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*Order vs Disorder in Joseph Heller's Catch-22:
A Postmodernist Reading*

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Dedication:

I dedicate this research paper to my beloved grandmother, my dear parents, my beloved brothers and sisters, and nephew and niece, as well as, my friends and my dear colleagues.

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First of all, the whole praise goes to Allah, the Lord of the World and the whole mankind for making this work's achievement possible.

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Abstract

Postmodernism and postmodernist literature are very broad concepts that have many connotations. The present work singles out with the main pillars that define the postmodern concept. The relationship of this movement (postmodernism) with post-structuralism is interrelated; however, it has some significant differences. The postmodernist literature transforms aspects of the postmodern world into literary devices that reflect how those aspects changed the way people think. The literature produced in this era is considered to be a shift from the traditional writings of the movements before it. One of the most celebrated literary works of postmodernism is *Catch-22*. It is a novel written by Joseph Heller, and was published in 1961. The novel refers to² a bombardier in the American Air Force who is having a conflict between being a good man for his country and having his life back which makes him a bad man in the eye of law. Though the novel at first seems to be random, the writer deliberately constructs his novel in this way.

General Introduction

After World War I and II, a lot of concepts about life, philosophy, people's mindset, art and so many other fields changed due to the chaotic condition produced by war. People no more believed in metanarratives or the accuracy of law or even religion. Many literary works had discussed these ideas related to this chaotic condition or what will be named later as modernism and postmodernism. The theme of order and disorder had great share in the postmodern theory.

This research paper aims to investigate the roots of postmodernism throughout the development of other movements of art before it, then, taking postmodern as a subject matter of discussion. The first chapter is a theoretical study about the development of postmodernism and its basis, post structuralism and its relationship with postmodernism and postmodernist writings and its different parameters. Starting by the early modern period, the chapter discusses the development of modernism as a concept and the hints that marked the change in this concept. Early modern period was marked by order which kept life going in a traditional way. It was followed by modern period that took place between the wars (WWI and WWII). Fragmentation, chaos, disorder were among the main problems dealt with in modernist fiction. Since the previous movements have their own style and aims, the modernist movement aims at locating the part of life that deters the development process and discard or replace it with new concepts. The subject matter of this dissertation is the postmodern period, how it dealt with the disorder and chaos that took place in the period after WWII. The postmodern period was a result of other movements that preceded it. It is a broad term that refers to many other aspects such as architecture and art.

The writings and studies of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida have also contributed to post structuralism and postmodernism. The main focus in this thesis will be on the effect of postmodern ideas on the field of literature and what factors that make postmodern literature unique. In addition to, in depth discussion of the characteristics of postmodernist literature and how they were influenced. At the end of the chapter, we choose to tackle the genre of war novel. *Catch-22* is a novel written by Joseph Heller fits the interest of the study. Through analyzing the passages and exploring the main claims of the novel, we would notice and trace the influence of postmodernist methods in writing styles and techniques. Though, the novel seems to

be funny and laughable, Heller used humour to highlight some factors in the postmodern world. The use of satire and irony is a paramount feature in postmodernist literature. The writer used it in an artistic way to play with chaos and surrounds the actions of characters. *Catch-22* is a novel that has no expectable plot with numerous characters with different perspective. It discusses the war from another point of view not as war novels are used to. A well-constructed mess is what makes *Catch-22* different from other novels of its time. One reading cannot give an over view to the reader that enables him to understand the main goals and hidden messages that the writer wanted to convey.

The works that discuss *Catch-22* as an area of study focus on the literary aspect of the novel such as Jan Solomon's "The Structure of Joseph Heller's *Catch-22*". He emphasizes on the literary devices and how the writer used them along with the language, style and structure. Some other works reflect on the psychological side of the characters such as "Only Fools Walk in Darkness" by Fredrick R. Karl and "The Logic of Surviving in a Lunatic World" by Robert Brustein. The latter kind of works investigates the way of thinking of the characters that correspond much to the way of thinking of individuals in the real world. The third type of works discusses the historical background of the Joseph Heller and *Catch-22* as a novel. The article under the title "Joseph Heller's Combat Experiences in *Catch-22*" by Michael C. Scoggins tackles the historical and personal backgrounds of the writer. It concentrates the study on taking some parts mentioned in the novel and relating them to some historical and public events. My work focuses the discussion on the process of turning the normal to the abnormal, the right to wrong, and the chaos to order. The writer used his literary devices to give his philosophy or point of view a literary frame of reference.

Postmodernism as a concept is a very wide subject matter of discussion. The following chapter will discuss postmodernism with relation to other concepts that seem similar to it or have common methods and basics with it. Since the name of this concept is made up of two words (post+modernism), then understanding the concept of modernism would contribute to the overall process. The first chapter is basically divided into three parts. The first part talks about the concept of modernism. The second one discusses postmodernism and postmodernism in relation to post structuralism. The third part tackles the postmodern literature and postmodern American literature and the genre of war novels.

The early modern period was the period designed by tradition, and big narratives. The exact period of time of early modern period is still debatable. Some of the suggested periods of the timeframe had a century difference in between. An article about early modern period by Jonathan Dewald suggested that the period was between 1590 and 1720.” The way historians understood the early modern period has been affected by their different views of modernity itself....” (165). In the journey of interpreting and investigating the roots of modernity, historians of early modern period claim that the crucial difference between modern and pre-modern society was industrialization. In other words, modern period and the changes that happened in philosophy and art in general were due to the industrial revolution that took place in Europe and later USA. Early modern period was considered as the first step to modernism itself. It set the suitable background for the emergence of different ideologies and movements such as Existentialism, Structuralism, and Post structuralism and later on Modernism and Postmodernism.

1. Postmodern Art and Philosophy

Modernism and postmodernism are two interrelated ideas that share common themes and ideas. They basically look the same but their references have some slight differences.

1. a Modernism

Before tackling the subject of postmodern period, the modern era should be discussed. Since the concept of modernism can be seen as the basic belief for postmodernism, discussing it would contribute to the way postmodernism is seen.

Modernism marked a transition from tradition to new set of ideas and methods. It was a new turn from the traditional way people treated literature and other concepts to new attitudes. The postmodern period as a development/continuation/ reaction of the modern period the romanticism, rationalism and existentialism were movements that helped the modern period to set it basis. The philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche and Søren Kierkegaard, Charles Darwin, Karl Marx and some other philosophers' ideas had its effect on the overall concept of postmodernism. In the process of modernism, artists exclude all what has a relation with traditions and invent a whole new set of styles and techniques. Modernism emerged in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Modern period emerged as a result to the rapid growth of the industrial movement that changed the way in which people conceptualize life. Consequently, intellectuals reacted to the development and technology and came up with a set of philosophical ideas that became a basis of Modernism. Those ideas were mainly about the change that took place in the period of industrial revolution.

Furthermore, the modern period claims were questioning the axioms of the Enlightenment movement that preceded it. In other words, questioning religion as the only way to reach God, the truth and identity and their source, the validity of tradition as way of living. As a result of the rapid sequence of development and the race for new supporters of ideologies, WWI broke out in (1914-1919) causing disastrous number of victims. Later on, intellectuals' response/ literary works were mainly about the unhappy ending of the WWI as the worst crisis of humanity; by taking into consideration the industrial movement as a sign of development. Works such as *The Waste Land* by T.S Eliot depicted the fragmentation related to WWI in a sense of sadness. The major problem of the modern period was fragmentation and the sense of "nothingness" as some scholars labeled it. The theme of fragmentation was discussed over and over in the works of modernism and postmodernism as well.

The language gest developed in order to refer to the problem of fragmentation and chaos but the writers were not intending to solve it; because there was no way to solve it. Modernists were struggling to understand how a developed and civilized nation could brutally take over another nation just to gain power.

Since the notion of being "developed/civilized" denotes the fact that there is a high level of awareness, mutual understanding, and a better means of communication, the results of the WWI were shocking for people of that time. The question that so many intellectuals failed to answer was: How come developed nations cause that crisis? A crisis that led to millions of

dead people, thousands of homeless, and jobless people and cities across Europe were destroyed by massive bombing.

What modernism brought to art's development is the sense of irony and being self-conscious about the situation being discussed; by building the concept of the work before discussing it. As the next passages will reveal, the sense of consciousness rose higher than ever; some authors even expressed the level of their consciousness in what will be referred to as "metafiction". By examining every aspect of life and science, modern authors tried to identify and locate the failure which prevents further development; since, many modernists tried to solve the problems that rose before and within their period.

1. b. Postmodernism

The word "postmodern" (post +modern) implies that a period of art or philosophy is a result/ continuation of the previous period "modernism" i.e. the postmodern period either developed or discarded the claims of Modernism. Though there isn't an exact date for the starting of postmodernism some scholars refer to the death of James Joyce and Virginia Woolf in 1941 as a starting point. Others see the starting point when John Hawkes published "The Cannibal" in 1949 the first performance of "Waiting for Godot" in 1953. The lecture of Jacques Derrida "Structure, Sign and Play" in 1966 is also referred to as a starting point of postmodernism. (Johnstone12)

Truth, faith, religion were among the questions discussed in postmodernist fiction and philosophy. Each of these concepts contributed to the essence of postmodernism. The philosophy that appeared as a result to the changes in the mindset of people was brought up to be the source of other concepts.

Postmodernists believe that truth is inaccessible. It is considered as an illusion and it is misused by people to gain power over others. Since most of the postmodernists donot believe in God or religion, the truth for them is a lie that is used to gain advantages. They rather believe in opinions than to believe truth. Facts for postmodernists are never determined as facts in whatever way, because the postmodernists do not believe in continuant lifestyle. A fact that is true today might be false in another day. Since postmodernists reject the facts, they rely heavily on personal opinions (individualism); no claim is approved without evidence.

For postmodernists the authority that is practiced by traditions is false and corrupted and serves the goals of a specific group over others. Morality, for postmodernists, is personal;

morality is a personal code for values and principles and should not necessarily follow the traditions or the conceptions of the popularity. Globalization for postmodernists is believe a necessity they also believe that the boundaries between countries cause war and prevent communication between human beings, therefore, they are against the nationalism and for internationalism.

All religions are valid, even though many of the postmodernists do not believe in God or religion; they reject any claim that there is only one way to God. Religious pluralism and cultural pluralism are some of the basic beliefs of postmodernists; the former is related to the beliefs in so many religions as being valid, whereas, the latter refers to culture and the embracing in so many cultures as being valid. Mother earth for postmodernists is sacred and they blamed the Western society for destroying it through industrial activities (factories, tests of bombs, deforestation..... etc.). A new school of criticism that rose lately that is called "Eco criticism" its paramount focus in criticism is on the depiction of nature in the literary works, the relationship between nature and literature.

These characteristics were echoed deeply in works that have a relationship with modern and postmodern art such as *The Waste Land* by T.S Eliot and *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller. In other words, postmodern period is one of the most influential movements of art that deeply and explicitly expressed the different aspects of life and science. The corner stone of postmodernism is the way reality is portrayed. In the postmodern theory, reality cannot be accessed by the human investigation, knowledge is constructed by the society, truth is a lie to claim power (political power in particular), and the meaning of words is determined by the readers not the writers. Reality in the postmodern world is determined by the individuals not the social groups. These ideas were propagated by so many philosophers.

2. The Most Influential Philosophical Ideas in Postmodernism

There is not only one "postmodernism" but there are "postmodernism(s)". To give a single meaning of what postmodernism is told to be against the belief of postmodernism, because they believe in the plurality of meaning.

Postmodernist theory has multiple concepts but there are very basic ideas, key concepts, which formed the basic belief of postmodern. Deconstruction is usually associated with Jacques Derrida. It is based on making a close reading of a text and conceptualizes the

true term (s) that the text claims. Then, by reversing the basic claim of the text, we can form an opposite claim that stands for an opposite argument that is as rational as the first one. For instance, the text claim is that all people should be good and none of them should be bad. In deconstructing the text the first step to do is to read and analyze the text and identify the main arguments. Basically speaking, people are meant to be good and bad i.e. it is a natural characteristic in human beings. Bad people are known through their bad attitude toward others and for being selfish. Good people are more selfless and have good attitudes toward others. The second step in the deconstruction process is to show that the claim of the text, “people should be good and none of them should be bad”, can be wrong because; without bad people we cannot recognize good ones. So if we claim that all people are good then we will never have an equal balance between the basic beliefs of the whole world. If we imagine that all the concepts of the world are to be classified and given different sections, then there should be a kind of balance between the concepts.

Postmodernist literature in general seeks to turn all the concepts that are devalued to be valued. Accepting the notion of new attitudes should necessarily denote accepting the old ones. Therefore in the postmodern literature, we no longer come across stories or novels that have a principal character that is labeled as a “hero” or an honest princess in a castle. The term “protagonist” replaced the term “hero”.

M. Foucault’s influence comes second in the postmodern approaches. His writings contributed so much to the postmodern view of history as a whole. He explained in his writings that the attitudes of dealing with people in various fields such as medicine and justice has become implicitly brutal.

Postmodern Theology is Atheism. Most of postmodernist authors were atheists such as Jacques Derrida and M. Foucault. They rejected the existence of God as a supernatural creator. Yet, they do not explicitly say that because their principle in first place is to never claim a fact. Nonetheless, many postmodernists are atheists, they embrace religious pluralism. It is a belief that one should tolerate all the religious beliefs and that no one’s religion is fully true. It is another way to express the ambiguity in the postmodern world where no one can reject or confirm what he/she is for.

Subjective truth is the second corner stone in the philosophy of postmodernism. Postmodernists claim that there is no universal objective truth i.e. the truth validity is limited to a certain social group. For instance, if in a certain society women should work another

society may disagree with this view. They limited the truth to a certain group of people and limited it with the setting of that particular group. For postmodernists, internationalism is at the level of thinking but the level of society thinking should be from a personal point of view not international; all people have some goals but different ways of achieving them. They agree that there is ambiguity and chaos in the postmodern world but they disagree in explaining how that ambiguity and chaos are actually shaping one's view to the truth and its reflection on reality.

Language is used by the author to express his own understanding to the real world. Yet in the postmodern literature, the meaning of words is never determined by the author, but by the reader him/herself. By taking in consideration the setting of culture (the background) of the reader, language took another dimension in the postmodern world. It constructs and deconstructs the meaning of reality. For postmodernists, language is what constructs the meaning and the reader is the one to determine what is the meaning. That's why some scholars talk about "The Death of the Author" (Roland Barthes 1967) as if the author's role ends when finishing the piece of writing. The reader in the postmodern world builds up the concepts about the real world based on his background; thus, every living human being has his/her own concepts about the reality. Truth for the postmodernists is created by individuals not determined or discovered.

Ethics are considered to be decided by local communities. Since there is no one big great narrative for the universal morals, then what a particular society knows about reality and how it should behave is codified by its own mind set. Society in the postmodern world decides what is moral and what is immoral. It also decides what way the members should behave in particular situations. Postmodernists do not completely abandon ethics but instead they seemed to examine the roots of the universal objective moral that determines what is right and what is wrong, or to come up with a new universal objective moral that promotes the standards of moral.

Everything is possible and impossible at the same time for postmodernists even when history is the subject matter. Radical postmodernists claim that there is no purpose of the past and, therefore, it is not worth studying. Less radical postmodernists have the view that history is what we as individuals want it to be, furthermore, they claim that historical facts are inaccessible to human being. Foucault and Lacan argue that each historical period has its own knowledge and culture and only individuals who lived in that era can decode its history. The

history of a particular era cannot be understood without studying the knowledge and the culture of that era which seems inaccessible in most cases. In the traditional approach, historians can tell what happened through revising and studying carefully the historical documents of a particular era. But in some cases history can be oral and true but when looking at it physically it would become confusing. For instance, the story told by a conqueror is totally different than the one told by the conquered when it comes to the reasons why the invasion itself happened. In the postmodern history, the documents are not the only way to truth and even when having any pieces of information it should be examined, modified, supplemented in order to match truth that does not actually exist for postmodernists.

Savvas states:

History is not the same as the past. The past is what happened and as such is (largely) irretrievable; history, however, is how we understand the past, and how we constitute it in the present..... Postmodernist thought has brought to the fore once again...questions such as: "how is meaning of the past conferred? By whom it is conferred with what justification and for what purpose?" (Savvas 2011)

It is no surprise that in the postmodern world if a society agreed on banning marriage, for example, it would happen. Harold J. Berman notes that, "there are historical backgrounds for the western civilization tradition's collapse. The WWI was the war that caused scars for the western civilization that could never be healed". This war made the Westerns lose their confidence in themselves and in their civilization. In the postmodern world, justice and the ways to achieve it are questioned. Statements such as "Does equality mean justice?" rose due to the re-questioning of the methods of achieving law and justice.

CLS (Critical Legal Studies) is a movement that aimed to change the ideology of law. It focuses on the dissecting of the subjective meaning of a law even if objectively means something else, by using the principle of Jacques Derrida "deconstruction". The gist of postmodern law is that "Reality is socially constructed by the powerful in order to perpetuate their own hegemony [power over other people]". As one radical feminist puts it, "Feminist analysis begins with the principle that objective reality is a myth." (Zygmunt 1993). Postmodernists such as Susan Estrich see law as a political tool that serves the political power over the rest of society, therefore, it is no longer a reliable tool by which a society is ordered. If the truth is said to be subjective then law is also meant to be the same. Truth and

law are components of the same concept; if one is ignored then the other essentially disappears.

Harold. J Berman stated that

The minds of lawmakers, judges, lawyers, law teachers...[and] from the consciousness of the vast majority of citizens....The law is becoming fragmented, more subjective, geared more to expediency and less to morality, concerned more with immediate consequences and less with consistency or continuity. Thus the historical soil of the Western legal tradition is being washed away in the twentieth century, and the tradition itself is threatened with collapse. (Berman)

The ability of law to make sense through regulation is becoming more and more difficult in postmodern world. Law in addition to the factors mentioned above contributed to the concept of postmodernism as a whole.

3. Post-Structuralism and Postmodernism

Post-structuralism is a term linked to the development in literary theory and criticism. It became known in the 1970's. Ferdinand de Saussure, the father of Structuralism, through his theories about language formed the basic belief for Post-structuralism. His theory about "signified" and "signifier" and how an element is defined by its relation to other elements, for instance, the word "cut" is a linguistic sign that is different from "put" or "nut". In terms of signifier it is the combination of (c+u+t), but in terms of signified it is related to the act of splitting something to two parts or more. The meaning "signifier" can alter as well as the concept "signified". A linguistics sign can refer to two different signifiers. "Different languages do divide the world in different ways" (Niedemaier 1994).Post-structuralism can also be traced in many other theories such as psychoanalysis that is related to Jacque Lacan's concept that focuses on the criticism of a literary work on the unconscious part and the symbolic order of language.

Jacques Derrida as well had contributed to the post-structuralist theory. His argument is based on the notion that we can determine what the things are just through language and the word it refers to. He accepts that language is a system of sign, yet he argues that a final

signified is never determined. "...All signifieds turn out to be other signifiers" (Niedemaier 107). The linguistic signs are not stable. Since the sign is defined by what it is not then it is defined by the context of the other different signs. So if the signified of a word changes then it is no longer defined as it used to. Derrida read the writings of Rousseau and de Saussure so carefully and focused on the parts of the text where the writer uses a metaphor to secure an argument. By doing so Derrida turned the writers' argument upside down. De Saussure argues that "speech comes first and that writing is little more than parasitical offshoot of speech" (Niedemaier108). What Derrida did was turning the argument from writing as a part of speech to consider writing as the best illustration of the linguistic units (words) and speech is just another form of writing (vocal writing). Christopher Norris offers the following as a definition of the verb deconstruct: "An ambivalent or middle voice verb, one that between the active sense 'to read texts with an eye sharply trained for contradiction, blind spots, or moments of hitherto unlooked-for complication' and the alternative (non-interventionist) account." (Norris 1991)

Feminism, post structuralism and postmodernism are often linked together but sometimes they are referred to as being in opposition to each other. These theories affected each other though; postmodern is labeled as being a cultural movement rather than a critical theory such as feminism and post structuralism. In both postmodern and post structuralism, the subject is dead and there is no subjectivity only representation, therefore, tackling any subject from one of these points of view will be objective.

4. Postmodern Literature and Postmodern World

Since postmodern period was a cultural movement in which renewed, it brought with it kind of philosophy, architecture and art. Postmodern literature was different in the way it explicitly treated the subject of ideas, beliefs and people. However, what makes postmodernist literature so unique is the fact that the term does not refer only to the literature written in the postmodern period as Ramen Sharma stated:

Though postmodernist literature does not refer to everything written in the postmodern period, several post-war developments in literature (such as the Theatre of the Absurd, the Beat Generation, and Magic Realism) have significant similarities. These developments are occasionally collectively labeled "postmodern"; more commonly, some key figures (Samuel Beckett,

William S. Burroughs, Jorge Luis Borges, Julio Cortázar and Gabriel García Márquez) are cited as significant contributors to the postmodern aesthetic. (189).

The work of Laurence Sterne “*The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman*” 1759 is often cited as an early influence of postmodernism. The work emphasis was on parody and narrative experiment. It was a work ahead of its time. Dadaism and Surrealism also contributed in the birth of postmodernism by the creation of collages, the collages that used elements from advertisement or illustrations from popular novels. Jorge Luis Borges had a notable influence on postmodernists and he generally was listed among them, even though, his writings date back to the 1920’s. His works reflected a sense of metafiction and magic realism that was not appreciated fully until postmodernism came to the track. Both modern and postmodern literature dealt with the subjectivism and the inner state of consciousness in works of Virginia Woolf for instance. Fragmentation was marked in both kinds of literature in narrative, characters-construction, yet modernists considered it, along with extreme subjectivity, as an existential crisis, a Freudian internal conflict that should be solved, whereas postmodernists almost tolerated the sense of fragmentation and treated it as an essential part of the postmodern literature. (Ramen 190)

4. a. American Postmodernist Literature

After tracking the postmodern as a concept and going through the main pillars of postmodern movement, it is quiet important to see how these ideas were applied in literary works. Postmodernist literature appeared as a respond to the postmodern movement that rose after the end of W.W.II. The American writers of the postwar years were affected by the culture of their population. Writers start to write about what people want to read. Oral history, comics, movies, fashions were commented on by writers such as, Thomas Pynchon, Joyce Carol Oates and Kurt Vonnegut. Those writers and through the literature they produced, asked many questions most of them were metaphysical, about life, history, technology....etc. It was as if the postwar writers were more aware about their time through discussing the daily life issues in literature. As it was expected, they excluded the traditional way of narrating or writing and innovated new styles that correspond to the postmodern era where the world was living in chaos.

W.W.II was a great food for thoughts for postmodernist who related their best works to real stories that happened in the wartime about humanity, cruelty, insanity of war. Some others related their works to the ongoing effects of the war and the change it caused to human culture, history, points of view...etc. Norman Mailer in his work (*The Naked and the Dead 1948*) and James Jones (*From Here To Eternity 1951*) were the best examples of portraying W.W.II through employing realism on verging on grim naturalism. The late 1940's witnessed the growth of writers, poets, essayists, dramatists, short story writers who used the W.W.II to reflect the personal growth of individuals in a society and how the individuals were responsible for their groups. The 1950's writers' depicted loneliness as a main theme and how an individual is intentionally/unintentionally deprived from society; in works like, *The Man in a Gray Flannel Suit* by Sloan Wilson and *The Lonely Crowd* by David Riesman. (Vanspakeren 1994). Since postmodernist literature brought with it the plurality of meaning, a literary work can have multiple expressions that sometimes it is impossible to determine what the meaning of a text is.

Postmodern literature, like postmodernism as a whole, is hard to define and there is little agreement on the exact characteristics, scope, and importance of postmodern literature. However, unifying features often coincide with Jean-François Lyotard's concept of the "metanarrative" and "little narrative", Jacques Derrida's concept of "play", and Jean Baudrillard's "simulacra." For example, **instead of the modernist quest for meaning in a chaotic world, the postmodern author eschews, often playfully, the possibility of meaning, and the postmodern novel is often a parody of this quest.*** (Ramen 189)..(Emphasis is mine)

The fuzzy line between reality and fiction was less clear than any time before in the literary works of 1960's, in addition to, the evolvement of the American society in political, social and technological aspects. In the middle of 1960's, a new mode of writing was innovated that later was known as metafiction, self-conscious or reflexive fiction. It emphasizes on language and style. The main themes of this style were metaphysic and

conscious. When reading a metafiction novel, the reader is not attracted by neither the settings of the novel nor the characters, but rather, he is fascinated by the consciousness of the writer. Whereas in the south of America the writers tend to tackle themes related to family, home, history, land, religion, guilt, identity, death, the search for redemptive meaning in life, they used their words as a link to traditions that were in the classical world.

The American literature of the 1960s was characterized by the “linguistic play, experiment with the language, with referential function of the language, radical irony, postmodern parody, fragmentation, intertextuality, the overlapping of fact, fiction, and dreams”..... . The use of ideas of Jacques Derrida’s Play, Jean Lyotard “Simulacra and Stimulation” and other philosophers were used in the postmodern American literature. John Barth (1930) an American fiction writer, his views in literature influenced not only the American writers but others around the world. His main focus in his theoretical works and essays was to use existing genres rather than creating new ones. Barth suggested using the existing genres not in a copy pasting manner but rather in a creative one and put some of the artistic values of a postmodern literary work. The French philosopher Jean Baudrillard is probably one of the influential critics about media and its impact on the psyche of people and their way of thinking. He emphasized his works on the difference of representation and stimulation (simulacra). The changing of the American society from an industrial to a postindustrial, from traditional to mass formed a suitable background for the formation of the post American literature and reflecting these elements in an artistic works. The culture of high and low status had been affected by the mass media of that time (technology in general), and later on the mass / popular culture including literature. (Vanspankeren 1994)

As for the techniques that were marked in postmodern literature, a variety of themes could be used in one literary work. Sometimes we may find a dominant theme with sub-themes within one novel. Irony, paranoia, fragmentation, pastiche, metafiction and hyperreality were used frequently in the postmodern literature. In addition to main philosophical ideas such as Jean François Lyotard's “metanarratives” , Jean Baudrillard's “simulacra” and Jacque Derrida “play and deconstruction” that were as well focused on in literary works.

4. b. Characteristics of Postmodern Literature

Some of the frequently used features in postmodern literature are explained in the passages below. These characteristics marked the works of postmodernism as being different from other kinds of literature.

4. b.1. Temporal Disorder: since in the postmodern literature there is no narrative or the plot, the order of the beginning, the climax and the end is discarded. Temporal disorder in the postmodern literature denotes that the novel has absolutely no plot in most cases. The narrative line starts in future then the author gives a glimpse in the present however the main part of the story is in the past. The characters are often different from multiple backgrounds what makes the story be seen and interpreted from different points of view. The text and language themselves are put in the sense of “no logic”, no idea in the text shows that the author was right or wrong; the text is fictional or true.

4. b.2. Hyperreality: Guy Debord wrote a book in 1967 entitled “*The Society of Spectacle*”. He tackled the subject of society and media and how media is used to “conquer” every single corner of daily life. He described the world he lived in as a world of representation of what used to be real once. Hyperreality in a wide scope means that the real world is almost unreal; as if we live in a world that is all about representation, stimulation and simulacra. Though literature and art are considered to be creative fields, in the postmodern world they are said to be representative. Words are like originality used to have lot of meaning and different faces, but for postmodernists nothing is original anymore. Jean Baudrillard, on the other hand, discussed the same theme in the same manner in his book “*Simulacra and Stimulation*”. He stated that we, as the people who lived in the postmodern world, are bombarded by images that were spoiled and have nothing to do with the real world. A novel by William Gibson entitled “*Neuromancer*” took the vision/ theory of Jean Baudrillard and applied it on a setting that is about a society called “Freeside”. The characters in this novel occupied virtual world and neglected the reality. The line between reality and representation of reality has come blurred because of the media.

4. b.3. Fiction: is a generic term that refers to many overlapping uses; one of which is novel. It refers to those settings, events and characters that are not real but they are used in a literary work to convey a message or ideology and can include even the artistic intentions and formal characteristics. The novel is a genre term that is narrowed to an imaginative production. Metafiction is the self-awareness that the fiction is a fiction by relating the story to storytelling conventions or telling a story within a story. Metafiction was first mentioned in

some classical works in the 1960's such as John Barth's *Lost in the Funhouse*, Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49*. It was used in "Waiting For the Wild Beasts to Vote" a translated work (from French to English) by Ahmadou Korouma where he made a story through a storytelling and related to stories of some characters within the same novel. Some critics consider fiction as a way to depict reality through the setting of the story and the characters that exist only in the mind of the author.

4. b.4. Fragmentation: is a common point between modernism and postmodernism, yet modernists dealt with it sadness and they used literature as way to find meaning to live in a world that is all about "Nothingness" even when it comes to meaning. *The Waste Land* by T.S Eliot is a poem in which fragmentation was used with mourning. It described the sad turn of the events of the WWI. Postmodernists seemed to deal with fragmentation as a tool to explore the chaos in the world. Chaos and fragmentation in the postmodern literature are used to express the uncertainty that feeds the ambiguous conditions that postmodern world is built on, on one hand. On the other hand, the notion that the story should end in a happy/sad way is no longer working. The literary works in the postmodern literature are often left open-ended.

4. b.5. Paranoia: The outgrowing rate of technology, consumerism, and mass media had its own effect on the postmodern vision to the world. The literary ideas related to the Cold War, for example, are filled with paranoia. Paranoia is a main theme of the postmodern literature. It is used to express the fear that the postmodernists felt that the elements above are affecting the world so badly instead of making it a better environment. The Cold War between the East "USSR" and the West "USA", which was all about who is more technologically and socially developed; made the postmodernists freak out, because, they were against the idea that somebody is controlling their lives; somebody is manipulating them. Postmodern movement came along with personal freedom, chaos, views of the world...etc., and the Cold war was more or less a war of who can get more support, more followers. It felt like as if everyone was unintentionally involved in the war and had no choice but to be a part of it. In works such as: *Mortal Engines* (2001) by Philip Reeve and *Watchmen* (1986_1987) by Alan Moore used paranoia of technology (the former novel) and the Cold War and the foreign USA relationship (the latter novel).

4. b.6. Pastiche: Works of literature that are inspired by other works of literature and expressed in a more accessible manner is called pastiche. It is a tool of postmodern literature

that is used to highlight the ambiguous points in the original work (being inspired from) and eliminate the tension in it. It is used to produce the literary work in a more accessible manner in relation to the language and the style of the original work as the poem of Akenside “The Pleasure of Imagination”. The second use of pastiche is disrespectful but in most cases but it is appreciated. Instead of taking the original works assumptions and putting them in the style and language of the author, the writer of a pastiche work recreates it by using different styles of other works. The term “cento” or “centonism” is a Latin word referring to “a garment of patchwork and applied to literature, a poem made up by joining scraps of various authors....” (Childs 2005). It has common points with parody, yet in parody, the writer only alludes to the original work and makes fun of it. In pastiche, the writer adopts the style, language and the motives of the original work to spot the ambiguity and the chaos in it but it does not comment on it.

4. b.7. Irony: is perhaps a dominant theme in the literature of postmodern world. It is a method of discourse that conveys meanings that are different from the ostensible ones. It focuses on the distance between the words and the context they were used in. Irony has two main categories: situational and verbal. Situational irony is primarily social, moral or even metaphysical. It is either a comic or tragic irony.

In tragic irony the ostensible reasons for the hero’s downfall, whether it is the anger of the gods or his own relentless pursuit of an ideal, are undercut by psychological reasons of a more mundane sort. Joseph Conrad’s *Lord Jim* provides a good example of this. Comic irony uses similar kinds of juxtaposition to describe and deflate the social aspirations of its protagonists. In both forms the pivotal character tends to be the *eiron* himself; a dissembler who brings two conflicting and contrasting worlds into sharp focus. Examples of such characters are Conrad’s Marlow and P. G. Wodehouse’s Jeeves.”(Childs 2005).

In the second chapter we will see how J. Heller used multiple techniques from the list above to create a bestselling book that is named *Catch-22*. The novel belongs to the genre of war novels that emerged after WWII.

5. The War Novel and Postmodernism

The genre of war fiction in general or war novels in particular is inspired from WWII specially those novels that date back to 1940's and on. The fast pace of technology, the discoveries in science, the settings of war have an effect on the way the characters were depicted in the novels and the setting of the novel itself. Since the common source of events is the same for all the war novels of the 1940's and on (WWI or WWII), it makes them similar in one way but different in the same time. They are similar in the way the events were chronologically sequenced and different in the perspectives of the narration of the story Marsalek (2006) states:

“War novels have a common tendency to record all events and affairs straight, using the realistic or naturalistic mode. They are generally written as a direct result of the war. Not only is their aim to narrate, document, and make comments but also to assess. In order to do so properly, there needs to be a certain time distance.” (Waldmeir 1969)

As the postmodern literature appeared as a response to modern literature, war novels appeared in response to war (WWII in particular). The language that was used in this kind of novels was similar to that one that soldiers used. The sentences are short and the dialogues are flowing in a quick manner, however, they provide a great deal of details. Some passages may seem unclear and the reader needs to guess the meaning or deduces it. In order to convey the true picture of the event, the writers tend to put the most exact picture of the ground in which the action took place. Though, there are unsaid sides of the war; sides that happened behind the scene and are meant to be hidden. The characters were usually depicted as having a struggle over something that could be meaningless to the reader, but the writer wants to emphasize the idea that the least thing those soldiers wanted was to see those wishes come true. The struggles that the characters are going through are mainly about basic needs, such going back home in one piece as Yossarian wished in *Catch 22* Joseph Heller, or living for another day such as *King Rat* by James Clavell.

Some of the war novels seemed to be an autobiography of the events written in exact details, some others focus on the psychology of the characters as well as their conflicts with the memories of war, after the war is over. The third type emphasizes on the stories of fictitious individuals from normal backgrounds, such as an attorney, a housewife or a farmer,

who face historical events that actually happened during the war. By mixing the personal experiences of the protagonist(s) with moments or full scenes from the war, the writers' depicted how really the war influenced and changed the lives of millions of people. The characters' wishes, what they would be doing if the war did not break out, were used as details to put a true image of war in front of the readers. An eyewitness perspective is not a surprising feature in the war novels, due to the large amount of details that are used in a work the reader feels that he/ she is reading for an eyewitness. Joseph Heller and Earnest Hemingway were eyewitnesses who wrote about their experience in the war fiction. Though some writers use fiction from time to time to tell their history, their use of detailed discourse keeps the reader interested.

The common point between all the war novels is the detailed description of the scenes so as it looks as vivid as reality. Though the reader sometimes may get some doubts about those scenes as being real, but as soon as he get drowned in the details he will start to forget his second thoughts. Sometimes whole paragraphs are dedicated to describe a particular scene that is important in the novel's setting. There is no doubt that the description of scenes has a great impact on the plot of the novel; however, without mentioning the actions and feelings of the characters the setting of the novel seems a bit general. That's why when writers use fiction they use the technique of omniscient narrator, which permits the writer to describe all the characters and the scene in detailed details. Writing a war novel is as deep as writing a script for a movie where the characters and their feelings and actions as well as the scenes are paid a close attention as Tim O'Brien wrote "I want to feel what I felt" (*The Things They Carried* 2003). The word "plot" in literature refers to the plan of the writer to tell their stories in a controlled manner. Some of the war novels do not have a plot they rather tell the same setting of the story from different perspectives such as in *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller. The reader is left to construct the plot the way he thinks it fits.

The primary theme of the war novels is war; nonetheless, other themes are related to war. For Joseph Waldmeir the war novels have three main categories:

"1) novels concerned primarily with a realistic portrayal of combat; 2) those which are principally studies of the effects of war upon an individual psyche; and 3) those which are above all else ideological" (Waldmeir10).

The third category is no more applicable, it can be found in the literature of other movements rather than postmodernism. Along with the categories of war novels, the

themes of war novels are mainly derived from the conditions of war and what it could bring up. “The idea of war, seen as the major focus, is what all militarily-oriented novels apparently have in common but the way it is integrated into the story can be understood as a distinguishing trait.”(Marsalek 31). Though the conditions of war are unfriendly, most war novels portray some kind of friendship or brotherhood among soldiers. The merciless conditions of war force characters, which came from different backgrounds, to trust each other and share the same attitude about survival. Friendship between characters is close to reality, due to the depiction of the aspects and factors of friendship that allowed different characters to come together. Friendship in wartimes is a part of survival techniques and the reaction of the characters determines whether they would become friends (brothers in arms) or not. “There are several ways which the authors use to make the reader aware of it, but the basis remains the same – a couple or a group of people whom the environment forces to trust one another no matter how many ironic, mocking and sarcastic comments on one another there are”(38).

Friendship and love come as the next theme in war novels. The only thing that makes the soldiers get their mind off the war is love, finding a woman who would make the pain of war go small. Surprisingly, love is one of the themes of war novels. The memories of the soldiers’ wives, fiancée, girlfriends, or the imagination of their scents in the middle of a violent scene or just as a memory that motivated soldiers and that they have something to go back for is how writers draw images of love in war novels. Implicitly, writers refer to love by objects such piece of clothes, scarfs, perfumes, rings, and letters. “Love and friendship versus cruelty and violence – these couples seem to represent the main motifs of all war stories.” (45).

The disastrous number of deaths caused by WWII (over 50 million victims) and villages and cities that had been devastated had an impact on the soldiers as being a part of the war and the writers as well. They tried to describe that wartime when deaths news everyday seemed to be a usual thing. Death and cruelty are the next theme in the list of war novels. The intentions of some individuals to control the world ended up by the tremendous killing of both civilians and soldiers. Those soldiers who participated in war were divided into two kinds: 1) the first kind is those soldiers were weak and they were looking for a least reason to quit the front line as pretending to be insane. The second kind is those who could handle their feelings in the combat, however, they would suffer from psychological issues later. Some of the soldiers of latter kind face troubles in interacting with people in a society so they run away

from society to live elsewhere or become serial killers in some cases. “The novelists tend to agonize, often embarrassingly, over the painful psychological reactions of their characters to war, romanticizing, sometimes sentimentalizing their desperation” (Waldmeir20). Characters as well in war novels have different categories which allow the readers to have different perspectives about the same idea.

Norman Mailer’s character Sergeant Sam Croft in *The Naked and The Dead* affected the rest of the soldiers by his merciless nature and made them live a kind of an internal conflict between the human and cruel side of them. Croft’s nature doesn’t allow him to detect any kind of emotions even if he is not addressed with those emotions. Death in the war novels was described as a sudden sorrow event that takes the lives of close friends of the chief characters, but they are brought to life through the flash of memories, souvenir or letters. Sometimes the chief character remembers deceased characters through letters and the reader has an image about them just through those memories of the chief characters that the novelist implies in the novel. Irony and sarcasm are sometimes mixed with the theme of death in order to reflect senselessness of the life in war, in addition to, the pain caused by them that became almost an usual part of the life of those soldiers. The events that took place in the period of 1939-1945 were depicted without exception such as the massacres of Holocaust, the bombing of Dresden. The novelists created images from different perspectives to form a historical review.

The absurdity of war appeared in a number of war novels of the period after the war (WWII). It is mostly expressed in the ways in which the novelist creates an image of death, chaos, and senselessness, or writing passages about the psyche of the soldiers that had been affected or destroyed by the death of brothers in arms or the cruelty and the injustice of the high rank officers. The characters’ search for a sense in the regulations of the army made them get in a crash with senseless regulations such as in *Catch 22* by Joseph Heller; that will be discussed later in the second chapter. Those regulations were made to work for those high ranked officers, the higher the rank, the better benefits. Since soldiers had no voice they also had no choice but to obey the regulations that the high ranked officers dictated on them. By putting scenes that contain death and cruelty next to those that contain safety and hope, the novelist puts the readers in an atmosphere in which they would notice how absurd the war is. “This narration style, based on contrasts, is supposed to stress transience of the particular pleasant instants as well as foolery such moments may accidentally turn into.” (53)The idea of the ability or inability of the soldier to cope with the normal life after the war is over seemed

to be tackled by various war novelists. The conditions in which the soldiers were forced to live in and the struggles that they went through mainly everyday had its effect on the psyche of those soldiers and their view to life. Some novelists use death and cruelty to reflect the absurdity of war some other use humour, especially black humour, to make fun of the system of the army and its ridiculous regulations and army itself such as Joseph Heller. (59)

War novels in general are a form of re-telling history from the perspective of people who had been a part of it. A subjective history is sometimes better than the history taught in classes. The themes discussed in the war novels are inspired from the conditions that the participants in the war were forced to live in. It is true that some war novels are inspired from the fiction of the novelists, but another way to depict reality is to use fiction. Therefore, some war novels aim to reflect other perspective rather than just retelling history. Thus, novelists sometimes use fiction to change the normal perspective that is commonly known, so instead of having a German high rank officer perspective or an American one about war we could have a perspective of a normal citizen. The use of autobiographies or eyewitnesses perspectives is another alternative which the novelists use to write their version of history.

To sum up, before WWI, there was order and norms that governed societies. When WWI broke out, order and norms lost their importance that is why modernism could be seen as an attempt to restore order. Postmodernism later on accepted disorder, which was caused by chaos in WWII, as part of order. The beliefs of postmodernism could be seen as revolutionary. It avoids traditions and norms and always seeks to bring something different. Therefore, when reading a postmodern work, we often have the notion of creativity throughout the work. Postmodernism in a wider sense refers to a cultural revolution on what prevents development (tradition). There are some literary works that were written way before postmodernism, however, they are considered to be postmodern literature. Eventually, postmodern literature does not include the works written in the postmodern period. It is the literature that does not follow the tradition of writing or uses language or literary devices in a different manner. It is based on the parameters of work rather than the period in which it was written. Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* is one of the most significant literary work that belongs to postmodern period. It reflected many aspects of postmodern theory. So to what extent does Heller reveal these aspects in his novel?

Catch-22 by Joseph Heller is celebrated as the best modern classic work in the 1960's. It was published in 1961 by Simon and Schuster paperback. The novel is considered as a postmodern literary work for so many reasons that will be discussed from a postmodern point of view in the following passages. Starting by some backgrounds about the novel followed by a main part devoted to discussion of the novel based on Derrida's, Baudrillard's and Lyotard's points of view about postmodern world.

1. The Postmodernist Condition

After WWII, people started to question their beliefs as a result to the chaos caused by the war. It left a great sense of ambiguity in the minds of people. The main questions that were asked were about how and why people should kill each other? To what extent can people claim that they are civilized? By looking at how life has become, authors reacted in an attempt to express the ambiguity and madness. A disordered society ruled by a bureaucratic voice that tells whatever lies fits its interest. Madness in the postmodern literature has different definitions. Some writers assume that madness strongly believes in something such as patriotism and metanarratives as Joseph Heller expressed that in *Catch-22*. American society with a sense of having won the war, culturally and militarily, lost the meaning of life and hold on to the meaning of death. Absurdity as well was marked in the postmodern American literature. It mainly expressed the way people dealt with politics and authority.

The absurdist US fiction which emerged in the 1960's and 1970's powerfully undermined by distrust of politics and authority. The most celebrated novel of this type was Joseph Heller's blackly comic *Catch-22*(1961) which presents us with a 'looking-glass' world where the sane is regarded as mad and the collective madness of war and the military approach to it appears sane (Nicol 86).

As Bran Nicols claimed that the fiction of the 1960's tackled the theme of absurdity in relation to government and governmental activities (politics and policy). The notion that Heller wanted to claim was that the concept of Baudrillard about representation "simulacra", that the world is virtual rather than real. All concepts that we know are only representation of a made up image. As soon as we indulge into it we discover that our convictions are represented which makes us confused. Yossarian was probably taught and told just as Nately about the patriotism and honour but the death of Snowden reversed his concepts and he

realizes that living for a reason is better than to die for one. "It doesn't make a damned bit of difference who wins the war to someone who's dead." (Heller 128).

The word irony stands for the use of words to convey a meaning; whereas, the real meaning is implicit. Both modern and postmodern literature used irony to make the readers more aware of the situation being discussed. Sometimes it is meant to be funny some other times it is meant to be ambiguous. Fragmentation as well was a problem that modernists tried to solve but for post modernists it becomes part of life, philosophy and eventually literature. Many literary works that belong to postmodernism are crowded with fragmentation and it is used as a tool to leave the reader's mind in a working state of mind. Most ends of postmodern literature (novels, poems, short stories) are meant to be open-ended as the plotless narration line. *Catch-22* takes all these qualities and more into the spot light and discusses them in literary manner that was granted later by many critics.

2. *Catch-22*: A Synopsis

The novel was published in 1961 by Simon & Schuster Paperbacks'. It is listed as one of the greatest novels in the twentieth century. It added a new term (*Catch-22*). It is well known in the American literature by its sense of senselessness and absurdity that is implied in the novel through the use of irony that is seen as a major theme in this novel. It is anti-war and anti-statuo-quo novel that criticized the use of power and politics by the American government and army during WWII in 1940's and 1950's. In 1970, a movie was published under the same name "*Catch-22*" that was inspired from this novel. The plot of the novel is constructed in an unusual way; for example the story starts in some place but ends up in another and in between it tells a story of somebody else. In this novel the reader realizes that the story is told in way that represents the chaos and the ambiguity of the postmodern world. The plot itself is a well-constructed mess. The novel is divided into 42 chapters and each chapter is not fully dedicated to one character, but to other conditions surrounding the character. It is a plot that is told by contrast which means the writer instead of talking about the events directly he tends to keep some chaos an ambiguity going on. A third person omniscient narrator tells the plot of the story in a chronological order from different points of view is used in this to describe different events and characters, whereas, the ideas flows in a smooth but chaotic order with reference to present events and past flashbacks. It is smooth to

the extent that the reader may re-read passages over and over to make sure that he understood the points mentioned in that passage, or lose the track of the plot in the middle of the reading.

However the novel is war novel, it has other side themes such as love and friendship. The protagonist is paranoid by the fact that everyone is trying to kill him which gives us another definition to the word enemy "The enemy is anybody who's going to get you killed, no matter which *side* he's on, and that includes Colonel Cathcart. And don't you forget that, because the longer you remember it, the longer you might live." (Heller 33). Yossarian is much concerned with his own safety than anything else, he does not care about glory or pride more than he returns back home in one piece. What is known about being a hero is doing something brave and getting medals and honour for that but for Yossarian, being a hero is to go back home in one piece. "..... a novel like *Catch-22*, trailing recollections of Joyce, Nathanael West, and early "funny" Celine, speaks solidly to those who are disaffected, discontented, and disaffiliated, and yet who want to react to life positively. With its occasional affirmations couched in terms of pain and cynical laughter, it makes nihilism seem natural, ordinary, even appealing...." (Karl 21).

In a nutshell, *Catch-22* is a novel that reveals what is behind the scene of glory of war and its pride. It shows how most soldiers were obliged to sacrifice their lives because high ranked officers told them so. The lives and the deaths of soldiers meant absolutely the same for the superior officers, because in a corrupted army the better the rank the more access to bureaucracy. Heller came up with a theory that says; the government speaks by the voice of bureaucrats the power-hungry who nothing really matters for them more than their own personal interest. When reading *Catch-22*, the reader should forget all what he knows about war and what's coming from it and start to learn what's going on between the lines. Not the lines of the literary work but the lines of history.

3. Summary of the Novel

In *Catch-22* there is a plot, there is something happening or happened and it is reported in some way in the story, but the way it narrated is different than any other novel. The setting of the novel is on an island called Pianosa in the west of Italy where a squadron that is called 256th Squadron that belongs to the American army is used as an attacking point on the German army in the WWII. The protagonist John Yossarian 28 year old who is a

bombardier who was ordered to fly a certain number of missions in order to return back home like any airman in the squadron. However, Yossarian had flown enough number of missions, he still couldn't go back home because Colonel Cathcart who is in charge of the squadron raised the number of missions from 35 to 55 and from 55 to 75 mission. Here starts the quest of John Yossarian to find a way to drop off the front line. From time to time Yossarian visits the hospital of the squadron pretending and faking that he is sick in order to keep himself off the front line as much as he could, so as he figures out a way to avoid going in missions.

He found out from Doc Daneeka, the doctor of the squadron, that he can't drop off because there is a catch that he should follow in order to be given a green light to drop off. The catch says that if a soldier wants to drop off the war he had to claim that he is insane, but by doing so he will be considered sane and there is no way that he would be grounded. In addition, the soldier should do that himself and nobody else. There is something funny and satirical written in the catch; it is noted that the catch should not be read. The catch is called "Catch 22" which is the title of the novel. The story in the novel is almost told from the perspective of Yossarian or related to him.

The death of Snowden in an aerial accident was the changing point for Yossarian who started to question where the Snowdens of the last years were. Yossarian lost completely the desire of being a part of the war because his life was in danger and it was not because of him. His superior officers easily volunteered him and his friends to do risky bombing missions in order to get their reputation and rank enhanced. The rule *Catch 22* is the second point that the novel is about. *Catch-22* itself had different interpretations throughout the novel. First, it is the law that allows the soldiers to avoid war if they apply to some conditions, which are totally inapplicable. Second, it is a law that is forbidden to be read by anyone except those who made it. Along with Yossarian story and the law catch 22 other stories step into the line of the plot like the story of Natally and his lover from Italy and later his death, McWatt story, CID men, Major Major, and Milo Minderbinder and his syndicate by which he could sell all what army provides and built an enterprise.

After the death of Natally, Yossarian refused completely to fly anymore missions, so he started to walk the streets of Rome, and neglecting all orders about flying missions. He was arrested for disobeying orders. In order to have Yossarian released with honourable discharge from the army, Colonel Cathcart and Colonel Korn gave Yossarian a choice to approve their policies and that would make all men in his squadron to fly 80 missions before going back

home. The second choice was to face a court-martial with the charge of disobeying orders. Yossarian had to find a way out that could work for him, so he fled to the neutral Sweden to join his friend Orr who faked his death to avoid war.

4. Postmodern Aspects in Heller's *Catch-22*

As it was mentioned in the introduction of this chapter, *Catch-22* is celebrated as the best example of a postmodernist literature. Heller put so many aspects related to postmodern world and philosophy that gave the work postmodern features.

4. a Temporal Disorder

From the way the narration starts, our first contact with the novel makes us surely believe that the narrative technique of *Catch-22* is different from any other novel. Taking for instance, the novel *The Slaughterhouse* written by Kurt Vonnegut is similar to *Catch-22* but in fact it is more fragmented, or the novel by Tim O'Brien *The Things They Carried* that focuses on the action scenes and the feelings of the characters. The characters in *Catch-22* seem to be mad; Yossarian pretends to be sick in order not to be sent to do more missions. Dunbar, Yossarian's best friend, prefers to spend time by doing boring things in order to lengthen his time at the ward of the hospital. The Texan, an adorable man, keeps talking about patriotism as a way to show off his love for the country. As we read the first passages, we keep waiting to read for a sane person who would make a difference till we realize that all characters are mad in a mad world. The events are carried out in a very fragmented manner sometimes even ambiguously funny. They start from nowhere and, as they stated they simply end that sometimes the reader does not realize that till he starts to read for another event.

A developing narrative of any novel starts by setting scenes that conceptualize the problematic of the novel then followed by events that develop and cause the problematic of the novel, then, the problematic is solved. Heller's plotless novel is mainly about characters and their relationship with Yossarian. He does not mention that this character is his best friend or that character is the enemy, but he lets the reader figure it out through the conversations and reactions of Yossarian with other characters. The subject matter of the novel starts at the middle end of it, when facts start to reveal and the humour is turned to a deep epiphany mixed with mockery. Furthermore, the narration line is made up of flashbacks and memories and the only thing that keeps us tracking the line of the novel is the rising number of missions. Heller

puts the plot of the novel in a careful disordered manner by mixing different events and characters and time periods. Heller's technique is to jump from one time period to another, one moment you are sure you are reading for a present, the next moment you feel like you are standing in the scene where Snowden died. Sometimes it drives the reader to read passage twice to make sure that he is reading what he sees.

We can only have a glimpse of the concept of the novel while reading but we actually start to have epiphanies once we finish reading. For instance, the chapter that talks about Chief White Halfoat or the chapter that talks about Major Major, are chapters in which Heller leaves the plot line to tell the story inside the story. Once Heller is finished you feel like you almost forgot the last point in the narrative which obliges you to go back and read few passages earlier to establish a link. Once I read some reviews about the novel, some people commented that they could not read 100 pages straight without going back to the start in an attempt to figure out the plot line. The joy of *Catch-22* lies in its plotless narration which drives the reader to be prepared to quick shifts from one subject to another. The novel ends with a climax that is the death of Snowden which happened way back before many other events and had been fore grounded to throughout the novel.

It is an advantage point for Heller that he forces his readers to laugh at something that they do not understand. Moreover, they admit it as true even if it seems ambiguous. His techniques in narration make the understanding of the novel impossible for the readers who read it for the first time which obliges them to re-read it to understand it better.

4. b Order in Chaos

Law, order, chaos and disorder were among the main focus of Heller, especially, the chaos that is made by "bureaucratic order". He even dedicated a major sector of the novel to describe how disordered the world would be if it is governed by a bureaucratic rule, and it is.

"He woke up blinking with a slight pain in his head and opened his eyes upon a world boiling in chaos in which everything was in proper order." (Heller 149)

The chaotic world that was created within and after the Second World War gave the exact conditions to J. Heller to come up with a brilliant novel as *Catch-22*. He even added a new term to the language which stands a testimony for the gifted imagination of J Heller. One

of the major factors that Heller mocked in his novel was law. The law that Heller criticized is the law of postmodern period that is meant to be subjective and serves the goals of a particular group over another (see chapter one), characterized by more fragmentation and less morality, and designed for personal interest rather than public interest. The novel took its name from a law that prevents soldiers to be grounded. Catch-22 is a law that looks simple and easy to be applied at first, but when indulging into details, it confuse its reader by its illogic argument. Catch-22 was described in a number of scenes throughout the novel. The most significant one was when Doc Daneeka explained this law to Yossarian.

Sure there is a catch" Doc Daneeka replied: "Catch-22. Anyone who wants to get out of combat duty isn't really crazy. There was only one catch and that was Catch-22, which specified that a concern for one's own safety in the face of dangers that were real ad immediate was the process of a rational mind. Orr was crazy and could be grounded. All he had to do was ask, and as soon as he did, he would no longer be crazy and would have to fly more missions, Orr would be crazy to fly more missions and sane if he didn't, but if he was sane he had to fly them. If he flew them he was crazy and didn't have to, but if he didn't want to he was sane and had to. Yossarian was moved very deeply by the absolute simplicity of this clause of Catch-22 and let out a respectful whistle. (Heller 46)

Law is the companion of the word order. Law can achieve order even in disorder. In *Catch-22*, law that is meant to make order is carefully disordered so as it does not make sense for the ones who read it, or object it; but it makes sense for the ones who apply it. At the chapter of The Eternal City, Yossarian realizes that, catch-22 is applied on people and soldiers alike, and it is unwritten law but it is worked with. At this exact point we realize that bureaucracy has no logic argument by which it is managed. The only logic that bureaucracy stands for is "anything should be done for whatever cost.

"There must have been a reason,' Yossarian persisted, pounding his fist into his hand. 'They couldn't just barge here and chase everyone out.'

'No reason,' wailed the old woman. 'No reason.'

'What right did they have?'

'Catch-22'... '*What?*' Yossarian froze in his tracks with fear and alarm and felt his whole body begin to tingle, '*What* did you say?'

'Catch-22' the old woman repeated, rocking her head up and down. 'Catch-22, Catch-22 says they have the right to do anything we can't stop them from doing.'

'What the hell are you talking about?' Yossarian shouted at her in bewildered, furious protest. 'How did you know it was Catch-22? Who the hell told you it was Catch-22?' 'Didn't they show it to you?' Yossarian demanded, stamping about in anger and distress. 'Didn't you even make them read it?'

'They don't have to show us Catch-22,' the old woman answered.

'The law says they don't have to.'(420)

In another scene, Major Major made a law that just as confusing as catch-22 in which he allows people to visit him in his office only when he is not inside. He made this rule by using his position as a squadron commander to impose it on the rest of the squadron. Since there is disorder that is made by authority, bureaucracy can be related to the idea of disorder. It has a great share in *Catch-22* along with law that they both have been discussed throughout the novel in different manners. The passage is both ironic and funny, especially when knowing that Major Major was getting in and out of his office from a window. It makes the reader laugh at the senseless conversation between Major Major and his men.

"From now on I don't want anyone to come in to see me while I'm here is that clear?.'Yes, sir' said Sergeant Towser. 'Does this include me?'

'Yes'.....'What shall I say to people who do come to see you while you're here?'

'Tell them I'm in and ask them to wait.'

'Yes, sir. For how long?'

'Until I've left'..... said Major Major. Don't come in to clean, either. Don't come in for anything unless you're sure I'm not here.'

'Yes, sir. But how can I always be sure?'

'If you're not sure, just assume that I am here and go away until you are sure. Is that clear?'

Yes sir'" (Heller104).

Rules of the squadron say that a soldier had to do whatever his superior officer says. In this sense, Major Major is as bureaucratic as Colonel Cathcart who keeps killing his men in order to get promoted. Major Major was promoted the day he arrived by a mistake of IBM machine that listed his name as, Major Major Major Major. In the exact same day he was promoted to become the squadron commander by Colonel Cathcart. As we read passages that contain Major Major's life, we would laugh sardonically at how mediocre his life was. "Some men are born mediocre, some men achieve mediocrity, and some men have mediocrity thrust upon them. With Major Major it had been all three. Even among men lacking all distinction he inevitably stood out as a man lacking more distinction than all the rest and people who met him were always impressed by how unimpressive he was." (86)

It is both a confusing and funny scene that Heller tried to reveal us through the reactions of Major Major that bureaucracy is a carefully and intentionally disordered to make sense only when it is not understood.

4. c Sanity vs. Insanity

The scene in which Nately and an old man had a conversation about what is nationality and patriotism and other values is a significant scene that really brings up the second idea of the novel (insanity). The old man witnessed the WWI and WWII and his vision about the war is that Italy has been losing war ever since but it continued to live in prosperity. As the old man said:

"The real trick lies in losing wars, in knowing what wars could be lost... Italy won a war in Ethiopia and promptly stumbled into serious trouble. Victory gave us such insane delusions of grandeur that we helped start a world

war we hadn't a chance of winning. But now that we are losing again, everything has taken a turn for the better, and we will certainly come out on the top again if we succeed in being defeated."(252).

The old man almost stated that the saner you think you are in an insane world, the more insane you truly are. By playing with the element of double irony, Heller convinces us that the crazier our conceptions are the more logic they could be. The speech of the old man seems ambiguous, but what Heller was aiming to was that the feeling of superiority is what let war broke out. When the old man talked about losing war he didn't certainly mean that wars are meant to be lost but they are meant to never break out even. The old man answered Natel, when Natel started to talk about heroism and patriotism; Italy won the war by being defeated because Italy is not losing any men anymore, in contrary, America is losing war because its men are dying. Though, the speech of the old man can be associated with the idea of deconstruction by Jacques Derrida. The idea that had been discussed in the first chapter. The old man represents the literary idea of deconstruction by taking all the claims of Natel to form opposite concepts that equal Natel's in logical assumption. Whereas Natel represents the idea of metanarrative that denotes that all people should believe in universal truths. Natel can also represent the theory of representation (simulacra) by Baudrillard that stands for the notion that real life becomes a representation of a virtual one. Natel kept representing America and American army in as ideal as should be not as it is. Natel representing America in an ideal manner: "America is the strongest and most prosperous nation on earth...the only thing that I believe is America is going to win the war..." (252) but the old man kept telling him Italy is doing so well in war whereas America was doing so poorly. A passage by Natel and the old man about heroism and patriotism:

"...You see? Imagine a man his age risking what little life he has for something as absurd as a country. Natel was instantly up in arms again. 'There is nothing so absurd about risking your life for your country!' he declared. 'Isn't there?' asked the old man. 'What is a country? A country is a piece of land surrounded on all sides with boundaries, usually unnatural. Englishmen are dying for English, Americans are dying for America, Germans are dying for Germany, and Russians are dying for Russia. There are now fifty or sixty

countries fighting in this war. Surely so many countries can't all be worth dying for.' 'Anything worth living for,' said Nately 'is worth dying for.' 'And anything worth dying for is worth,' answered the sacrilegious old man, 'is certainly worth living for.....'Because it's better to die on one's feet than to live on one's knees,' Nately retorted with triumphant and lofty conviction. 'I guess you've heard that saying before.' 'Yes I certainly have,' mused the treacherous old man, smiling again. 'But I'm afraid you have it backward. It is better to live on one's feet than die on one's knees that is the way the saying goes.' (Heller 254)

For the old man, to be a hero is to live on one's feet not to die on them. For Nately, heroism is the other way around. If someone is a hero because he died in the war then what's the meaning of his death or as Yossarian wondered: "Where are the Snowdens of yesteryears?" (Catch-22 33). If people live to make a difference for the world it would be more worthy than to die and make a difference for themselves. "It doesn't make a d***** bit of difference who wins the war to someone who's dead." (128). The WWII and WWI were wars in which multiple nationalities made allies against each other. The concept of dying for the country is not approved to have any sense, because Germans were shooting any subject that belongs to Allies and the vice versa. The old man could not understand why Americans were dying for defending Italy and not America, though, he is pro-Americans. If Nately claims that he is fighting to protect his country, then why doesn't he fight Germans in US of America? The old man thinks that they rather live for a concept or an ideology or a country that they believe in than to die for. Insanity is to think like a madman but to live a sane one as the old man stated at his conversation with Nately.

Yossarian as well seems to be insane when stood against a whole society. If characters could be insane to stand for their own belief, then Yossarian is the craziest character ever. His madness falls at the belief that he is crazy in a lunatic world. He is concerned more about his own safety in face of danger, than the orders of his commanding officer. Throughout the novel we have seen many faces and stages of insanity in war. Colonel Cathcart is a type of the characters that create insanity and mixed it with bureaucracy. Hungry Joe for instance is a character that is completely convinced that there is no way to get out the mess of bureaucracy and tried to keep up with it the best he could. Yossarian had been hurt so much with the insanity of war and made many attempts to avoid ending up like his friends. He tried that he

put so much effort in the process of skipping that he choose to put himself in danger then to let other man feel the terrifying moments he felt. Heller puts Yossarian in a position of individual against society; perfectly insane against orderly sane just to prove to us that sometimes our belief or convection can put us in a situation when others would see insane whereas they are. "From now on I'm thinking only of me." Major Danby replied indulgently with a superior smile: "But, Yossarian, suppose everyone felt that way." "Then," said Yossarian, "I'd certainly be a d***** fool to feel any other way, wouldn't I?" (461)

In the previous passages, Heller made sure that his novel is anti-war and anti-society in some sense. His discussion of the notion of victory and heroism through a fragmented way, and associating it with the idea of deconstruction by Jacques Derrida, simulacra by Lyotard, and metanarrative by Baudrillard. Heller once again enlightens us by his creative imagination the best it is said about is brilliant.

4. d Absurdity, Irony and Hyperreality

Catch-22 very first chapters are full of humour and laughable situations; however, it is not the comedy that is meant for comedy. Heller's sense of humour in this novel is to put the reader in the context to make him aware of fictionalising of events. Its use in this novel is meant to open the eyes and drive the attention of the readers to discover hidden facts or admit them. As Heller puts it "I wanted people to laugh and then look back in horror at what they were laughing at." In many scenes throughout the novel, we feel the presence of hidden or neglected facts that are brought to life as an evidence for the absurdity that suffocated the life of individuals.

One of the funniest and absurd scenes in the novel is the scene in which Clevinger stood up in front of a court and he was asked if his father is a high ranked officer or a governmental senator. When Clevinger said his father is dead, they accused him and sentenced him for duty punishment; for a charge that neither him nor them knew. Major Major's decision about the way people should visit him only when he is not in his office. It is an absurd scene that combines humour and irony. The fact his men had to obey him at the senseless process would show us how bureaucracy is a little world that governs a bigger one. The absurdity already exists in the war and the bureaucracy only made it worse.

For instance, the rising number of missions by Colonel Cathcart or the claim that Doc Daneeka died in a plane crash just because a list of passengers said so. The latter can be both absurd and ironic sense of humour.

Heller used irony and satires war process and the sense of chauvinism through mocking the basic arguments of them. Heller is not saying that war against Hitler is bad, but he influences on the way war was carried out and for what reasons.

Heller made the real world as if it doesn't exist through his experiment on Yossarian's over questioning about the real meaning of his life or death. Through Yossarian point of view and reactions, Heller described how unreal and meaningless could life be when coming to situations when the life or death of people depends on the decisions of other people. As if soldiers are there to die, come to war to die, they are born to die and high military had to benefit from the death to get promoted.

4. e The Collapse of Metanarrative

Back to the old man Nately's conversation when they had a conversation about what is a country? Patriotism? Or nationalism. In postmodernism, the subject of "Metanarratives" or "big narratives" is denied and often replaced by small narratives. The beliefs that all people should believe in the same world is no longer applicable. For instance, Yossarian's concern that everybody was trying to kill him is small narrative his own concern that everyone was trying to kill him. He even included Colonel Cathcart who is his commanding officer and never missed a chance to volunteer Yossarian and his friends to do dangerous flying missions. Clevinger, Yossarian's friend, has a similar situation when he was sent to court sentenced to punishment duty for a crime that he didn't even know. Later on he realizes that he was punished because those officers in the court hated him, for no obvious reason.

“These three men who hated [Clevinger] spoke his language and wore his uniform, but he saw their loveless faces set immutably into cramped, mean lines of hostility and understood instantly that nowhere in the world, not in all the fascist tanks or planes or submarines, not in the bunker behind the machine guns or mortars or behind the blowing flame throwers, not even among all the expert gunners of the crack Hermann Goering Antiaircraft Division or among the grisly connivers in all the beer halls in Munich and everywhere else, were there men who hated him more.”(Heller 81).

In this passage, Heller describes how much did men from Clevinger's country and army hated him more than Germans who were his enemies. The hatred of those three officers was a personal matter. As Yossarian defines enemy as: "The enemy.... is anybody who's going to get you killed no matter which side he is on, and that includes Colonel Cathcart, and don't you forget that because the longer you remember it, the longer you might live." (*Catch-22* 129). What Heller meant through the definition of "enemy" is that the metanarrative that stands for Germans were the enemies because they oppose the American army is wrong. First, we need to distinguish one who wants you to die for their personal interest from those who wants you to die because his orders said so. The first type is one meant in the passage of Yossarian.

Heller's point of view about patriotism is useful when authority make sense. By considering patriotism as a way of showing chauvinism, and governmental activities as being fragmented, showing patriotism in such conditions makes it a laughable situation. He also likes to think of heroism as to live and fight in another day rather than to die and never be remembered again. The climax of the novel (the death of Snowden) can be considered as the first mark in which Heller treated the idea of metanarrative. The death of Snowden made Yossarian re-question his own beliefs.

4. f Words Cannot Communicate Logic

The scene in which Yossarian deleted words from the letters of soldiers based on his rules drives our attention to ask why Yossarian is doing so. We consider words as way of communication and in this case it is the only way in which soldiers can communicate to their beloved ones. We realize later that what Yossarian was trying to tell us is that words effect is very little when it comes to the bureaucratic rules. Nevertheless, bureaucratic rules are traps made of words, but those words are used to convey an illogical concept (*Catch-22*). Whenever the men of squadron try to use logic to understand illogic they are confused of the deep illogical sense of the bureaucratic rules. Logical argument stands for logical basis and sense, whereas illogical argument stands for absolutely everything illogical. Logical argument is limited to the logical sense, whereas, illogical argument is unlimited to anything. For instance, killing is morally and religiously bad, because taking someone's life for no reason is a crime. But when it comes to illogic, if someone may kill another person because he was standing in his way, then the argument here is that the dead person was standing in the way of the murderer. Law mainly punishes people when they do illogical crimes, crimes that are done for

Chapter Two Order and Disorder in Joseph Heller's Catch 22

illogical reason. In *Catch-22*, law itself is illogical, let alone what it stands for. It traps your logic sense by giving you words that are played with to let you in a confused state of mind by questioning the basis of *Catch-22*.

To conclude, most war novels discuss the war as scene for courage, honour and pride. Or tell stories from a perspective of ordinary people during war. In *Catch-22*, war is mocked by the way it is carried out. Law means disorder and national values are described as laughable jokes. *Catch-22* is a great food of thoughts of discussion whether in military, society, philosophy, or even psychology. Heller's mixture of different techniques drives his readers to have delusions while reading sometimes even confused and non-sense. As soon as the reader puts the book away epiphanies start to rain out of nowhere.

Catch-22 is a food of thoughts that allows its readers have rich discussions about bureaucracy, law, history, war, philosophy and many other aspects. The third chapter tries in some way to build up some of these ideas that are discussed in the novel. The previous chapter discussed the novel based on a postmodernist reading, whereas, this one will discuss deeper ideas that the novel highlighted.

Some ideas that are related to the novel but are not mentioned in the previous chapter. The ideas discussed in this part are related to the context as well as the content.

1.The Logic of Surviving in a Lunatic World:

Heller plays with words in a way that seems so smooth that readers may agree on anything written in the novel. “It is a triumph of Mr. Heller’s skill that he is so quickly able to persuade us 1) that the most lunatic are the most logical, and 2) that it is our conventional standards which lack any logical consistency.” (Brustein 2008). Convincing the readers that some of their convictions are actually not right is an advantage point for Joseph Heller. He could turn the sane to the insane and the right to the wrong. A close enough reading to *Catch-22* enlightens us to discover facts about the postmodern world in a literary frame. Probably one of our convictions is to believe in the ideals and believe that government is the source of order and rationality. By using the techniques of postmodernist literature, Heller made *Catch-22* a copy of the actual postmodern world that has many interrelated aspects. Surviving in a lunatic world as a postmodern one obliges us to use illogical arguments to understand logic in a way that seems ambiguously funny.

The protagonist J. Yossarian’s logic in surviving is to try all the possible ways he could. Since everyone was trying to kill him, he avoided being in situations where he could not have decisions that protect him. Yossarian used his jaundice as a way to prevent his superior leaders from sending him to do more missions. Though his argument is weaker than to be called an argument, it seems to be his only solution to keep himself safe. He seemed to be the only sane character who acts in an insane way, whereas, the rest of the characters seemed to be drowned in a bureaucratic setting. As Heller once said: “what does a sane person do in an insane world. Though the book seems to have some funny comic qualities that make it laughable, its humour has deeper implications. “...Heller will never use comedy for its own sake; each joke has a wider significance in the intricate pattern, so that laughter becomes a prologue for some grotesque revelation.”(17). He uses humour to transmit a message that is implicitly hidden within the lines.

Irony and double irony is what we find in *Catch-22*. It is basically a trap of words that creates a sort of laughter but as the reader starts to laugh at; likewise, he starts to understand the message is in those lines. It may seem as if Yossarian is a coward personality that runs away from duty because he sees his friends dying one by one. He is concerned about his own safety because words and actions have little to communicate. The fact that his friends died for nothing makes him try to live for something. At the worst case he was going to die for attempting to escape from the army, but at least his dying in attempt is acceptable. Heller makes it clear that surviving in a mad world implies making our convictions crazy in order to make our point more logic. He also convinces us that swimming with the current is not all the time right.

2. An Anti-war and Anti-statuo-quo Novel

When the old man and Natally had that conversation, or argument, Heller made his point clear about war and the way he sees the governmental laws and flaws. He made an example by turning the right concepts to wrong ones with logical arguments. The text explains the point of view that Heller wants to highlight.

Through the story of Chief White Halfoat, Heller represented the greedy spirit of Americans in order to get more money and power by exploiting the land of Red Indians and kicking them out from their oil-rich land. The psychiatrist who was appointed to look after Yossarian was unqualified; because, instead of listening to Yossarian's problem he started to share his. Since bureaucracy is the main theme of *Catch-22*, bureaucrats and patriots are on Heller's list as well. He created the character of the Texan, Lieutenant Scheisskopf, Colonel Cathcart and many others to fulfil this idea. Their actions revealed their way of thinking. The boys who occupied the place of Orr in the tent of Yossarian are that kind of boys who came to war thinking that they can defeat the enemy by showing off. Since Heller dedicated 3 chapters to describe the personality of Milo (Milo, Milo the militant, and Milo the Mayor) he certainly wanted to reflect or focus on a particular aspect of this character. Milo had a syndicate made of trade companies that transform food and other supplies from army to other places of the world. By stealing anything and putting a note that said: "what is good for the M.M syndicate is good for the country", he developed his syndicate to the extent that he thought he could bribe the American government to let him pass a store of Egyptian cotton (16). Heller does not say that war against Hitler is wrong or that moral values should be discarded, but rather he

criticize the way war was carried by individuals. War profiteers as Colonel Cathcart and Milo are highlighted in the novel through the depiction of the syndicate which activities are inhumane. After all, he doesn't criticize the system of government but the people standing behind it, the bureaucrats who use the voice of the government for their personal benefit.

In addition, Heller criticised the governmental activities in the Korean War, Cold War as well as McCarthyism.

3.Avoiding the Characteristics of Tradition in Writing

The traditional novel is a novel that focuses on a main character and his/her development in terms of a particular field, sociologically or psychologically. By keeping the form of introduction, body, conclusion with events that happen to the character or the character contributes in. Moreover, it provides a plot and a theme to discuss. A postmodern novel does not apply the traditional scheme of narration or plot or climax or characters. We don't find in a postmodern novel a prince or king is always a principle character, but we rather find a character who is a boy or a normal man who is living his life in a usual manner. It provides us with two points of view, the critics and readers.

Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* provides the model, a novel that combines critical success with popular acclaim to degree that the book's title enters the language. Heller's novel also provides a technical example: "Heller had figured out a copy of outdoing the actuality, employing the illogic of modern warfare as a metaphor for the more general denaturing of American reality " (37). Heller's approach is to push absurdities of modern warfare and, by extension, modern American life to humourous satirical extreme, while also reaching a formidably large number of readers. (Green 2005)

Joseph Heller followed no traditional scheme in narrating *Catch 22*. He starts by a present event then he switch between past memories and character's description takes the fiction element and mixed it with irony. It is crowded with events that seem humourously fragmented. Instead of having the concept that the government is doing its job and the threat comes from the outside, Heller gives us the chance to experience how the government could betray its people and ends up in causing chaos. Not only, had Joseph Heller used the concept of war and makes mocked it, but also, how people would lose faith in their governmental officials and laws when they don't make real sense. Most war novels discuss the idea of

personal experiments, eyewitness, and testimony of wartime, In addition to, pride, honour and sacrifice. J. Heller tells us, through discussing what is between the lines, that not all soldiers wanted to die for honour, not all soldiers lived with dignity and died in combat, furthermore, not all officers get promoted because they were brave enough to fight along with their men.

4. An Anti-novel

The abnormal fragmented structure of *Catch 22* can make a reader who is reading it for the first time get confused. Rather than having an introduction, body, conclusion in the novel, *Catch-22* gives us chapters that are not interrelated, just occasionally, and mainly end in a fragmented way. Most chapters contain characters' description or flashbacks and memories. In the middle of the novel we start to sense the presence of "now". The death of Snowden seems to be the climax of the novel; however, it had happened before many events of the novel. In the beginning of the novel we come across the flashbacks of this death and keeps coming in a number of situations in the novel. So instead of having the climax in the body of the novel we will come across it at the end, when everything seems to be unresolved. The climax itself is an event that happened way before other events; it shows how Heller went off the normal traditional way of narrating the story. The end of the novel is open ended, where the reader is left to make interpretations; such as, Dunbar's disappearance or Clevinger's death as being real death or an escaping as Orr's, or how the squadron would become after Scheisskopf became a general.

5. Pro-Protagonist and Anti-Hero

The protagonist of *Catch 22* Captain John Yossarian is not a hero. He is concerned about his safety in face of danger. Survival at all costs is what makes him faking his illness in order to avoid being sent in flying missions. Though he has little moral values, he cares about his friends lives as he cares about his. His fear that he would die because he does not have the choice to decide when it comes to safety and death, makes him flee from the squadron to Sweden at the end of the novel.

A hero is traditionally defined as the principle sympathetic character that exhibit admirable traits such as idealism, courage and integrity (Gale Cengage learning, 2010). The anti-hero lacks the normal characteristics of a hero but rather does not trust in conventional values and is unable to be committing to any ideals. Instead of feeling powerful over their world and

situation the anti-hero often feels helpless and that they have no control over their situations and the world around them.(Editors of 20th century philosophy).

The hero believes in metanarratives and have morals values. The protagonist does not believe much in religion or in morals codes and values but he makes his own beliefs and values that correspond to his kind of logic.

6.The Style of Writing

The events described in the novel are repeated so often to give the effect of humour. The way the events are told makes the readers feel as if they had already dealt with the events before. Some words and phrases and passages (Snowden's Death) are repeated. By using Circular Reasoning, Heller paradoxically showed relation of some characters with others. The paradox of the Texan for instance, though the Texan is a good natured and respectful man in three days no one could stand him. Heller tried to have a second or third perspective about what an enemy could be. He obviously said that the first enemy against America was American bureaucrats who tried to get American soldiers for their own benefits.

Though, the novel belongs to the genre of war novels, Heller never mentioned the Nazi German as an enemy. "The enemy.... is anybody who's going to get you killed no matter which side he is on, and that includes Colonel Cathcart, and don't you forget that because the longer you remember it, the longer you might live." (Catch-22 129). A paradoxical aspect in Catch-22 is to be a war novel and to discuss the WWII but not mentioning the Germans as enemies. Discussing this idea opens the door to the discussion of other ideas one of which is the concepts, was the war a personnel matter? Since US and its allies declare the war against Nazi German as a system or nation, man to man fight was a matter of orders from superior officers rather than a personnel matter. The novel highlighted this idea in the event when Clevinger was judged by a court that held him in custody without a charge.

These three men who hated [Clevinger] spoke his language and wore his uniform, but he saw their loveless faces set immutably into cramped, mean lines of hostility and understood instantly that nowhere in the world, not in all the fascist tanks or planes or submarines, not in the bunker behind the machine guns or mortars or behind the blowing flame throwers, not even among all the expert gunners of the crack Hermann Goering Antiaircraft Division or among

the grisly connivers in all the beer halls in Munich and everywhere else, were there men who hated him more.(Catch-22 81).

The idea of profiting from the outcomes of war and taking the mess caused by the war as a cover had been tackled by Heller. Milo and Colonel Cathcart, the two prominent characters in Heller's *Catch-22* represent the idea of taking benefits from war. Milo made a syndicate out of the military supplies and used the American aircraft to distribute those goods. Milo is an American subject who is supposed to work for the national interest, however, he made a deal with the Germans by letting them bombing the squadron camp. The idea of who is the enemy of whom and what is a national unity is dealt with carefully by Heller in this section of the novel.

8.The Language of the Novel

Catch-22 kind of language varied from being direct and indirect, simple and complicated. Heller often used irony in his discourse that makes his language in *Catch-22* so kaleidoscopic. The meaning can vary from many meanings, confusing meanings, no meaning at all. The scenes when Heller used simple language are in the description of scenes or the description of character. Sometimes he seems to use irony in the discourse which gives the notion of complex simplicity. That is conveying very deep meanings by very simple language.

7.The Rising Number of Missions

Colonel Cathcart is best known by his bureaucratic policy that obliges man to do his men to obey his orders even if their lives are in danger. He has a number of actions in the novel which shows his greedy ambitious self. The rising number of missions was more than just an element that developed the concept of the novel, but rather a marker of time. As the reader reads *Catch-22*, he is certainly is going to get lost in the labyrinth of the events. The time marker in *Catch-22* is not dates or hours but rather the rising number of missions. From 25 up to 80 throughout the novel, Heller takes our attention and put it in dilemma through the narration. The only thing that makes sense in the first reading is that the missions keep rising. The unset narration line is crowded with flashbacks, characters' description, and memories that make the meaning generally confusing or without has multiple interpretations.

9. Main Characters

Characters in *Catch-22* are mainly connected to Yossarian. There are few characters that do not have any relationship with Yossarian. Through the events of the novel there are characters who continuously get involved in the action going on.

9.a. John Yossarian

an American bombardier who is one of the men of the squadron 254. Though the story of Yossarian starts with the first page of the novel, we start to conceptualize his personality through his actions, feelings, reactions, and the flashbacks he encounters from time to time. The death of “Snowden” the 18 year old gunner who was killed in his first mission, affected the perspective of Yossarian about war. We come to realize later that Yossarian was as “nationalistic” as Nately before the death of Snowden. As the world around Yossarian grows crazy, he tried to fight back with every way he could to avoid getting killed. For Yossarian death as we know it is inevitable but death that is caused by others is what really annoys Yossarian.

9.b. Colonel Cathcart

He is the commanding officer of Yossarian’s squadron. He is so ambitious to become a general. Throughout the novel his name is always related to bureaucratic rules or activities (Milo syndicate, the rising numbers of missions, abusive decisions ... etc). Colonel Cathcart only wishes to become a general as General Dreedle at whatever cost. That meant that as Yossarian was trying his best to avoid going in missions, Colonel Cathcart was doing his best as well. He is so full of ambition that turned him greedy, and used his position to abuse his men’s lives for his own benefits.

9.c. Milo Minderbinder

Milo was the mess officer of the squadron, but his experience in economy made his grow big as he established a syndicate of trading. The syndicate was a group of companies in which the supplies of the military were used as goods and were smuggled across the world. Though, Milo has two sayings he always repeated “what’s good for M&M Enterprises is good for the country”, “everyone has a share”, he continuously break his sayings through his actions. In a funny way, Heller brings the claims of the economic systems (Capitalism and

Communism as well) and put them on experiment. The character of Milo Minderbinder is meant to represent those people who benefit from chaos.

To sum up, along with the satirical and philosophical ideas discussed in *Catch-22*, there are also ideas related to political and literary aspect. The ideas discussed in this chapter contribute to concept of the novel. *Catch-22* is not only full of the aspects of postmodern world, but also political points of view and many literary devices.

General Conclusion

To conclude, war as a factor effects not only the countries participated in it, but also the psyche of people who were effected by. Since the concept of modernism and postmodernism rose as a result to WWI and WWII, the main discussion that was going on was based on the drawbacks of war. Modernity means renewing the old terms and ideas , because they no more fulfil the task required. Modernism tried in some way to control the change that was taking place by producing literary works describes the chaos and seeks for restoring order. Postmodernists took the idea of disorder and fragmentation in and developed it as a literary device. The use of fragmentation in literature does not necessarily mean that the work will never be understood but that the work can be understood if it is read over enough. This thesis concentrated on the part of literature in the postmodern world; however, postmodernism has a share in the discussion too. Post structuralism and postmodernism are often coined as being the same; nonetheless, Postmodernism is used to refer to the cultural movement that appeared in the period after the war world two. Post structuralism is a literary criticism and often associated with feminism. The literature of postmodern period differs from other kinds of literature for being generative and creative. The meaning is not determined by authors but by readers (plurality of meaning). Language is often played with in postmodern literature. Readers of postmodern literature had to work out their minds to deduce meanings.

Many factors contributed to the classification of *Catch-22* as a postmodern literature. It is considered as an anti-novel and anti-hero because the plot is not organized in a clear chronological order and the events start and end abruptly. The essential character does not believe in moral values or metanarratives which fit the term "protagonist" rather than "hero". J. Heller criticized the governmental laws and war itself in the novel by inserting different stories that shows the power of bureaucracy that governs the lives of individuals. War in a postmodern world is an inevitability but the ambiguous bureaucratic way in which war was carried out is what made Heller satires the system of army. Along with irony, order, disorder, surviving comes the concept of *Catch-22* the law that conceptualizes the main interest of J Heller. The brilliance of Heller in making fiction look as reality permitted him to add a new term to the language.

Joseph Heller use a great number of postmodern literature's characteristics (Temporal Disorder, hyperreality, fragmentation and ironyetc) to create a work that could survive for more than 60 years after its first publication. It is a rare work in which war against enemies is not praised but rather discarded.

Appendix:

1.b Reviews about Catch 22

A review by The Socialist Party of Great Britain describes the book as being brilliant, powerful, and bitter. The reason why they classified it as such was that Heller's *Catch 22* and in a mood of satire and irony showed what war is really like. The honour, glory, and medals are just modifiers to make war be seen as a positive thing. The socialist party about the book in general is that it should be read in order to be given its true rank among the books of all time.

The New York Times reviewed the book as: "A monumental artifact of contemporary American literature, almost as assured of longevity as the statues on Easter Island.... *Catch 22* is a novel that reminds us once again of all that we have taken for granted in our world and should not, the madness we try not to bother and notice, the deceptions and falsehoods we lack the will to try to distinguish from truth"

3.Terms used in the Novel.

AWOL: Absent w/o leave.

CID: Central Intelligence Division.

Flak: Antiaircraft artillery/ shells that explode in the air.

Milk Run: Easy bomb mission.

PX: Commissary/ store for soldiers.

Strafe: to attack a position or troops on the ground with machine-gun fire from a low flying aircraft.

Wac: Women's Air Corps.

4.Powerful Quotes from the Novel

1. "Do you know how long a year takes when it's going away?" Dunbar repeated to Clevinger. 'This long.' He snapped his fingers. 'A second ago you were stepping into college with your lungs full of fresh air. Today you're an old man.'

'Old?' asked Clevinger with surprise. 'What are you talking about?'

'Old.' 'I'm not old.' 'You're inches away from death every time you go on a mission. How much older can you be at your age? A half minute before that you were stepping into high school, and an unhooked brassiere was as close as you ever hoped to get to Paradise. Only a fifth of a second before that you were a small kid with a ten-week summer vacation that lasted a hundred thousand years and still ended too soon. Zip! They go rocketing by so fast. How the hell else are you ever going to slow down?' Dunbar was almost angry when he finished.

'Well, maybe it is true,' Clevinger conceded unwillingly in a subdued tone. 'Maybe a long life does have to be filled with many unpleasant conditions if it's to seem long. But in that event, who wants one?'

'I do,' Dunbar told him.

'Why?' Clevinger asked.

'What else is there?'" (Joseph Heller, 1961)

2. "Some men are born mediocre, some men achieve mediocrity, and some men have mediocrity thrust upon them. With Major Major it had been all three. Even among men lacking all distinction he inevitably stood out as a man lacking more distinction than all the rest, and people who met him were always impressed by how unimpressive he was." (86).

3. " There was only one catch and that was Catch-22, which specified that a concern for one's safety in the face of dangers that were real and immediate was the process of a rational mind. Orr was crazy and could be grounded. All he had to do was ask; and as soon as he did, he would no longer be crazy and would have to fly more missions. Orr would be crazy to fly more missions and sane if he didn't, but if he was sane he had to fly them. If he flew them he was crazy and didn't have to; but if he didn't want to he was sane and had to. Yossarian was moved very deeply by the absolute simplicity of this clause of Catch-22 and let out a respectful whistle." (Heller, 46)

4. "From now on I don't want anyone to come in to see me while I'm here is that clear'. 'Yes, sir' said Sergeant Towser. 'Does this include me?'

'Yes'.....'What shall I say to people who do come to see you while you're here?'

'Tell them I'm in and ask them to wait.'

'Yes, sir. For how long?'

'Until I've left'..... said Major Major. Don't come in to clean, either. Don't come in for anything unless you're sure I'm not here.'

'Yes, sir. But how can I always be sure?'

'If you're not sure, just assume that I am here and go away until you are sure. Is that clear?'

Yes sir" (Heller 104).

5." You see? Imagine a man his age risking what little life he has for something so absurd as a country. Natally was instantly up in arms again. 'There is nothing so absurd about risking your life for your country!' he declared. 'Isn't there?' asked the old man. 'What is a country? A country is a piece of land surrounded on all sides with boundaries, usually unnatural. Englishmen are dying for English, Americans are dying for America, Germans are dying for Germany, Russians are dying for Russia. There are now fifty or sixty countries fighting in this war. Surely so many countries can't all be worth dying for.' 'Anything worth living for,' said Natally 'is worth dying for.' 'And anything worth dying for is worth,' answered the sacrilegious old man, 'is certainly worth living for.....'Because its better to die on one's feet then to live on one's knees,' Natally retorted with triumphant and lofty conviction. 'I guess you've heard that saying before.' ' Yes I certainly have,' mused the treacherous old man, smiling again. 'But I'm afraid you have it backward. It is better to live on one's feet than die on one's knees That is the way the saying goes.'"(254)

6.“What a lousy earth! He wondered how many people were destitute that same night even in his own prosperous country, how many homes were

shanties, how many husbands were drunk and wives socked, and how many children were bullied, abused, or abandoned. How many families hungered for food they could not afford to buy? How many hearts were broken? How many suicides would take place that same night, how many people would go insane? How many cockroaches and landlords would triumph? How many winners were losers, successes failures, and rich men poor men? How many wise guys were stupid? How many happy endings were unhappy endings? How many honest men were liars, brave men cowards, loyal men traitors, how many sainted men were corrupt, how many people in positions of trust had sold their souls to bodyguards, how many had never had souls? How many straight-and-narrow paths were crooked paths? How many best families were worst families and how many good people were bad people? When you added them all up and then subtracted, you might be left with only the children, and perhaps with Albert Einstein and an old violinist or sculptor somewhere.”

7. “Some men are born mediocre, some men achieve mediocrity, and some men have mediocrity thrust upon them. With Major Major it had been all three. Even among men lacking all distinction he inevitably stood out as a man lacking more distinction than all the rest, and people who met him were always impressed by how unimpressive he was.” (Editors of Goodreads)

A Part of the Preface on the Novel:

Joseph Heller's Preface to the 1994 Edition of *Catch-22*

In 1961, *The New York Times* was a newspaper with eight columns. And on November 11 of that year, one day after the official publication date of *Catch-22*, the page with the book review carried an unusual advertisement that ran from top to bottom and was five columns wide. To the eye the effect was stupendous. The book review that day, of a work by somebody else, was squeezed aside to the fold of the page, as were the crossword puzzle and all else. The ad had this caption: WHAT'S THE CATCH? And displayed at the top in silhouette was the comic cartoon of a uniformed figure in flight, glancing off to the side at some unspecified danger with an expression of panic. It was an announcement ad for *Catch-22*. Interwoven with the text were mentions of

praise from twenty-one individuals and groups of some public standing, most connected to literature and the publishing world, who had received the novel before publication and had already reviewed it or commented about it favorably. Within days after publication, there was a review in **The Nation** by Nelson Algren (a client of my own literary agent, who had urged him to read it), who wrote of **Catch-22** that it 'was the best novel to come out of anywhere in years'. And there was a review by Studs Terkel in a Chicago daily newspaper that recommended it about as highly. (Heller 1994)

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