

## Characteristics of postmodern literature: Playfulness, Fragmentation, Metafiction, Intertextuality in literary works of Thomas Pynchon and Ulug'bek Hamdam

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**Abstract:** *This article gives a brief preview of the topic of postmodern literatures, and the aspects of playful, fragmented, metafictional, and intertextual writing. They are expounded in the lecture that analyses Thomas Pynchon's works and the work of Uzbek writer Ulugbek Hamdam. It is using playfulness, fragmentation, metafiction, and intertextuality and generally, it affirms the verbal and visual simulation of culture and its codes. While doing so, however, they are guided by different cultural and, in a way, narrative premises; at the same time, Thomas Pynchon and Ulug'bek Hamdam exhibit similar features in their books.*

**Key words:** *postmodern literature, playfulness, fragmentation, metafiction, and intertextuality, Thomas Pynchon and Ulug'bek Hamdam, literary, historical, cultural, Uzbek and influenced by Soviet/post-Soviet realities, American culture, technology, and history, particularly the Cold War era.*

### Introduction.

In this paper that Thomas Pynchon and Ulug'bek Hamdam employ such features of postmodern literature as playfulness, fragmentation, metafiction and intertextuality. Comprehending the Features Let's first briefly review what we mean by these terms: Playfulness: Dislike of dark, serious, realistic storytelling; often employing sarcasm, irony, parody, and the world of the absurd. It is such fun that involves playing with the stories and words. It's much like a cinematographic narrative where the story is was portrayed in an unconnected manner, that is, fragmentation. Such practices include temporal shifts, fluctuation of narrators and the focus on multiple, and potentially, immoral narrators. The writing that can be described as self-reflexively coming to the reader with the specification that it is fiction is called metafiction. This might include characters being willing to say outright that they are characters in a fiction, the author approaching the reader directly in the text, or the text stepping back and actually discussing the book. When the author employs one text within another which deliberate citations, references or allusions of other literary, historical or cultural text within it, then it is a case of intertextuality. This strengthens meaning and often poses challenges to concepts like originality through linking up a network of relations between works. Pynchon, Thomas Pynchon indisputably is one of the most famous and challenging writers in postmodern literature. His writings are famous for their extensive use of the qualities we've covered, and they are thick and expansive: Playfulness: In Pynchon there is the sense of Coney Island, the run, the elan, the t's and the frenzy, almost barbaric at times. He uses comedy such as amusing situations, comic aspects of ridicule, and out of vanity of characters. Consider Gravity's Rainbow's paranoid fantasies, Vineland's slapstick humour and The Crying of Lot 49's inventions and conspiracies alike. I find it very entertaining to read him and at the same time rather sharp academically because he uses many homographic words, play on words and switches the tone abruptly.

## Materials.

Disarray: The stories by Pynchon, or better still, the plot of his stories are notoriously twisty and complex. For example, *Gravity's Rainbow* has several outlined points of view, time frames, and locations. There is often a failure to provide a convoluted understanding of events and is often unsatisfactorily resolved. This may be slightly confusing but it is also very much in the spirit of the messy world he paints. He often uses additional stories, interventions, and composite plots that seem to be of marginal interest to the main plot. Metafiction is fully endorsed in the literary work of Pynchon. Often, his stories start to point at the constructed nature of the text by addressing the audience directly. The author might state directly to the reader when that he is telling a story or use references that point towards the author. For instance, exposed through the literary techniques of the book, *Mason & Dixon* is a novel in which the process of the telling and recording of the story is presented. He challenges both the possibility of a sustained and credible narrative and even toy with the concept of control over the story-telling process. Intertextuality: Intertextual references seem to be one of Pynchon's most common narrative techniques. He employs a range of objects, people, events, concepts from pop culture, history, literature, philosophy, science and others. The most example is *Gravity's Rainbow* as it contains elements from World War II tales, science fiction, historical novel, fictions and many others. Thus, a rather confusing number of meanings is built in which forcing the reader engage with the book and look for the connections between concepts and sentences.

## Research and methods.

Hamdam belongs to the generation of Uzbek authors who write in the postmodernist tradition, yet his works belong to a specific Uzbek context with references to Soviet/post-Soviet experience. The traits are demonstrated in his work as follows: *Ulug'bek Playfulness*: There always has been an undertone of sarcasm in the works of Hamdam but not very obvious to the eyes. Apart from being the primary tool to get people laugh, he uses it to question political system, power relations, and cultural norms. The way he loves to mix the extraordinary with the ordinary he more often than not develops quite funny but profound states of affairs. He often uses such stylistics as magical realism to tell even more fun stories that are beyond the conventional prose. *Fragmentation*: In many of his works Hamdam sometimes employs an unstructured canopy where the work moves from one sequence to another, from several sequences or periods. As it would be suggested by the philosophies of phenomenology, where is such an indication of how existence is usually factionalized. The fiasco in question is a good representation of how existence can look like during the postsoviet transition. His tales could involve many scenes, incidents or facet of opinions on the respective incidences instead of having a sequence which the reader has to join together with so as to be able to have a full picture. *Metafiction*: From the given collection of Hamdam's pieces, writing often deals with the topic of storytelling, and sometimes, subverts writing. It does appear that it is possible for narratives to comment on their own construction and for characters to be read as negotiating their own subject positions. His most stories can be seen to have enough metafictional awareness in them and as such this is not as blatant as in the case of Pynchon.

*Intertextuality*: At the same time, while the subjects of his work are Uzbek literature, history, and culture, he also occasionally references Soviet literature and the idea. Many of them he includes folk tales and the techniques of oral traditions of storytelling in the stories. He might include reference to real historical events or cultural practices in order to get the reader to make connections with reality out of the fictional world. He often underlines the correlation between traditional and the modern, Soviet and post-Soviet tendencies in the Uzbek culture using intertext, which gives the layers of meaning. *Contrast and Comparison* Although Pynchon and Hamdam both utilise similar postmodern strategies, there are several significant distinctions in their approaches: *Size and Range*: Pynchon of course often weaves large, all-encompassing, complex narratives with plots on a universal level. Hamdam's articles are usually less general and often look at the historical and present day position of the Uzbeks as well as

Uzbek culture, both at home and in the rest of Central Asia. Cultural Context: Pynchon's plots and the entire setting of the plays are based on American history, society and technology; specifically the cold war. On the other hand, Hamdam's work is set in the post-soviet Uzbekistan, where issues of the modern and the traditional, the self and the other gain specific sociopolitical resonances.

## Results.

**Political Engagement:** While here, do not speak directly of political issues – at least not in the same way as the other writer. Though Hamdam is more insistent on addressing the challenge of post-Soviet transition, and the need to identify the self and the present within a complex and disputed past, Pynchon often focuses on major cover-ups and paradigms of control. **Ulug'bek Directness vs. Subtlety:** Even though Hamdam is typically more polished, Pynchon uses obtrusive, maybe even domineering, metafictional strategies. Perhaps his metafictional elements are set up more than stated plainly. There are several features which raise doubts about the postmodern narrative realism characteristics. Two of the writers most often associated with postmodernism include an Uzbek writer named Ulug'bek Hamdam and Thomas Pynchon. Here, an attempt is made to consider all four mentioned postmodern patterns in their works: play, fragmentation, metafiction, intertextualities. **Pynchon, Thomas** 1. **Playfulness:** Such postmodern and/or metafictional texts as *The Crying of Lot 49* or *Gravity's Rainbow* contain playful strategies in narration, stylistic variety and/or satire. In order to challenge the reader to listen to him carefully he uses elements of wordplay, far-fetched examples, and exhaustive wandering off in the middle of his thought process. By this playfulness, readers are encouraged or reminded of the activity of meaning making. 2. **Fragmentation:** *Yonder* is a manifestation of Pynchon's tendency in his writing to tell a story out of logical sequence, containing many scenes, multiple points of view, and different time frames. For instance, *Gravity's Rainbow* is recorded for leading an organic form of shape and speaking, which resulted in spinning out extensive narrative voices that depict the different tapestry of tales which represents the chaos of the modern world. 3. **Metafiction:** Pynchon constantly asks the reader to reflect on the very construct of the story through fictionalizing facts. Through the event surrounding *Oedipa Maas*, the receiver of the text is brought into awareness of the fundamentals of the fictional world as all the complexities are referred within the text.

## Discussion.

**Intertextuality:** A good example is that Pynchon regularly incorporates historical, literary or any other sort of references throughout his works. This is seen by the way he relates the novel, its theme, and characters to several authors, ideologies and other cultural influences within a network that enriches the novel. It emerges that his discourse of literature often enriches historical, technological and paranoid concerns. **Hamdam Ulug'bek** 1. **Playfulness:** Usually, Hamdam's angle is rather informal because his execution is rife with sarcasm, comedy, and informal, almost casual language. His narratives may contain clear elements of folkloristics and miraculous and bizarre setting and view of life that can be irony to varied social problems. 2. **Fragmentation:** Pynchon has a way of telling a story in fragments and so does Hamdam in his writings. His stories could break the point of view or tell the story in different voices and in different writing to comprise the patchwork of experiences of modern man. 3. **Metafiction:** Intentionally employing metafictional techniques, Hamdam leads the readers to contemplate writing and reading. His stories may challenge readers by asking them about the real / false boundaries by exploring the nature of the narration or by using characters with volitional memories of being created. 4. **Intertextuality:** Similarly, Hamdam builds a network of significances that connect his anecdotes and the larger environments by alluding to global literary trends and references to the local cultures in his writings. Many of the remarks he uses are from folklore, history, and even classical literature and it develops a talk to place his narrative in a regional and global perspectives.

## Conclusion.

Because of metafictional aspects, intertextuality, fragmentation of structure and playfulness towards form both Thomas Pynchon and Ulug'bek Hamdam's works can be identified as postmodern texts. While the two work in different realms of literature and culture, their writings disrupt prejudices about the nature of its telling and force the audience to look at the complexity of the present day world. Hamdam and Pynchon embody promising examples as to how the theorizations of postmodern literature might be put into practice in the distortion of the standard paradigms of storytelling. While Pynchon is known for his large, inclusive, maximal, and occasionally chaotic works, Hamdam provides a compact, local but vigorous encounter with postmodern issues. Using their analysis, one can claim that postmodernism is an omnibus term that can show up in any culture. Such methods may be applied to all kinds of circumstances thus helping authors to question assumptions, engage with the complexity of history, and consider the constructiveness of reality. Finally, these qualities are not mere figures of speech; instead, they are great tools in understanding the modern age as well as our place in it.

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