and junior or between Madge and the members of the bridge club. Problem: Madge is suffering from irregularity. Solution: Drink this stuff, and the muses will squat. The rationale behind this kind of advertising is that the consumer will identify with Madge. This is a mistake. The consumer never identifies with the anti-image. He identifies only with the image. The Marlboro man. Frank Gifford and Bobby Hull in their Jantzen bathing suits. Slice-of-life commercials usually deal with the more depressing areas of life—odors, sores, old age, ugliness, pain. Fortunately, the image is big enough to absorb the anti-image. But the anti-image is being presented much too literally. The old themes. The stereotyped dialogue. It needs a touch of horror, some mad laughter from the graveyard. One of these days some smart copywriter will perceive the true inner mystery

of America and develop an offshoot of the slice-of-life. The slice-of-death' (DeLillo, 2006, pp.271-2).

Harry Phillips and Patricia Bostian emphasizes that the only text rather than images in advertisements reinforces the idea of selling the product (Phillips and Bostian, 2011, p.467). They argue that advertising today does not introduce a new product or describe an existing one's virtues. It has more related to images, dreams, and emotions which are fake at all (Ibid). Only text and no images in advertising or anti-image in other words, build up honesty and straight talk. David Bell would like to support the idea of anti-image by underestimating the actual commercials since they deal with 'the more depressing areas of life—odors, sores, old age, ugliness, pain' (2006). As an example, he gives 'The Marlboro man', since it is identified with the image. With his idea of anti-image, Bell stresses the hyper-real proliferation of the image and its boredom and exhaustion on himself.

The media exploits people's happiness and sorrow and empties the meaning out with the images. David Bell means to escape from this exploitation when he says the following:

'Do you have any particular ambition in life?'

'To get out of it alive' (DeLillo, 2006, p.286).

David Bell feels as if he is 'drifting downward into a coma, a sleep of no special terror and yet quite narrow and bottomless, and Little of himself seems to be left' (2006). Towards the end of *Americana* (2006), Bell turns to his consciousness which may be his redemption. His plan with the autobiographical film does not reflect what has been planned before: filming the authentic American heartland has resulted in the hollowness of his expectations for his plan and his sacramental journey across the country. On the other hand, he happens to reflect on his own life and understand irrelevance between his expectations for authentic America and actual America. He says:

'Our lives were the shortest distance between two points, birth, and chaos, but what appears on these pages represents, in its orderly proportions, almost a delivery from chaos. Too much has been forgotten in the name of memory' (DeLillo, 2006, p.345).

People's lives are between the birth and chaos which does not seem to offer any salvation for them. David Bell, in that sense, is represented as a 'product' out of this chaos. In the memory of history, societies and people, like Bell, in these societies have happened to experience incidents that have transformed themselves so far, but on the other hand, they are facing with much worse experiences than before which put them into a chaos, and this produces and reinforces their suffering and makes their salvation impossible.

While shooting his autobiographical film, David Bell comes across an American family who lives with the Indians, and Bell becomes interested in their lifestyle since he is in pursuit of the authentic. American family likes living there as 'there is a lot of love there, although it gets monotonous at times' (DeLillo, 2006, p.355). David Bell spends some time there to experience their authentic life, wants to be sure whether they are seriously happy or not, which is in fact what he is looking for. Although the Indians keep on living their ordinary authentic life, David wants to know whether they and the American family experience the real happiness that he has been looking for up to now. Rather than working for the death machine, American family prefers to live a simulated authentic life with the Indians:

'Anything's better than working for the death machine. We all try to dress the same way here. Simple and beautiful. But it's not like uniforms. It's just part of the single consciousness of the community. It's like everybody is you and you are everybody. Sex is mostly auto. You can watch someone doing something for himself or herself and then they can watch you do it. It's better that way because it's purer and it's all one thing, and you can do it ...'
(DeLillo, 2006, p.356).

Although American family living with the Indians seems to adopt their lifestyle, it looks more hyper-real to David Bell since the family does not approve the Indians' way of living, but adapt themselves to their routines. In other words, the American family, escaped from materials and products, pursue a hyper-real Indian life instead of an original and authentic Indian life. They all try to dress the same way there to feel their participation in the Indian community. They also live a simple and beautiful life; they do not have many materials and objects; they work for their basic

daily needs rather than working for the death machine; they are satisfied and happy there since they do not kill themselves for America's death machine.

'What they don't realize is that we're much more conservative than they are. This is a very conservative settlement. We want to cleave to the old things. The land. The customs. The words. The ideas. Unfortunately, wilderness will soon be nothing but a memory. Then the saucers will land, and our children will be forced to embrace the new technology. If they're not prepared, if we don't prepare them, there'll be an awful lot of confusion. We have to learn to accept the facts of technology without the emotion it engenders, the death impulse.... Big government beeps out everything in the end' (DeLillo, 2006, p.358).

Living there with the Indians means an alternative way of living for the people who are exploited in consumer culture. However, people's perceptions of social existence are different from those of Indians. Rather than Indians, people in the American consumer society are obsessed with their possessions, land, the customs, words and ideas, and socially constructed concepts and understandings. Furthermore, people need to be always ready for the new trends such as new technology. It means to be still busy with the necessities of the physical environment in order not to be forgotten in the memory of history.

In short, DeLillo's *Americana* (2006) emphasizes that people should not transform themselves for the benefits of the social. 'If they let themselves be what they want to be, physically and spiritually, they can kill a lot of the dead inside them' (DeLillo, 2006, p.360). Although this glorifies the human free will on doing whatever they want physically and spiritually, it does not seem possible since the postmodern consumer environment does not allow for that since it engulfs and envelops people with its media technologies. David's withdrawal to a remote island escaping from the American consumer society manifest his insistence on the first-person consciousness rather than universal third-person singular. David Bell's displays his 'willingness to deal with the complexities of truth, he sees himself as the most successful person; however, he ends in silence and darkness, sitting still, a maker of objects that imitates his predilection' (DeLillo, 2006, p.347). His silence and darkness are regarded as a representation of the impact of media technologies on his

consciousness. His preference to go beyond the third-person singular has resulted in his failure. David Bell cannot reach redemption in the media-saturated America because he already feels exploited and tired. His distancing from media-saturated society, and his setting off for the authentic heartland of America has resulted in his disappointment. He understands his individuality is a product in a world consumed by cinematic, capitalist and consumerist representations. Bell's quest for authenticity and purity makes him realize that he is, in fact, a consumer product. For Mark Osteen (1996), this is David Bell's 'unveiling movement from 'mystification to enlightenment and revelation' (Osteen, 1996). David Bell reveals that his withdrawal is unsatisfactory. He concludes that 'there is no such place' any longer.

In that sense, 'postmodernity, as Kellner echoes Baudrillard, is known by its implosion of meaning, reproduction of models of the hyper-real, acceleration of inertia and the implosion of the mass in a dark hole of nihilism and meaninglessness' (Kellner, 1989, p.118). His nihilist future is not full of joy, energy, and hope. David Bell is a nihilist who acts against to the unendurable limit of hegemonic systems. However, it is the system's itself, which negates previous values and destroys the meaning. Therefore, David Bell, in this self-annihilating system, will not possibly attain any salvation.

5. CONCLUSION

‘A young writer sees that with words and sentences on a piece of paper that costs less than a penny he can place himself more clearly in the world. Words on the page, that’s all it takes to help him separate himself from the forces around him, streets and people and pressures and feelings’ as Don DeLillo says in an interview for Paris Review (2017, 2). Don DeLillo writes and manifests his escape from the outside forces through his fictions. DeLillo sounds that he distances himself from the postmodern American society. However, it is, from the perspective of an outsider, his works which offer a critique of the society and the critique of the subject. It shows, besides, a fiction writer’s discipline and control, his exercise on bending the language in his way and bending the world in his way.

In a sense, Don DeLillo, in his novels, ‘controls the flow of impulses, images, words, faces, and ideas’, and he feels uncomfortable, and he wants to ‘let go to a higher place, a secret aspiration’ (2017). Like Stephen Daedalus in James Joyce’s *The Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, Don DeLillo and some of the characters in his novels such as Bucky Wunderlick in *Great Jones Street* (1998) and David Bell in *Americana* (2006) trace a religious and intellectual awakening by both distancing themselves from the society and taking a sacramental journey across the country. DeLillo tries to find a way for Jack Gladney, Bucky Wunderlick and David Bell’s escape from the impending death or the end of the subject brought about by the media-saturated American society.

To where can one escape from the artificiality, superficiality and hyperreality of American society? First of all, the Gladneys in *White Noise* (1986) escapes to supermarkets where they feel ‘the sense of well-being, the security, and contentment’, and the Gladneys seem that they ‘achieve a full of being’ (DeLillo, 1986, p.20). This is consumption and destruction their own life. The need keeps the members of consumer society in motion and alive as they do not prefer to delay their instant gratification. In the consumer society, Bauman says there is ‘delay of

gratification', but 'ever-rising demand' (Bauman, 2001, p.13). Since the nature of consumption changes from 'satisfying needs' to 'satisfying desires' and 'wish', this insatiable satisfaction will eventually consume and end the subject. The ever-rising demand and competition for its gratification bring the end of postmodern subject. In other words, 'the consuming desire of consuming' leads to the annihilation and destruction of the subject (Ibid).

Postmodern people's consumption habits are liquidized. The history of consumerism starts with the products for the solid needs of people which refers the satisfaction of their basic or daily needs, but in time, the solidity of the needs is discarded and replaced with liquidity of desires and wish, and it is now difficult for people to fulfil their desires and wish since they are constantly produced and reproduced day by day. People's consuming desire of consuming in the postmodern consumer social foreshadows their closed end. For example, Jack Gladney and his family are exposed to television and its contents such as advertisements, images, and signs in these advertisements. They will inevitably face their self-destruction and end since they forget their individuality through these contents, and they are transformed into objects. This is, for Baudrillard, the emptiness of the existence of individuality and neutralization of the social and social relations that media, all media, information, all information produce. If the media and information destroy the social, the social becomes empty', and the social will consist of the nullified individuals –masses (Baudrillard, 1983, p.66). The media fascinate the individuals through its contents. The individuals participate in the consumption of these contents, and the more they consume, the more it becomes difficult to satisfy their desires and wish. Then, they forget their individuality and transform into objects which desire more objects.

Television, interviews, and movies produce real and extra real, or hyperreal, and there is too much of it, and this will place people into obscenity and porn (Baudrillard, 1983, p.84). Too much information and meaning on television disguise and distort the fundamental reality, and create a hyperreality which has no reference to any truth. The hyperreality fascinates the Gladneys, and their excessive indulgence in this hyperreal world inevitably brings their corruption and end.

Another escape is Bucky Wunderlick's in *Great Jones Street* (1998). As a rock and roll star, dissatisfied with a life full of fame and fortune, Buck Wunderlick suddenly decides his voluntary recluse from the American society in his unfurnished apartment in New York. Wunderlick's exit is his escape from the *pandemonium* and from the idea of becoming a commodity in the American society. The requirements of being famous are; 'the excess', 'a devouring neon', 'outrage', 'hysteria in limousines', hysteria in the frenzy crowds, 'knife fights in the audience', 'bizarre litigation', 'treachery', 'drugs' and '*pandemonium*' (DeLillo, 1998, p.3). Buck Wunderlick, tired of these requirements of becoming famous, prefers his voluntary isolation from the American consumer society since he is also tired of the masses' crave for his image rather than his music. Wunderlick's escape from the reality of his turning into a commodity to the apartment in New York is a desperate privatism as his seclusion is transformed into a product by his frenzy fans and his manager Globke.

Not as a rock and roll star, but as an image or sign of a famous star, Globke takes the fans pulse taking his isolation as an advantage, and keeps Wunderlick's popularity among the fans by catching up with some rumors about his separation. These rumors transform Wunderlick into a product, and the product is evaluated by its symbolic or sign value rather than its use-value. Rather than appreciating his music as an art form, the frenzy crowds kill themselves for the name or image of Bucky Wunderlick. Bucky Wunderlick is turned into a commodity fetish by the masses. Being tired of 'contractual matters', 'studio dates', 'recording commitments', 'road arrangements', 'bookings', 'interviews', 'press parties' and 'release dates', Buck Wunderlick's voluntary escape does not bring any redemption or salvation, but his end. He is exploited both by the frenzy fans and the manufacturer, the manager Globke. Although Wunderlick, in his apartment in Great Jones Street, pursues his loneliness to become 'a half-saint', he finds himself in the middle of the music market and market economy.

Bucky Wunderlick's preference of stillness, silence or oblivion is destroyed both by the fans and the authority in the music market. He eventually understands the impossibility of his isolation and escape from both American society, the music market and market economy. Wunderlick cannot put an alternative to the market economy so that he surrenders and lets his commodification in his apartment in New

York, allowing Happy Valley Farm Commune, 'a violent cultlike group, give him a 'silence-inducing' drug that 'attacks the speech-forming areas in the brain' (DeLillo,1998).

Bucky Wunderlick accepts his passivity and commodification in the consumer American society. This passivity of Wunderlick proves that he is a cheaper alienated commodity in the consumer society. He becomes less active and more contemplative in his apartment. Wunderlick is a human-machine. He is not a productive force any longer, rather he performs his consumer role in his society. His image is objectified and commoditized by the masses and the authorities of the market economy. Therefore, Wunderlick's condition is an intentionally planned escape to silence and oblivion which becomes self-destruction and self-annihilation.

The last escape resulted in self-destruction is David Bell in Don DeLillo's *Americana* (2006), which tells a story of a 28-year-old successful TV executive who is in pursuit of a sanitarium to cure his postmodern suffering across America. David Bell's sudden leave from New York into the mid-west of America in search of authenticity and uniqueness, and also of the quest of his soul for meaning eventually becomes unsuccessful. Bell understands that media and their contents have already captured American society. Artificiality and superficiality of the physical environment are supported employing mass media, and this creates people who live in the third-person consciousness rather than the first-person. As his professional and social situations display a hyper-real saturation of the media, Bell, thanks to his enlightenment about the realities of American society, escape from this in pursuit of happiness and salvation

Satisfied with his physical needs and professional success, David Bell is in search of his authentic self, and this journey across the country gives him an opportunity to compare and better understand the American reality that he has left behind. The dominance of the media and consumerism surpass the masses and expand their power with their proliferation of images, signs, codes, and models. David Bell sees that media and through its contents, consumerism have already enveloped the whole America, and the masses are experiencing the hyper-reality of America that has been coming out of the media. Bell who already has the experience of New York insanity and violence, image, sign, model and code bombardments, therefore escapes from

the American *pandemonium* in pursuit of a sanitarium across the country both in the Midwest and among native Indians. However, Bell, for Elise Martucci, is 'manipulated by media images offering false promises of stability, prosperity, and happiness' (Martucci, 2012, p.41). Bell's expectation for regeneration in the American sanitarium becomes futile, and his regeneration dreams are exploded, and it disappoints him. His plan to film the lives of ordinary people in small towns and to contact with authentic people and their real hearts, like Indians, make him conclude that there is no authenticity and true heart across the country, and postmodern American society has almost reached to its end, David Bell never attains his salvation.

Don DeLillo's characters, Jack Gladney, Buck Wunderlick and David Bell becomes 'Somebody' rather than 'Nobody' as Emily Dickinson means in her poem 'I am Nobody? Who are you?' (Dickinson, 1891; 2018). For Dickinson, 'Somebody' is everybody and the masses, and 'Nobody' is a person who keeps his/her individuality and subjectivity. From the modern eye, Emily Dickinson becomes 'Nobody' by shutting herself down in her house. In other words, she voluntarily likes to keep her authenticity and authentic self by distancing herself physically and mentally from the social expectations of the 19th century America. She does not prefer to be 'Somebody'. With this, she means she strongly rejects to be depersonalized, passivized and commoditized in 19th American society within the social and religious frameworks of the period. Rather, she insists on her *Nobody-ness* – her individuality and uniqueness in her own house and her individual space. In addition, with a 'Frog' in the 'bog', in her poem, Dickinson may be satirizing the people who struggle, challenge and long for their recognition in the media-saturated hyperreal society. This may be, in the contemporary sense, the movie stars, athletes, politicians, lawyers, and others who desires to be on television.

The individual subject should insist embracing on his/her individuality and authentic self by not involving and participating in the circle of consuming in contemporary America. S/he should declare, as Emily Dickinson does, on his/her '*Nobody-ness*' rather than '*Somebody-ness*', not in the postmodern 'bog', not like 'a frog', but like an individual subject. Rather than performing socially deformed and devalued practices, the subject should pursue more authentic, original and individual values in the contemporary consumer society. Bucky Wunderlick in *Great Jones Street* (1998)

suggests ‘silence endowed with acoustical properties’ for the postmodern subject as a solution for his suffering. Wunderlick’s hit song ‘Pee-Pee-Maw-Maw’ suggest the idea that ‘Least is best’, Nil nully void’ (DeLillo, 1998, p. 118). For Peter Boxall, this reflects Samuel Beckett’s idea that he mentions in *Wostward Ho* (1983); ‘Less best worse. No. Least best worst. Least never to be naught. Never to be brought. Never by naught be nulled’ (Boxall, 2008). Although it is ‘impossible to withdraw’ from the objects of consumption and commodification of the market economy, both Wunderlick’s lyrics and Beckett’s words simply suggest a less participation in the practices of the consumer society such as shopping. Less involvement in the consumer society is also a reaction against the ‘repression of individual and public freedom’ as John N. Duvall claims (2008, p.1). With his novels, DeLillo maybe would like to warn us against ‘the culture of entertainment and media that we consume and that consumes us’ as Tom LeClair claims (2003). DeLillo, by Jack Gladney, says that he ‘feels sad for people and the queer part that we, all, play in our own disasters’ (Ibid).

To finalize my dissertation, it is examined and argued that people’s active participation in the consumption accelerates the disastrous future, and the ‘fullness of being’ that comes from consumption offer no real protection to anyone’ as Stacey Olster claims (2008, p.88). Everything in the contemporary consumer society should be judged by their freedom consequences. For Karl Marx, humanity should leap from the realm of necessity into the freedom since the necessities limits people to pursue a social, cultural and economic rationality. For Marcuse, ‘the structure of human existence would be altered, and liberated from the work world’s false needs and false possibilities’. Then the individual would be free to exert autonomy over a life that would be his own...This goal within advanced industrial civilization means the ‘end’ of technological rationality’ (1994, p.2). The Gladneys’ sense of freedom in *White Noise* (1986) is ‘shopping for its own sake’, and the drug, Dylarama. Both, for them, distance the existence of death from their mind and lives, but bring emptiness and numbness to their mind and lives that will never be filled in. Both Bucky Wunderlick in *Great Jones Street* (1998) and David Bell in *Ameriana* (2006) know the existence of the ‘false needs’ and ‘false possibilities’ in their lives. Therefore, they decide to alter their lives by liberating from these ‘false needs’ which are defined by technological rationality. Wunderlick’s recluse, and Bell’s spiritual pilgrimage are in

fact their escape from the media and consumption rationality so that they will be 'free to exert their autonomy' over their lives. However, both are resulted in despair and destruction.

Contemporary America, as it is in T.S. Eliot's 'Waste Land' (1922), is an 'unreal city, under the brown fog of a winter dawn' where people like Jack Gladney, Bucky Wunderlick and David Bell are suffocating every day and that is why, they are in pursuit of a safe and secure environment where they can rehabilitate themselves. However, Don DeLillo emphasizes that the media have surrounded contemporary America with its contents to such an extent that it is no longer possible to escape from this bombardment of the images and signs and the hyper-reality that this created. In other words, the *manna* has already been lost; the Gladneys' sacred supermarkets, Wunderlick's apartment in New York, and Bell's spiritual journey across America does not bring the *manna* to their lives. Don DeLillo eventually addresses that the subject is consumed. It is now impossible for the subject to quit the world of consumption and get away from the entrapment of media and its contents.

REFERENCES

- Aeron, D.** (1991). 'How to Read Don DeLillo', *Introducing Don DeLillo*, Frank Lentricchia, Duke University Press, Durham, p. 73
- Adorno, T.W.** (2005). *The culture industry: Selected essays on mass culture*. Routledge.
- Artz, L. & Kamalipour, Y.R. (eds).** (2012). *Globalization of Corporate Media Hegemony, The: Evaluating California's Imprisonment Crisis*. SUNY Press.
- Bachner, S.** (2011). *The prestige of violence: American fiction, 1962-2007*. University of Georgia Press.
- Baudrillard, J.** (1990). *Fatal Strategies*, trans. Philip Beitchman and WGJ Niesluchowski.
- Baudrillard, J.** (2016). *The Consumer Society: Myths and structures*. Sage.
- Baudrillard, J.** (2016). *Symbolic exchange and death*. Sage.
- Baudrillard, J.** (1994). *Simulacra and simulation*. University of Michigan Press.
- Baudrillard, J.** (2001). *Impossible exchange*. Verso.
- Baudrillard, J.** (1983). In the Shadow of the Silent Majorities... or the End of the Social, and Other Essays, translated by Paul Foss, Paul Patton, and John Johnston. *New York: Semiotext (e)*.
- Baudrillard, J. & Foss, P.** (1983). *Simulations*. York: Semiotext (e).
- Baudrillard, J.** (1988). *America*. 1986. *Trans. Chris Turner*. New York: Verso.
- Baudrillard, J. & Levin, C.** (1981). *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign* (Vol. 262). St. Louis: Telos Press.
- Baudrillard, J.** (1990). *Seduction*, trans. Brian Singer. New York: St. Martin's Press, p. 31.
- Baudrillard, J.** (1988). *Jean Baudrillard: selected writings*, edited by Mark Poster. Cambridge and Stanford Polity and Stanford University Press, UK.
- Baudrillard, J.** (2000). *The vital illusion*. Columbia University Press.
- Baudrillard, J. & Foss, P.** (1983). *Simulations*. New York: Semiotext (e).
- Baudrillard, J. & Poster, M.** (1975). *The mirror of production*. St. Louis: Telos Press.
- Bauman, Z.** (2000). *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge, UK, Polity Press.
- Bauman, Z.** (2001). Consuming life. *Journal of consumer culture*,
- Bauman, Z.** (1999). 'The self in a consumer society'. *The Hedgehog Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, pp. 35-40.
- Beckett, S.** (1983). *Worstward ho, Nowhow*. On London: John Calder.
- Berman, M.** (1983). *All that is solid melts into air: The experience of modernity*. Verso.
- Best, S. & Kellner, D.** (1991). *Postmodern theory: Critical Interrogations*. Guilford Press.

- Bloom, H. (ed).** (2003). *Don DeLillo's White Noise*. Infobase Publishing.
- Boxall, P.** (2008). *Don DeLillo and media culture*. Cambridge University Press.
- Cowart, D.** (1996). 'For Whom Bell Tolls: Don DeLillo's Americana'. *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 37 no. 4, pp. 602-619.
- Cox, J.** (1998). 'An introduction to Marx's theory of alienation'. *International Socialism*.
- Debord, G.** (2012). *Society of the Spectacle*. Bread and Circuses Publishing.
- DeCurtis, A.** (1991). 'An Outsider in This Society: An Interview with Don DeLillo', *Introducing Don DeLillo*, Frank Lentricchia, Duke University Press, Durham, p. 58
- DeCurtis, A.** (1990). 'The Product: Bucky Wunderlick, Rock 'n Roll, and Don DeLillo's Great Jones Street,' *Introducing Don DeLillo*, Frank Lentricchia, Duke University Press, Durham, pp. 131-141
- DeLillo, D.** (1986). *White Noise*. Penguin.
- DeLillo, D.** (1998). *Great Jones Street*. Picador.
- DeLillo, D.** (2006). *Americana*. Penguin Modern Classics.
- DeLillo, D.** (1993). 'Don DeLillo: The Art of Fiction No. 135'. Interview by Adam Begley. *Paris Review*, 128.
- Dewey, J.** (2006). *Beyond Grief and Nothing: A Reading of Don DeLillo*. University of South Carolina Press.
- Dickinson, E.** (2018). I'm Nobody! Who are you? (260). [online] I'm Nobody! Who are you? (260). Available at: <https://www.poets.org/poetsorg/poem/im-nobody-who-are-you-260> [Accessed 31 Mar. 2018].
- Duvall, J. N.** (2008). *The Cambridge Companion to Don DeLillo*. Cambridge University Press.
- Duvall, J. N.** (1994). 'The (super) marketplace of images: Television as unmediated mediation in DeLillo's White Noise'. *Arizona Quarterly: A Journal of American literature, culture, and theory*, vol. 50, no. 3, pp.127-153.
- Eliot, T.S.** (1943). Thomas Stearns. *Four quartets*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.
- Eliot, T.S.** (1992; 2010). Thomas Stearns. *The waste land and other poems*. Broadview Press, 2010.
- Ewen, S. & Ewen, E.** (1992). *Channels of Desire: Mass images and the shaping of American consciousness*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Gilson, E.** (2018). 'The Real and the Reel: Mass Media, Technology and the American heartland in Don DeLillo's Americana'. [online] Academia.edu. Available at: [Technology and the American heartland in Don DeLillo's Americana](https://www.academia.edu/38111111/Technology_and_the_American_heartland_in_Don_DeLillo's_Americana) [Accessed 31 Mar. 2018].
- Featherstone, M.** (2007). *Consumer culture and postmodernism*. Sage.
- Frow, J.** (1991). 'The Last Things Before the Last: Notes on White Noise,' *Introducing DeLillo*. Don, Frank Lentricchia, Duke University Press, Durham, pp. 175-191.
- Gramsci, A. Hoare, Q. & Nowell-Smith, G.** (1971). Selections from the prison notebooks of Antonio Gramsci.
- Hall, S.** (1977). *Culture, the media, and the ideological effect*. Arnold.

- Harvey, D.** (1990). *The condition of postmodernity: An enquiry into the conditions of cultural change*. Blackwell.
- Historic England.** (2018). *From Bethlehem to Bedlam - England's First Mental Institution*. [online] Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/inclusive-heritage/disability-history/1050-1485/from-Bethlehem-to-Bedlam/> [Accessed 30 Mar. 2018].
- Jameson, F.** (1991). *Postmodernism, or, the cultural logic of late capitalism*. Duke University Press.
- Joyce, J.** (2017). *Ulysses*. Jovian Press.
- Joyce, J.** (1975) *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*. Penguin Books.
- Jung, C.G.** (2014). *Modern man in search of a soul*. Routledge.
- Kavadlo, J.** (2004). *Don DeLillo: Balance at the Edge of Belief*. Peter Lang Pub Incorporated.
- Kellner, D.** (1996). Baudrillard: A New McLuhan? Illuminations: The Critical Theory Project.
- Kellner, D.** (1989). 'Boundaries and borderlines: Reflections on Jean Baudrillard and critical theory'. *Current Perspectives in Social Theory*, vol. 9 no.1 pp. 5-22.
- Kellner, D.** (1989). *Jean Baudrillard: From Marxism to postmodernism and beyond*. Stanford University Press.
- Kellner, D.** (2003). Jean Baudrillard. *The Blackwell companion to major contemporary social theorists*, pp. 310-331.
- Keeseey, D.** (1993). *Don DeLillo*. Twayne Pub.
- Kerouac, J.** (2007). *On the road: the original scroll*. Penguin.
- Kirkby, J.** (1990). 'The noble savage as the continent: a review of Jean Baudrillard's America'. *Australasian Journal of American Studies* Vol. 9, No. 1 pp. 70-74.
- Knight, P.** (2008). 'DeLillo, postmodernism, postmodernity', *The Cambridge Companion to Don DeLillo*, pp. 27-40.
- Koch, A.M. & Elmore, R.** (2006). 'Simulation and Symbolic Exchange: Jean Baudrillard's Augmentation of Marx's Theory of Value'. *Politics & Policy*, vol. 34 no. 3, pp. 556-575.
- Kroker, A. & Cook, D.** (1990). The postmodern scene. *Philosophy and Literature*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 239-247.
- Laist, R.** (2008). 'Oedison Rex: The Art of Media Metaphor in Don DeLillo's Americana' *Modern Language Studies*, pp.50-63.
- Laist, R.** (2009). *American environments: Technology and subjectivity in the novels of Don DeLillo*. The University of Connecticut.
- LeClair, T.** (1987). *In the loop: Don DeLillo and the systems novel*. The University of Illinois Press.
- Lentricchia, F.** (1991) 'The American Writer as Bad Citizen,' *Introducing Don DeLillo*, Frank Lentricchia, Duke University Press, Durham, pp. 1-6
- Lentricchia, F.** (1991). *Tales of the Electronic Tribe*. Cambridge University Press.
- Little, W.G.** (2002). *The Waste Fix: Seizures of the Sacred from Upton Sinclair to The Sopranos*. Psychology Press.

- Lombardinilo, A.** (2017) 'The meta-language of an absent world. Baudrillard, McLuhan and the media consumption'. *Mediascapes journal*, vol. 9, pp. 43-55.
- Logan, R.K.** (2010). *Understanding new media: extending Marshall McLuhan*. Peter Lang.
- Lukács, G.** (1971). *History and class consciousness: Studies in Marxist dialectics* R. Livingstone, Trans. London: Merlin.
- Lyotard, J.F.** (1984). *The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*. University of Minnesota Press.
- Marcuse, H.** (1991). *One-dimensional man: studies in the ideology of advanced industrial society*. Boston, Beacon Press.
- Martucci, E.** (2012). *The environmental unconscious in the fiction of Don DeLillo*. Routledge.
- Marx, K. & Engels, F.** (1967). *The Communist Manifesto*. 1848. Trans. Samuel Moore. London: Penguin.
- Marx, K.** (1975). *Economic & philosophical manuscripts of 1844*.
- Marx, K. & Bottomore, T.B.** (1964). *Early writings: Translated and edited by TB Bottomore. Foreword by Erich Fromm*. McGraw-Hill.
- Marx, K.** (1867). Capital, volume I.
- McClure, J. A.** (1991). 'Postmodern Romance: Don DeLillo and the Age of Conspiracy,' *Introducing Don DeLillo*, Frank Lentricchia, Duke University Press, pp. 99-117
- McLuhan, H.M.** (2010). *Understanding Me: Lectures and interviews*. McClelland & Stewart.
- McLuhan, M. & Fiore, Q.** (1967). 'The medium is the message'. New York, 123, pp.126-128.
- McLuhan, M.** (1994). *Understanding media: The extensions of man*. MIT press.
- McLuhan, M.** (2011). *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The making of typographic man*. University of Toronto Press.
- McLuhan, M. & Powers, B.R.** (1989). *The global village: Transformations in world life and media in the 21st century*. Oxford University Press, USA.
- McLuhan, E. & Zingrone, F.** (1997). *Essential McLuhan*. Routledge.
- McQuail, D.** (2010). *McQuail's mass communication theory*. Sage publications.
- Nel, Philip.** (2008). *Don DeLillo and media culture*. Cambridge University Press.
- Osteen, M.** (2008). 'DeLillo's Daedalian artists'. Cambridge University Press, pp. 137-50
- Osteen, M.** (1996). 'Children of Godard and Coca-Cola: cinema and consumerism in Don DeLillo's early fiction'. *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 37, no. 3, pp. 439-470.
- Olster, S.** (2008). 'White Noise'. *The Cambridge Companion to Don DeLillo*, pp. 79-93.
- Palese, E.** (2013) 'Zygmunt Bauman. Individual and society in the liquid modernity'. *SpringerPlus*, vol. 2, no.1, p.191.
- Pascal, B.** (1966) *Pensées*, Vol. II, trans. A.J. Krailsheimer. Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Petit, P.** (1998). *Paroxysm*. New York: New Left Books.

- Phillips, H. & Bostian, P.** (2011). *The purposeful argument: A practical guide*. Cengage Learning.
- Southern, D. (ed).** (2011). *Encyclopedia of consumer culture*. Sage Publications.
- Schussler, A.** (2013) 'Pornography and Postmodernism'. *Postmodern Openings/Deschideri Postmoderne*, vol. 4, no. 3.
- Veggian, H.** (2014). *Understanding Don DeLillo*. University of South Carolina Press.
- Wilcox, L.** (1991) 'Baudrillard, DeLillo's *White Noise*, and the End of Heroic Narrative'. *Contemporary Literature*, vol. 32, no. 3, p.97
- Williams, R.** (2014). *Keywords: A vocabulary of culture and society*. Oxford University Press.
- Yeats, W. B.** (1994) '*Michael Robartes and the Dancer*' *Manuscript Materials*. Thomas Parkinson and Anne Brannen, eds. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Yehnert, C. A.** (2001) 'Like Some Endless Sky Waking Inside: Subjectivity in Don DeLillo'. *Critique: Studies in Contemporary Fiction*, vol. 42, no. 4, pp. 357-366.



RESUME

Name Surname: Muhsin Yanar

Place and Date of Birth: Tokat – 10.07.1984

E-Mail: muhsinyanar@sabanciuniv.edu

EDUCATION:

- **Bachelor:** 2006, Çanakkale 18 Mart University, Faculty of Sciences and Letters, English Language and Literature
- **Master:** 2013, İstanbul Aydın University, Institute of Social Sciences, English Language and Literature Program

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE AND REWARDS

Lecturer	Sabanci University	2017 – ongoing
Lecturer	Piri Reis University	2011 – 2017
Lecturer	Beykent University	2010 – 2011
Lecturer	İstanbul Aydın University	2008 – 2010
Lecturer	Alfred University Istanbul Campus	2007 – 2008

PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS ON THE THESIS:

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS AND PATENTS:

Yanar, M., (2013). ‘The Effects of Mass Media Tools on Speaking Skills in Teaching Maritime English’. *International Maritime English Conference, IMEC 25*, pp. 166-174

Yanar, M. & Tütüniş, B., (2016). ‘The impact of Mass Media Tools on EFL Students’ Speaking Skills. *International Online Journal of Education and Teaching*, vol 3, no 1, pp. 2-24

Yanar, M. (2008). ‘Deli Evliliği.’ *adımİZİ*, vol. 1

Yanar, M. (2007). ‘Deli Evliliği’. *Trendsetter*, vol. 6, no. 67

Yanar, M. (2007). ‘Üç Dinler Bir Söyler Ayna’ *Trendsetter*, vol. 6, no. 62.

Yanar, M. (2007). ‘Zeus Sevişir Bizi Afrodit’inde’ *Trendsetter*. vol. 6, no. 67

