

People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific
Research
Amar Thelidji University,
Laghouat Faculty of Letters
and Languages Department of
English



Individualism in Postmodern Literature a Case Study Ursula.

Kroeber Le Guin's

“The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” (1973)

A Dissertation Submitted to the Department of English in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for Master Degree in Civilization and Literature

By:
Keltoum Bagadi

Board of Examiners:

- Mr Nadir Mehamdi , University of Laghouat, Chairman
- Miss. Aicha HOCINE, University of Laghouat, Supervisor
- Mrs Wafaa Nouioua , University of Laghouat, Examiner

2021-2022

Dedication

I would like to express my love and appreciation to my beloved parents: to my thoughtful father and my sympathetic mother who have encouraged me to accomplish this work.

Special thanks go to my adorable sister: Nacira, to my brothers: Abdelkarim, AbdelAli, Badreddinne, and Bachir, to my dear cousin: kheira Boumaaza, to all those who have encouraged me, supported me, and prayed for me.

Acknowledgments

Above all, I thank Allah; the Almighty for having given me the strength and patience to undertake and complete this work glory and praise for Him.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Miss, Aicha Hocine for her help to accomplish this study.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all members of the jury for accepting to review this research and to my teachers in the English Department.

Abstract

Individualism is a core issue of the Nineteenth century that postmodern writings depend on. The present dissertation deals mainly with the theme of individualism in postmodern literature; therefore, a case study was conducted on Ursula. K. Le Guin's "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" (1973). It aims at examining the theme of individualism in literary writings, and in Ursula's book in particular, during the postmodern era and trying to find out how it could be transformed into a culture that is pursued by many people all over the world. In order to achieve this aim, the descriptive and analytical approaches were adopted; thus the work describes the theme of individualism in the postmodern era and then analyzes it in the story. The results of this research reveal that individualism can be transformed from being a philosophical idea to a culture by reading the literary works of the postmodern era as it may contribute to increasing the individual's awareness of their independence, goals and desires. That is to say, reading postmodern literary works on individualism may change the individual's way of thinking so that an individual becomes fully aware of the ways to analyze reality and events surrounding him; he has also become in control of their decisions and been more responsible for his attitudes toward himself and others as he realize their value in his society; consequently, the reader of "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" will grasp the hidden messages of Ursula .k Le Guin that she transmits throughout her story. She wants the reader to understand the idea that there are some societies that do not pay attention to the happiness of the individual.

Résumé

L'individualisme est une question fondamentale au XIX^e siècle que les écrits postmodernes s'en sont inspirés. La thèse actuelle traite principalement du thème de l'individualisme dans la littérature postmoderne, une étude de cas a donc été menée sur un roman d'Ursula K. Le Guin sous le titre *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas* (1973). Cette étude vise à examiner le thème de l'individualisme dans les écrits littéraires, et dans le livre d'Ursula K. Le Guin en particulier, pendant la période postmoderne et à essayer de découvrir comment il s'est transformé en une culture suivie par de nombreuses personnes à travers le monde. Afin d'atteindre cet objectif, des approches descriptives et analytiques ont été adoptées, de sorte que le thème de l'individualisme à l'ère postmoderne a été décrit puis analysé dans le roman. Les résultats de cette recherche révèlent que l'individualisme est passé d'une idée philosophique à une culture à travers la lecture des œuvres littéraires de l'ère postmoderne car il peut contribuer à accroître la conscience de l'individu de son indépendance, de ses objectifs et de ses désirs. Cela signifie que la lecture d'œuvres littéraires à l'ère postmoderne sur l'individualisme peut changer la façon de penser d'un individu afin qu'il devienne pleinement conscient des méthodes d'analyse de la réalité et des événements environnants, il est également devenu maître de ses décisions et plus responsable de ses attitudes envers lui-même et les autres parce qu'il réalise sa valeur dans sa société, par conséquent; le lecteur de *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas* comprendra les messages cachés d'Ursula K. Le Guin qu'elle lui a envoyés à travers son roman, elle veut que le lecteur comprenne l'idée qu'il y a des sociétés qui ne font pas attention au bonheur de l'individu et croient qu'il est normal que l'individu.

الملخص

الفردانية قضية أساسية في القرن التاسع عشر بحيث ارتكزت عليها كتابات ما بعدالحداثة، تتناول الأطروحة الحالية بشكل أساسي موضوع الفردانية في أدب ما بعد الحداثة، لذلك أجريت دراسة حالة على رواية *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas* (1973) لأورسولا لي غوين. تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى فحص موضوع الفردانية في الكتابات الأدبية، وفي كتاب لي غوين على وجه الخصوص، خلال فترة ما بعد الحداثة ومحاولة معرفة كيف تحولت إلى ثقافة يتبعها الكثير من الناس في جميع أنحاء العالم. ومن أجل تحقيق هذا الهدف، تم إعتقاد المناهج الوصفية والتحليلية، بحيث تم وصف موضوع الفردانية في عصر ما بعد الحداثة ثم قمنا بتحليلها في الرواية. تكشف نتائج هذا البحث أن الفردانية إنتقلت من فكرة فلسفية إلى ثقافة من خلال قراءة الأعمال الأدبية لعصر ما بعد الحداثة لأنها قد تساهم في زيادة وعي الفرد بإستقلاليته، وأهدافه ورغباته. وهذا يعني أن قراءة الأعمال الأدبية في عصر ما بعد حول الفردانية قد تغير طريقة تفكير الفرد بحيث يصبح مدركا تماما لطرق تحليل الواقع والأحداث المحيطة به، أصبح أيضا متحكم في قراراته وأكثر مسؤولية عن مواقفه وإتجاه نفسه وإتجاه الآخرين وذلك لكونه يدرك قيمته في مجتمعه، وبالتالي؛ فإن قارئ *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas* سيفهم الرسائل الخفية من اورسولا لي غوين التي أرسلتها له من خلال روايتها، فهي تريد من القارئ أن يفهم فكرة أن هناك بعض المجتمعات التي لاتولي إهتماما لسعادة الفرد.

Table of Contents

III Dedication	I
Acknowledgements	II
Abstract	III
Résumé	IV
المُلخَص	V
Table of Contents	VI
General Introduction	1
Chapter One: A Background of Individualism	4
Introduction	5
I.1.General Definition of Individualism	5
I.2.The Emergence of Individualism	6
I. 3. Individualism versus Collectivism Culture:	7
I. 4. Claims of Individualism	9
I. 4. 1. Philosophical Individualism	9
I. 4.1.a. Ontological Individualism	10
I. 4.1.b. Epistemological Individualism	10
I. 4.1.c. Methodological Individualism	10
I. 4.2. The dignity of the Individual	11
I. 4.3. The Ideal of Individualism	11
I. 4.4. Moral Individualism	12
I. 4.5. Political Individualism	12
Features of Individualism	12
Autonomy	13
Self-responsibility	14
Uniqueness:	15
Conclusion	17
<i>Chapter Two: A Background of Postmodern Literature</i>	18
Introduction	19
Defining Postmodernism	19

The Historical Background of Postmodernism	20
Common Features of Postmodern Literature:	23
Intertextuality.....	23
Origins of Intertextuality	23
Definition of Intertextuality.....	24
Intertextuality in Postmodern Literature:	24
Metafiction.....	25
Origins of Metafiction.....	25
Definition of Metafiction	27
Metafiction in Postmodern Literature:	27
Conclusion	29
<i>Chapter Three: Individualism in Postmodern Literature</i>	31
Introduction.....	32
Indicator Symbols of Individualism in the Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas:	35
Thoughts of Individualism on the Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas:	37
Conclusion 40	
General Conclusion.....	42
Works Cited.....	Erreur ! Signet non défini.

General Introduction

General Introduction

The individual is the main component of society, and society is essential to the state constitution. Individual development is the main condition in the development of society. Also, the development of society leads to the development of the state. So, the development of both society and state depends on the individual. He or she is of paramount importance in every law-applying country that recognizes his rights represented in the right to live, to be free and to be able to express his/her opinion. Every state in which the law is applied emphasizes the dignity of the individual, so as to guarantee his right to live proudly away from the injustice and humiliation that used to characterize his primitive life, because the ancient individual is different from the modern individual. The individual at that time witnessed various political changes, such as; wars that made him confused and look for answers to his questions of whether there is a just society that does not take his rights by force, hence; the idea of individualism spread widely among people.

Accordingly, this research is about the theme of individualism in postmodern literature. It has analyzed a literary story as a case study written in the postmodern era - that is to say, in 1973 by the American narrator Ursula. K Le Guin. This story was titled “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas”. It aims at investigating one main question and three sub-questions which are as follow:

- 1- How has individualism transformed from being a philosophical ideology to a cultural mindset through postmodern literal writings?
 - A- To what extent is individualism important to the evolvement of mankind?
 - B- How can studying postmodernism’s characteristics in literature help figuring out the new changes in this new era?

C- How different/ similar is the book of Ursula from/ to other postmodern works in introducing the theme of individualism? And how crucial is embracing individualism to postmodern mindsets?

In order to find answers to these research questions, the descriptive and analytical approaches were employed so as to investigate individualism as the philosophical belief that focuses on the fact that the worth of the individual and his/her desires are more significant than what his/her society or family expect from them. This term emphasizes that a person should not be treated as just a number or an object, but as a human being, offering his/her rights and freedom before anything else. In the postmodern era, thinkers, philosophers, writers and others from various fields of life such as history, literature, and cinema have been defending the idea of individualism and expressing it in their own way.

So, this study aims at analyzing of the philosophical ideology which is called individualism in literary writings during the postmodern era and finding out the reason for its transformation into a culture that pursued by many people; especially, in America. As a hypothesis, it can be said that readers are influenced by what they read, and therefore; the theory of individualism will affect their way of thinking, thus becoming a culture for them. Also, other hypothesis for the previous questions may be arranged as follow:

A- Individualism is important to the evolvement of mankind because it may help persons to realize their rights and duties.

B- Studying postmodernism's characteristics in literature help in figuring out the new changes in this era because it may be said that literature is the main criterion through which we can find out the most important changes happening at any new era.

C- The book of Ursula is different from other postmodern works in introducing the theme of individualism may be because it is the best work that can deliver hidden messages

in the easiest ways to people that is why it won the prestigious Hugo Award for best short story. Since, people in the postmodern era began to rebel against all previous mentalities and ideas; it can be said that individualism was promoting the same kind of new ideas that people wanted to be as a change to what came before it, and therefore the theme of individualism may be considered the most important feature of writings in the postmodern era.

Most of the previous studies have not addressed the theme of individualism in the postmodern literature. It was mostly about comparison or contrast between Individualism and Collectivism in general such as this paper entitled “Collectivism. Vs Individualism in the American Framers Protest during the Thirties. In John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) and of *Mice and Men* (1937)” written by Sabrin Drouiche; however, the present paper discussed the theme of individualism in postmodern short story in particular.

The present research is divided basically into three major chapters. The first chapter is devoted to the theoretical background of individualism, its definitions, appearance, claims and features. The second chapter is devoted to the theoretical background of postmodernism in general, then about the postmodern literature in particular, and its common features. Chapter three will be devoted to an analytical reading of individualism in postmodern writings; a case study of a short story entitled ‘The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas’ was conducted as an example of individualism.

Chapter One: A Background of Individualism

Introduction:

The first chapter presents some information and theories about individualism, a culture that characterizes the Western world, especially the United State which is considered the country that strongly embraces it. First of all, individualism is defined from different perspectives like Ayn Rand, Lukes (born 1941), and Hofstede (2020). Second, the appearance of individualism, followed by a comparison between individualistic culture and collectivistic culture is explained. Then claims of individualism are briefly presented. These claims include: Philosophical individualism (that is divided into three major aspects which are as follows: Ontological individualism, epistemological individualism and methodological individualism), the dignity of the individual, the ideal of individualism, moral individualism, and political individualism. Finally, the features of individualism are explained including: Autonomy, self-responsibility and uniqueness.

General Definition of Individualism:

Individualism is a known culture that characterizes many countries in the world. It has been defined by Macmillan Dictionary as follows:1- The belief that the freedom of the individual people is more important than the needs of society or government; 2-The behaviour of someone who does things in their own way without worrying about what other people think or do.

From another perspective, Ayn Rand who is an individualistic philosopher points out that what makes a person an individualist is “a man who says: I will not run anyone’s life - nor let anyone run mine. I will not rule nor be ruled. I will not be a master nor a slave. I will not sacrifice myself to anyone – nor sacrifice anyone to myself” (The Ayn Rand column 84 as cited in Ayn Rand lexican).

So, this culture is all about the individual and their own world. Merriam –Webster Dictionary describes individualism as “a theory maintaining the political and economic independence of the individual initiative, action, and interests”.

According to Lukes (1971), the term of individualism is firstly used by Europeans as a reaction to the French Revolution. Especially, it was a result of the Enlightenment thinking. The early visions of individualism in social and political theory concentrated on the ideas of welfare and freedom of the individual, with society existing merely for the reason of its individuals.

As specified by Hofstede (1980, 1991), Individualism is connected to a society in which an individual is expected for just looking at himself or herself and his or her current family.

The Emergence of Individualism:

The emergence of individualism did not have a specific time in history because it is a culture that reflects society as a whole. Kohl (7) views that each society prevents some individual traits and it lets others free and encouraged. The social characteristic can be replaced because society is not constant. Actually, The social characteristic have been changed quickly and greatly over time in history; thus, man differs widely from the one who come before, that experts have been declared a new version of man who begun to appear in America. In the Middle Ages, this new type of man was produced from a wide transference in the Western world. Although, in the early Nineteenth century, the appearance of that man was clear and more popular in the United States than in any different country. Kohl continued that interrelationship between humans did not bring to an end. The individual had more traditional relations with others, but the nature of it became different. The advanced nature of relations between a man and his world makes him strongly feel the sensation of individuality.

In the Nineteenth century, American citizens rethink their behaviours between the individual and the majority of people surrounded him as an unparalleled and exceptional ties. Basically, the principle idea in individualism is that each person presents morality, politics, and economics as an essential interest, that is to say, each man is librated and self-governed in his society. Additionally, every man and woman must select his or her organizations freely and optionally without any commitments or requirements hardly applied by society (Daniels 70).

I. 3. Individualism versus Collectivism Culture:

Each society characterized by a particular kind of thought, either to be an individualist thought or a collectivist thought. These two kinds of cultures are totally different. Triandis clarifies that collectivist people are those who see themselves as indivisible from their collectivities and their aims are related to those of their collectivities. Principles, responsibilities, and commitments dominate attitude of people in society. Although their relationships are impossible, they cannot put an end to it. These cultures are constant. People stay with their collectives for the rest of their lives. In marriage they join different collective, and feelings are not interesting as commitments and responsibilities that is why divorce is uncommon. Children are raised to be nice people of the collective.

Triandis explains that people in individualistic cultures are autonomous and more separated from their collectives; also their social attitude is in full of pleasure and based on personal relationships. People in individualist cultures see that their personal aims should precede any goals of the collective if they are not parallel to each other. When their pleasures are unconsiderable than their relationship costs, they break up this relations. People get a divorce repeatedly because of relationship change, and they give total reliance to feelings, that is not stable, when they get married. Children are raised to be free from their collectives. It is very essential to be independent of the effect of the collective. In general, it is assumed that

individualist cultures focus much more on individual accomplishment, but the collectivist cultures affirm teamwork.

According to (Hofstede & Bond, 1984) people in individualistic cultures are interested in themselves and close relatives only, but people in collectivist cultures see themselves as one part of a whole that take care of each other faithfully.

There are many features that characterized the individual in his individualistic cultures such as self-interest, personal autonomy, privacy, self-realization, individual initiative, independence, individual decision making, identity, and lack of interest about necessities and services of other people. For instance Australia, Great Britain, Canada, and the US are examples of individualistic societies. On the contrary, in collectivist cultures people are emotionally dependent to groups and associations, lack of privacy, more concern about group decisions than individual decisions, interdependency, a comprehension of self identity as individual's affiliation with the group, and more interesting to necessities and services of the group. For instance, China, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Pakistan and Taiwan are examples of collectivist societies (Baron & Byrne, 1997).

Mary Jane in her video titled by "Individualism in USA" on YouTube compares between these two cultures which are individualism and collectivism by giving this example:

...If I compare an average American who is unemployed to an average Italian who is unemployed, the second one is gonna most likely sit at home waiting for a job fall down from the sky and in the meantime complaining about how things don't work in his country and how the government is a failure. The American on the contrary is gonna (rolls up his arms) do this-we say in Italy-and go out there morning to evening to try to find a job. If he's not able to find it build a new job from scratch for himself.

Mary Jane gave her opinion about individualist culture and collectivist culture from another perspective throughout comparing between an American individualist and Italian collectivist who are both non-employee, but they are unlike in their way of thinking.

It is obvious that individualism and collectivism have many differences in all areas even in sports. Some plays has an individualistic thought in which people focus on the successes and achievements of one player, however; some other plays has a collective thought in which team achievements is taken into account. For example, football is a collective game, but tennis is an individualistic game. In china, there is no one specific person on the team on which to base the game. On the contrary, in America people encourage one specific player who is the focus of attention.

I. 4. Claims of Individualism:

Individualism is a value belief in life of Americans. It is a core issue of the Nineteenth century that writing depends on. Herbert Hoover in *American Individualism* wrote “Individualism is the most precious possession of American civilization.” Individualism is divided into five major claims. In order to understand individualism you have to be able to distinguish between its claims. These claims include several theories which are unnumbered, however; Frederick Stoutland in his article titled “Self and Society in the Claims of Individualism” sum it up for us as follows:

I. 4. 1. Philosophical Individualism:

It claims that truth and ability for knowledge differentiate individuals from their society. It consists of three major doctrines:

I. 4.1.a. Ontological Individualism:

According to Britannica, Ontological individualism is “the thesis that social or historical groups, processes, and events are nothing more than complexes of individuals and individual actions.” It holds that individual reality is not related to the reality of society. A society is consisting of individuals who are far away from society in their essential properties. Which means all needs and concerns of individuals, and their emotional and mental abilities can be affected by their social situation, but their initial nature and presence do not rely on it, they rely on the interaction of organic stable features of human nature with inconstant and personal aspects like physical nature and inherited traits.(Stoutland 107-111)

I. 4.1.b. Epistemological Individualism:

It holds that the ability for knowledge does not depend on social constitute, that is means individual knower’s are independent from any social factors. It based on a theory called Empiricism which believes that all knowledge is based on sense awareness, which can be available for everyone whose senses are normal and regular, no matter what society he belongs to.(Stoutland)

I. 4.1.c. Methodological Individualism:

It is “a philosophical method aimed at explaining and understanding broad society-wide developments as the aggregation of decisions by individuals.” (igi-global). It holds that facts about the individual are the essential of all social facts, and all common social behaviours are conducted around facts about the individual. (Stoutland 117)

I. 4.2. The dignity of the Individual:

It is a principle that approves the position of humanbeings. It is a value belief in the dignity of the individual. Dignity means respect and equality. Respect the dignity of people does not mean to evaluate them according to their contributions, but it means to treat them not only because of what they contribute to society. So, the dignity of people must be respected whatever are their skills, whatever if they have encourage the common good or not, whatever how negative or bad they are supposed to be. Also, dignity requires equality which mean that all people should be treated equally regardless their talents or contributions. The concept of dignity claims that people are authorized to be evaluated equally and respectably, for it “pertains to the self as such, to the individual regardless of his position in society”.(Stoutland 111-113)

I. 4.3. The Ideal of Individualism:

It is a strong belief about how it is important to be distinct in life and society. The idea of the ideal of individualism came from people who supposed a model of superiority possible for each individual. This claim confirms that individuals should be unique or distinctive through improving their own distinctive abilities. Rousseau explains that at the beginning of his confession: “...I am made unlike anyone I have ever met; I will even venture to say that I am like no one in the world. I may be no better, but at least I am different. (Lukes, 1978)

So, in order to be distinctive this led to the rise of a theory called relativism about the good which means that there is a relative relation between a good life and each individual, that is to say; there is no longer universal criterions for a good life. This indicates that people should have extreme liberty to follow their own principles of the good. (Stoutland 113-117)

I. 4.4. Moral Individualism:

It is a theory assumed from philosophical individualism as a moral understanding. It is to believe in moral equality as well as to believe in equal liberty, thus respecting individuals equally means respecting their liberty too. Also, it concludes that the good should get on with desires, interests, values, and preferences of the individual. It claims that advantages are only reduced to the individual, and there are no goods except individual goods. A society has no advantages that rise above those of its individuals; there are no social goods that exceed individual ones. On this view, positions are the same, and no one is better than another to realize what is good because individuals can realize only what their own preferences are. On another hand, moral individualism does not reject those goods that society has been realized. It requires that interests, desires, values, and preferences of individuals participate in society, but they are shaped independently without any social constitute. (Stoutland 117-127)

I. 4.5. Political Individualism:

It is an explaining theory which is against discrimination of people in their society, and it emphasizes the dignity of human beings within an equal freedom. It suggests that a society can realize the justice demands only if its major social, economic, and political organizations are closely connected to the principle of equal liberty. This concept based on moral belief that human dignity and liberalism's explanatory have equal liberty. (Stoutland)

Features of Individualism:

Individualism constitutes of three major features which are autonomy, self-responsibility and uniqueness. These features are mainly the core themes of individualism. Hsu (1983) proposed multiple aspects of individualism such as conformity, insecurity, competitiveness, self reliance, aggressive creativity, large military expenditures, and prejudice

toward different racial and religious groups. However; there is no clarity if these aspects are really essential components of individualism or they are just simply linked concepts. Hence, value of the individual, autonomy, individual responsibility, individual achievement, and self-reliance are the fundamental components of individualism (Ho and Chiu 1994).

According to (Realo.et al) individualism is a Latin word which means ‘indivisible’ and there are only three different features that characterized an indivisible person which are: autonomy, self-responsibility, and uniqueness.

Autonomy:

It is a word originates from Greek which means independent, also it has a meaning of self-governing. Dworkin in his article titled the Nature of Autonomy suggested some criterions about the theory of autonomy. For instance: Logical consistency, empirical possibility, value conditions, ideological neutrality, normative relevance, and judgmental relevance. And because they are so many it is somehow impossible to take them in details. Therefore, talking about autonomy in general will be more appropriate.

Hence, autonomy according to Dworkin is a concept that have been used by philosophers like John Rawls, Thomas Scanlon, Robert P. Wolff and Ronald Dworkin in order to “ define and illuminate issues such as the characterization of principles of justice, the limits of free speech, and the nature of the liberal state”. This means that autonomy have been used by philosophers to express three different thoughts which are related to justice, freedom of speech and its limits, and liberalism and its nature.

To speak more precisely, autonomy is a theme that have been tackled in most discussions about individualism, especially; in the work of Triandis. A person can define himself as an autonomous independent agent if he is able to think independently, to sit in

judgment, and to survive. Also, autonomy means one's own aims, decisions, and choices are considered as his first priority (Realo.Et al) Nathaniel Branden said that "autonomy pertains to self-regulation: control and direction from within, rather than from any external authority." From his words, it is clear that there is no authority from outside can control or guide the self but itself.

Self-responsibility:

In his book titled "Taking Responsibility: self-Reliance and accountable life", Branden describes self-responsibility that is "to look at the world through our own eyes, to chart our life course and think through how to achieve the future we want, to commit ourselves to continuous questioning and learning." In other words, self-responsibility is to take responsibility about your own view of the world, your life and achieving goals, and committing yourself to keep asking questions and to learn.

According to (Realo, et al) self-responsibility is a theme that have been discussed mainly in works of Ho and Chiu (1994) and Waterman (1984) which played a central role in individualism self-responsibility means that a person decides to take responsibility for himself and his action, according to his decision, he will have confidence in his capacities. But the question is how can a person be responsible of himself and of his actions? Branden answer:

....I am ultimately responsible for my own existence ;that no one else is here on earth to serve me, take care of me, or fill my needs; I am the owner of no one's life but my own.

This means that I am willing to generate the causes of the effects I want. It also means that if I need the cooperation of others in the pursuit of my goals, I must provide them with reasons meaningful in terms of my goals,I must provide them with reasons meaningful in terms of their own interests and needs; my wants per se are not claim on anyone.

Furthermore, as I live my life, I have the choice to operate mindfully or mindlessly or anywhere between. I am accountable in any issue for the level of awareness I select.

To think is an act of choice; so is to avoid thinking, and I am the cause of that choice. Self-responsibility entails my willingness to be accountable for my choices, decisions, and behaviour. I take responsibility for thinking about the consequences of my actions and hold myself accountable for them as well. When I choose an action whose consequences I can foresee, I am also choosing the consequence, and I accept that fact.

This talk taking from the article of Nathaniel Branden which is under of the name of taking Responsibility: self-Reliance and Accountable life, summarizes self-responsibility and the understanding of individual's responsibility of himself and his actions.

Uniqueness:

It is an idea that Singelis and Colleagues (1995) introduced in their typology of horizontal and vertical types of individualism and collectivism. Uniqueness is an essential element in individualism which confirms that a person should be aware of being unique, 'only one of its kind'. Also, it encourages an individual to see oneself as unlike the others, and treats him like distinct person. (Realo. Et al).

Furthermore, a poem which is placed at the beginning of an article called Uniqueness: The Human Pursuit of Difference, and is written by Lynne Lehman (age 13) who explained uniqueness in her own way:

I'm Me

I'm me and nobody else
Not the girls down the street
With ribbons in their hair
Not Sue, or Jane
Or the girl with the bike

I don't even want to be Mike
I'm me and nobody else
I'm different in a strange sort of way
Sue and Jane like me for what I am
I still like Mike
With his motor bike
But I like me for what I am
Because I'm me and nobody else.

Lynne Lehman means that she is unique and different from other girls like Sue or Jane (random names). She does want to be like him. However; she and Mike have same motor bike which means they have some shared points, though; she has her own path and her own personality that she loves and is proud of. This poetry calls for uniqueness and the need to see ourselves as unique.

According to uniqueness theory, if a person feels that there is high similarity between him and another person or persons, that individual is obliged to engage in behaviours that make him or her totally different. Under these highly similar conditions, a person can consider himself or herself as a different individual if he can be highly sensitive person to opportunities (Snyder and Fromkin).

Consequently, a poem which is written by Anonymous undergraduate student from University of Kansas (1979), explains the ideas of uniqueness exactly what is it:

The Way to Be Unique

Being unique is sometimes my aim

Just to avoid being the same

Here are two basic rules

(Ignored only by fools)

First, know those differences

Where society lets you alone.

For the poet, in order to be unique you have to be different, and if you want to be different, you must know firstly what distinguishes you from others, and then you must work on those differences to make them clearly demonstrated.

Conclusion:

The first chapter has presented theoretical information about individualism to give the reader a clear image about what individualism is from different views and different sides. Firstly, individualism has been defined from many philosophers such as Ayn Rand, Lukes (born 1941), and Hofstede (2020). Secondly, the appearance of individualism, followed by a comparison between individualistic culture and collective culture. Then, the dignity of the individual, the ideal of individualism, moral individualism, and political individualism. Finally, the features of individualism are tackled including: Autonomy, self-responsibility, uniqueness.

Chapter Two: A Background of Postmodern Literature

Introduction:

The second chapter presents theoretical issues about postmodernism in general and postmodern literature in particular. First, it introduces some definitions from dictionaries and stated by different philosophers and scholars such as Terry Eagleton (born in 1943) who is an English theorist, critic, and public intellectual, also David Harvey (born in 1935) who is Distinguished Professor of anthropology and geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Then, the historical background of postmodernism is briefly presented from the 1917s onwards. Furthermore, the common features of postmodern literature are pointed out. 1-Intertextuality(including: Its origins as a background information, its definition according to its originator whose name Julia kristeva (born 1941),a French psychoanalyst, critic and novelist, and its relationship with postmodern literature).Finally, another feature of postmodern literature has been discussed which is called:2- Metafiction (including: Its origins and a background information about the term, its definition according to Patricia Waugh (born 1965) who is a literary critic, intellectual historian and professor of English Literature at Durham University. And its relationship with the postmodern literature has been tackled in brief.

Defining Postmodernism:

Postmodernism seems to be an intellectual movement that rejected deep-rooted ideas and beliefs which were prevalent in the Enlightenment age, its signs started to clearly appear from 1950s as an inevitable result of the Second World War. The concept "postmodernism" has been defined by many philosophers, thinkers, and writers of that time such as David Harvey who wrote in Postmodernism (Harvey 1989,39),"Postmodernism has become a concept to wrestled with, and such is the battleground of conflicting opinions and political forces that it can no longer be ignored". Terry Eagleton in his article which is entitled "The

Illusions of Postmodernism" asserts that the term postmodernism "is a style of culture..., a depthless, decentred, underground, self-reflexive, playful, derivative, electric, pluralistic art which blurs the boundaries between " high" and "popular" cultures, as between art and everyday experience."

Postmodernism as a concept has an unnumbered definitions, and each definition is totally different from another. Merriam Webster Dictionary as example defines it as "relating to, or being any various movements in reaction to modernism that are typically characterized by a return to traditional materials and forms (as in architecture) or by ironic self-reference and absurdity (as in literature). Another definition by " Your Dictionary" which attempts to clearly define postmodernism as follows "postmodernism is a movement that focuses on reality of the individual, denies statements, that claims to be true for all people and is often expressed in a pared-down style in arts, literature, and culture". As a result, there is no one signal clear direct definition to the word "postmodernism" because it is a broad concept and can be defined from various perspectives as mentioned.

The Historical Background of Postmodernism:

The word "postmodernism" has been used in many fields and disciplines from ancient times to the present day. This argument has been developed in an article entitled "From modernism to postmodernism: An Anthology." By Lawrence E. Cahoon who is Professor of Philosophy at the College of the Holy Cross, he asserts that the "postmodern" is a term that distinguishes between two different scenes which are the contemporary and the modern. According to Cahoon [3], in 1917 the German philosopher Rudolf Pannwitz adopted this word for the first time to portray the "nihilism" of twentieth western culture which is a theme that is associated with Friedrich Nietzsche. Then, in 1934; the Spanish literary critic Federico de Onis used the term "postmodern" to describe a violent reaction against literary modernism.

After that, it has been used in 1939 by the theologian Bernard Iddings Bell who stated that the secular modernism recognized its failure, and the historian Arnold Toynbee who meant the Post-great war (1914-1918) rising of mass society where the working class is more important than the capitalist class. In the introduction of his article titled "From Modernism to Postmodernism: Concepts and Strategies of Postmodern American Fiction". Gerhard Hoffmann declares that:

The postmodernism of the Sixties is the result of the liberation from the restraints of the fifties. It extends into the past and the future. The Sixties turned against what was conceived as the general mood and the dominant notes of the Fifties: materialism, moralism, individualism, self-consciousness, domesticity, and privacy, de-politicization, anxiety, the Cold War and the Bomb...

It is an important quote that gives a picture about postmodernism in the 1960s in which it is considered as a result of the release from the limitations of the 1950s and its "general mood".

Furthermore, and to go deeper in the 1960s; Christopher Butler in his article named by "Post Modernism: A very Short Introduction" Mentions that by the middle of the sixties critics such as Susan Sontag and Ihab Hassan started to indicate some features of postmodernism, and they declares that postmodernists work was different from the art that had preceded it because it characterized by loss of unity, masterfulness was clearly decreased, increasing of fun or chaos, understanding processes of the reader is more important than the desire of finishing or unifying the art, holding a narrative together doesn't matter anymore and resisting of the interpretation was a main concern. Butler adds that after this period in which these critics who are mentioned above formulated themselves, the theory of postmodernism

raised throughout intellectuals and academics. A critical self-consciousness grew on at all people in all fields. Postmodernists blamed readers, spectators, and listeners of Modernism (who are supposed to be 'naive' liberal humanities) for their belief that all humanity, in such a way; may accept this art and relieve it from various political contexts.

Afterwards, in the 1970s; postmodernism was used mainly in architectural character. In the Eighties, philosophers used the term "postmodern" in two different ways. First, as refer to the French philosophy of Post-structuralism. Second, to describe the backlash against modernist philosophies such as: Rationalism, utopianism, and foundationalism. Simultaneously, social scientists used the term as an indicator in which performed the purpose of a new methodological approach. Also, natural scientists considered that postmodernism is conceptually linked with the term post-industrialism. The concept in which societies markedly have changed and developed their industrial character compared with the previous one that is in the Post-World War II. The word has been used by journalists in rock videos, the demographic composition of Los Angeles, and the general cultural type and mood of the 1990s, and this is what makes post modernism spread at all people. (Cahoone 3-4)

Finally, the word was used for the first time in 1917 then advanced widely by the 1990s through artists, critics, intellectuals and others.

Common Features of Postmodern Literature:**Intertextuality:****Origins of Intertextuality:**

It dates back to the ancient times when Ferdinand de Saussure, a Swiss linguist, created a definition about the linguistic sign in his work which is named "In his Course in General Linguistics", a collection of his lectures first published in 1915. Saussure asserts that a sign can be divided into two parts of a signified (concept) and a signifier (sound-image) and there is a combination between them. For instance, the word 'tree' in English is called 'arbor' in Latin which is interrelated with the same concept in French that would be specified by the word 'arbre'. However; it is possible to cite the Russian literary theorist M.M. Bakhtin as the originator of the term 'intertextuality' because of his theory about the social contexts in which words are exchanged, since both Saussure and Bakhtin did not employ literary the term. Hence, Julia Kristeva tried to combine the insights and major theories about language and literature of both Saussure and Bakhtin and then she produced the first articulation of intertextual theory which was first used into the French language in Kristeva's work of the middle to the late of 1960s in 'The bounded Text'. Kristeva says: 'a text is a permutation of texts, an intertextuality in the space of a given text', in which 'several utterances, taken from other texts, interest and neutralize one another'. She is concerned with the construction of a text which is existed already in a previous discourse. Texts can not be created from the original minds of authors, but they are collected from previous existent sources. (Allen.8-36)

Definition of Intertextuality:

Intertextuality is an approved method that has been used by many theorists, poets, authors and more of the same in different fields. Julia Kristeva, who is considered as the founder of intertextuality defines it in her essay "Word, Dialogue and Novel," as "a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality replaces that intersubjectivity, and poetic language is read as at least double". It can also be defined by Merriam-Webster as "the complex interrelationship between a text and other text taken as basic to the creation or interpretation of the text". In other words, it can be understood as the relationship between one text (for example. A novel) and another one and it depends on the reader's understanding and detecting.

Intertextuality in Postmodern Literature:

Intertextuality can be found in various areas such as: architecture, painting, music, photography and cinema. But in literature it was not used till the late of 1960s. Thus, in postmodern literature; intertextuality was the main focus of literary studies concerns.

First, intertextuality has been applied in many novels, stories, poems and so on. For instance, the story of Jorge Luis Borges with the title 'Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote' is significantly referred to Don Quixote by Kathy Acker. Also, Roberto Coover's Pinocchio in Venice which is referred to Death in Venice by Thomas Mann.(Sharma and Chaudhary).

In addition, many theorists and critics see that postmodernism has much of reproductions which are adopted from original productions. As an example of that, the arguments of Terry Eagleton (1986) and Fredric Jameson (1991) are frequently reinforced by reference to the work of Jean Baudrillard, and other postmodern theorists. Also, Baudrillard in

his postmodern culture use the word the '*simulacrum*' which is a term taken from the work of Plato and relating to a copy that does not have an origin. (Allen.181-182)

Furthermore, to give more examples about the use of intertextuality in postmodern literature; Graham Allen, in his book entitled 'Intertextuality: the New Critical Idiom. He mentioned that Hayden White, utilizing the work of the literary theorist Northrop Frye, has declared that literature and its genres which are: comedy, tragedy, romance, and satire shaped every historical narrative (White, 1973). That means, the study of literature contributed to the understanding of history. Thus, a relationship ties them together, and this relation is what we call 'intertextuality'. Also, Allen explains that Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose* is a postmodern novel. The protagonist in the novel is named William of Baskerville, and his surname 'Baskerville' has a direct relation towards *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Arthur Conan Doyle. Throughout the development of the novel readers will discover and recognize this intertextual relation between those two novels from the Medieval and Victorian Ages. (182-192)

Metafiction:

Origins of Metafiction:

It was noticed that the term "Metafiction" has been mentioned for the first time in an essay by the American critic and self-conscious novelist William H. Gass in 1970. Although terms like 'metapolitics', 'metarhetoric' and 'metatheatre' are a reminder of an artistic interest that deals with the problem of how people reflect, construct, and mediate their experience of the world since the sixties. First of all, the American scholar; Patricia Waugh (as cited in Dai and Huang. 62) declares that:

Metafiction pursues such questions through its formal self-exploration, drawing on the traditional metaphor of the world as book, but often recasting it in the terms of contemporary philosophical, linguistic, or literary theory...If our knowledge of this world is now seen to be mediated through language, then literary fiction (worlds constructed entirely of language) becomes a useful model for learning about the construction of "reality" itself.

After that, Waugh asserts that the rising of social and cultural self-consciousness caused a rising awareness of "Meta" levels of discourse and experience. The awareness made people pay attention to the function of language that constructs and maintains the daily reality. In addition to that, she explains the function of the term 'Meta':

"Meta" terms, therefore, are required in order to explore the relationship. Between this arbitrary linguistic system and the world to which it apparently refers. In fiction they are required in order to explore the relationship between the world of the fiction and the world outside the fiction.

Furthermore, not like the rest of the critics, Waugh affirms that metafiction based on a version of Heisenbergian's uncertainty principle in which awareness is "for the smallest building blocks of matter, every process of observations causes a major disturbance" [5]. That is to say, describing on objective world is something impossible because the observer always changes what he observed. Waugh believes that the interests of metafiction are more difficult than this, she thinks that "the metafictionist is highly conscious of a basic dilemma: if he or she sets out to 'represent' the world, he or she realizes fairly soon that the world, as such, cannot be "represented" [6]. Hence, according to Waugh, in fiction of literature; it is one of the possibilities to merely "represent" the discourses of that world. Though, "if one attempts of analyze a set of linguistic relationships using those same relationships as the instruments of analysis, language soon becomes a "prisonhouse" from which he possibility of escape is

remote. Metafiction sets out to explore this dilemma "[7]. (Waugh, as cited in Dai and Huang .62)

Definition of Metafiction:

Metafiction as a mode of writing that a lots of novelists and writers attempt to use in their writings has been defined by Patricia Waugh, a literary critic, intellectual historian and professor of English Literature at Durham University, in her book entitled by "Metafiction: the Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction"(1984) as follows:

Metafiction is a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draw attention to its status as an artifact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text. [3]

In other words, metafiction is a method which is used by the writer who intends to make the reader feel lost, and can not differentiate between what is fiction and what is reality!

Metafiction in Postmodern Literature:

Metafiction is a term that lots of philosophers and thinkers attempt to discuss and talk about it. The article entitled "Metafiction and Postmodernism" by Hongbin Dai and Yini Huang summarizes the most important things they said.

According to (Dai and Huang) the relationship between metafiction and postmodernism can be discussed at first by William Gass, because he is the originator of metafiction. Because of the confusion about the definite meanings of postmodernism at his time, he refuses himself to be a postmodern writer because there was no clarity for him regarding the nature of

postmodernism in literature. He just indicates that his fictional writings are classified as late or decayed modern. Then, Sarah Lauzen, another critic, her idea is different from the idea of Gass. She asserts that one of the characteristics of metafiction is the use of metafictional tools and elements frequently and the tool or element mainly advances one of two writing aspects or the work structure. After that the American critic Paul Maltby argues that "metafiction is therefore more a formal term than a historical one, and is not solely a postmodern (or modern) possession" [15](Maltby as cited in Dai and Huang). In other words, he declares that the techniques of metafiction have been used to emphasize its status, and according to him metafiction's scope is much wider than postmodernism. He justifies his words with the idea that though many metafictionists who are certainly include in the circle of postmodernism, such as the works of Cervants and Sterne which are metafictional while their authors are not postmodernists. Maltby thinks that the category of postmodernism includes only the contemporary metafiction. According to Maltby, the difference between metafiction and postmodernism is "while postmodernism may be conceived as relating the fiction to a postmodern culture or postmodernity, metafiction, as a term, altogether lacks sociohistorical reference"[16] (Maltby as cited in Dai and Huang).

Moreover, (Dai and Huang) continue that the opinion of Larry McCaffery is close to maltby's one. McCaffery argues that works of metafiction are not new because they can dated back to Miguel de Cervantes and Lawrence Strene, however; metafictional works have been appeared on a regular basis in the twentieth century. For him, metafiction is an important category of literature in postmodernism and it is a widespread tendency in a lot of the most well-spoken postmodern fiction. He declares that one of the defining features of fiction in the postmodern era is the metafiction impulse which distinguished it from the fiction of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s [17] (McCaffery as cited in Dai and Huang). Patricia Waugh agrees with McCaffery's viewpoint. She says that "metafiction is a mode of writing within a broader

cultural movement often referred to as postmodernism." And "although metafiction is just one form of post-modernism, nearly all contemporary experimental writing displays some explicitly metafictional strategies"[18](Waugh as cited in Dai and Huang). She also notes that practice of metafiction has been strangely highlighted in the fiction since the sixties, but it is incorrect to say that the practice belongs only to the contemporary fiction for "the term 'metafiction' might be new, the practice is as old (if not older than) as the novel itself"[19] (Waugh as cited in Dai and Huang).

Furthermore, (Dai and Huang) says that Linda Hutcheon adds her judgment. She declares that she has always denies the term "postmodernist" to choose for the most distinctive one of metafiction, but she believes that disproving that metafiction is at the present time realized as an aspect of postmodernism is something foolish. She writes that "the formal and thematic self-consciousness of metafiction today is paradigmatic of most of the cultural forms of what Jean-François Lyotard calls our "postmodern" world from television commercials to movies, from comic books to video art" [20] (Hutcheon as cited in Dai and Huang). She identifies "historiography metafiction" in her work, and believes that the combination between the metafiction and historiography causes the new experimental writing, and accomplishes the poetics of postmodernism.

To conclude, it seems that metafiction acted as a motivator which foregrounds writers and poets to produce their writing in the postmodern era.

Conclusion:

The second chapter presented theoretical issues about postmodernism in general and postmodern literature in particular that will help and clarify the research topic in the reader's mind. A reader can learn from this chapter that postmodernism is an intellectual movement that rejected deep-rooted ideas and beliefs which were in the previous movement which is

called Modernism. As well as, postmodern literature differs from the literature before so that the written methods have evolved. For example, as this chapter mentioned, writers were using intertextuality and metafiction as a modes of writing that is why the written works at that times were aesthetic, complex and difficult to be understood at the same time.

Chapter Three:
**Individualism in
Postmodern Literature**

Introduction:

The third chapter presents the theme of individualism in the postmodern literature particularly, in the postmodern short stories. The short story that has been chosen to this chapter's titles is "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" written by Ursula Kroeber Le Guin(1929-2018) who is an American author. She writes lots of essays, poetries, speeches, translations and literary critiques which belong to realistic fiction and non-fiction works. First, the theme of individualism in "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" is discussed in details relating to the event sequences of the story. After that, the indicator symbols of Individualism in "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" are presented in which these symbols are clarified and explained with examples. Finally, thoughts of Individualism on "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" are presented which it has been discussed throughout its relation with the main elements of postmodern literature including: intertextuality and metafiction with an explanation of how Le Guin presents her postmodern work.

The Theme of Individualism in “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas”:

Ursula.k. Le Guin has written a short story entitled "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas". She tried to send the idea of individualism among the readers at a moment of political change in the United States. Le Guin wrote this short story in the early of 1970s, in the later years of the Vietnam War. Many American were confused and they were looking for answers to their questions that le Guin poses to her readers in the story as whether it is possible to live in a fair and just society without depending on the oppression and scapegeating of others.

At first, it came in the story that people who live in Omelas should accept that the happiness of their city depends on the suffering of one child. Those who cannot help the child decided to move away from the city. The narrator presents a questionable issue: Do your morals allow you to accept suffering of one person to serve the happiness of others? In this dilemma, every one of the citizens decided his destiny. If he is able to accept the suffering of an individual under the pretext of what is called the benefit of the whole or the common weal. However, if a person feels some kind of sympathy with the child's suffering. He has only one choice which is to refuse the society of Omelas by walking away from the city. The narrator's point of view is neutral because she didn't tell us which decision is true. Therefore, she tried to convey a hidden message to the readers that their sacrifice as individuals for their society is not necessary.

Moreover, Le Guin describes at the beginning of the story how wonderful life is in Omelas. The city of Omelas does not have any monarchy, slavery, war, or drugs. Besides, the citizens of Omelas are happy and feel joy because everything in this city is so beautiful, except; for the child's miserable condition. The narrator describes how each child from the city of Omelas must learn about and struggle with the existence of the suffering child. She wrote:

They all know it is there, all the people of Omelas. Some of them have come to see it; others are content merely to know it is there. They all know that it has to be there. Some of them understand why, and some do not but they all understand that their happiness, the beauty of their city, the tenderness of their friendships, the health of their children, the wisdom of their scholars, the skill of their makers, even the abundance of their harvest and the kindly weathers of their skies, depend wholly on this child's abominable misery.

The narrator means that the children of the city of Omelas must bear in mind that helping the child will lead to destroying the city's happiness. So, It can be understood that helping the individual will lead to destroying the collectivist's happiness. Hence, those children only have two options for dealing with this problem: suppress their feelings towards the child's suffering, or leave the city.

Most of children in Omelas choose to continue their perfect lives as if nothing happened. They are convinced that it is better for one person to suffer than for everyone in Omelas to give up their perfect life which means that a child who suffers is like scapegoating to keep the citizens of Omelas happy. Most people choose to put society at the first priority over the individual. Although, if a person decides that the individual has the right to be happy before it is so for the collective _in other words, if a person decides that the child's suffering is unacceptable, even though; it contributes the rest of Omelas's people to taste happiness _ they have no choice but leave the city. Those people who leave the city they don't know even where are they going and whether this choice make them feel satisfied or remorseful. Le Guin writes "the place they go towards is a place even less imaginable to most of us than the city of happiness. I cannot describe it at all. It is possible that it does not exist." In this way, she didn't say if their decision is right or wrong because most readers are, just like most citizens of Omelas, make choices that the happiness of the individual should be a tax for the happiness of society, and thus the choice that the happiness of one individual takes precedence over the happiness of all will always remain a puzzlement for them.

To conclude it may be said that le Guin writes her short story "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" to emphasize the idea of individualism at the reader awareness. She describes the beauty of Omelas and the happiness of its citizens, but there is a price for this beauty and happiness. After an individual absorbs that this price is paid at the expense of himself. He will notice that it is not necessary to sacrifice his happiness to make others happy,

and he must choose between accepting the situation of being scapegoat for the joy of others or leaving towards a place that can live as an independent person.

Indicator Symbols of Individualism in the Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas:

The narrator whose name Ursula.k Le Guin uses many literary devices and symbols which added a special aesthetic to her short story titled by " The Ones who Walk Away From Omelas" and through these symbols , Le Guin sends a lot of encrypted messages which appear to the simple reader as an incomprehensible and vague , while the reader who always trying to analyze, understand, and read between the lines will grasp what did the narrator want to say exactly .These symbols generally focused on the theme of individualism .

First, the title "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" may indicate the change. Either; to change the place if a person can not feel free in his society, or to change the mentality from a collective mentality to an individualistic mentality.

Then, the name 'Omelas' refers to society and the narrator asserts that the city is not as perfect as is proposed to be .In other words, ' Omelas' represents an individualistic society where people are seeking to satisfy their happiness at the expense of other persons.

The narrator writes "if it were cleaned and fed comforted, that would be a good thing, indeed; but if it were done, in that day and hour all the prosperity and beauty and delight of Omelas would wither and be destroyed." Throughout this quote, it can be perceived to the reader as if Le Guin wanted to show that the individual is persecuted and his rights are taken away in a society which is calling for collectivism and fighting everything related to the individual because this 'individual' poses a threat for the public interest.

Furthermore, the child in the short story is a character who symbolizes the individual who is treated with inhumanity ,injustice , and inequity, Le Guin says "the people at the door

never say anything, but the child ,who has not always lived in the room ,and can remember sunlight and it's mother's voice ,sometimes speaks, "I will be good," it says. "Please let me out. I will be good!" They never answer."This child is a scapegoat for the happiness of people who live in Omelas, in other words; the suffering of the individual is necessary for the existence of collectivist's happiness.

Also, the pronoun 'it' is used to refer to the child, it symbolizes the status of the child and how the individual is treated as an object rather than a subject in his society. So, by using the pronoun 'it' to describe the child, it can be understood that the individual in his society has no rights and he is not considered as a human being.

After that, Le Guin states "with the clamor of bells that set the swallow soaring, the festival of summer came to the city of Omelas, bright -towered by the sea " From this quote, it can be noticed that the bird 'swallow ' symbolizes freedom but the swallow cannot fly before having to rest and taking small naps which means that the swallow symbolizes the limited freedom of people who live in Omelas in which strict rules are used against them as individuals to limit their own freedom.

Moreover, even those people who choose to accept the situation that it is normal to have an individual suffer for the rest and they decided to go on with their lives. This represents them as individualistic persons who consider their happiness first before that of others.

Besides, Le Guin describes what is waiting for those who decided to walk away from Omelas by using the term 'darkness'. She said "They leave Omelas, they walk ahead into the darkness, and they do not come back .The place they go towards is a place even less imaginable to most of us than the city of happiness." The use of the word 'darkness' suggested

that even after moving away from Omelas, it is not sure that they can find a society where happiness depends on the misery of some individuals.

As a summary, it can be seen that the theme of individualism could never be perceived to the readers without the use of the symbols and methods. The writer succeeded in conveying the idea of individualism in a hidden way in which the reader can understand the intended meaning once he has finished reading the short story.

Thoughts of Individualism on the Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas:

The short story "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" by Ursula.k le Guin is a Meta fictional story that has nothing to do with reality. It is one of the main works of the postmodern era because, first; it is written in 1973,and second; it contains the two most important elements that it has been discussed earlier which are: Intertextuality and Metafiction. This short story presents how smart and postmodern the writer" le Guin" is. First, the essential idea of intertextuality is about referring a text(or any work) to another text. And here, Le Guin declared at the beginning of her short story "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" that she was inspired by William James, and the idea of the story was derived to her from reading a passage in his book entitled "The Moral Philosopher and the moral life". He said:

...Or if the hypothesis were offered us of a world in which Messrs. Fourier's and Bellamy's and Morris's Utopias should all be outdone, and millions kept permanently happy on the one simple condition that a certain lost soul on the far-off edge of things should lead a life of lonely torment, what except a specifical and independent sort of emotion can it be which would make us immediately feel, even though an impulse arose within us to clutch at the happiness so offered, how hideous a thing would be its enjoyment when deliberately accepted as the fruit of such a bargain?

Then, the narrator used another element that characterizes the postmodern literary works which is Metafiction. This mode of writing named 'metafiction' makes the reader wonder whether this story belongs to the fictional world or to the real world. For instance, in this story, the narrator writes about a city called 'Omelas' which does not actually exist in Earth but the reader will think that this city may exist in somewhere.

Moreover, the short story "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" is merely postmodern work because it is nontraditional story. The reader get used to read short stories in which he can find characters and real narrative but it is not the case in this short story; it has no characters except the typical character 'the child' and the 'people of Omelas'.

On the other side, what makes this short story a postmodern is the style of the narrator. She narrated the story in a smart way in which she clarifies to the reader the idea of individualism and collectivism intelligently. She was neutral and did not express her opinion explicitly.

Even the title contains the word 'Ones' to asserts to readers their plurality and individuality at once. However, through reading such quotes extracted from the story: "I do not know the rules and laws of their society", "I repeat that these were not simple folk.", and "I cannot describe it at all." These frequently use of the pronoun "I" may suggest to the reader the inclination of the narrator which is called individualism.

Furthermore, in the short story "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas", The narrator started talking about the happiness and beauty of Omelas so that the reader may think at the first glance that how it can be a very nice idea to be a member of this city, he will understand through reading the writer's nice description of the city 'Omelas' as if she

encourages him to live in such society, and calls him to defend collectivism. However, when he continues to read, he will discover "the room" in which the imprisoned child is. This room symbolizes the bad side of Omelas and as a result of that the reader's feeling lean more to accept the idea of individualism.

In the same way, Le Guin describes the people of Omelas in the most beautiful way in which she uses the best words and phrases such as happy, mature, and intelligent so that the reader thinks that living with people like those who live in Omelas and are collectivists is the coolest idea. However, when he keeps reading, he will be shocked how selfish and weak the citizens of Omelas are. Because, the maximum thing they can do for the child's suffering is to leave the city! Or to come back to their houses and carry on with their lives as if nothing is happening, and these are examples of individualism because each one of the Omelians thinks of himself and his interest before anything and anyone else.

Also, one of the most important characteristics of the narrator's intelligence and cleverness is the use of 'child' as a major character in the story. She picked up a 'child' not a 'man' in order to win sympathy of the readers about the miserable condition of the child and how he is oppressed by society and therefore the reader like the idea of being individual, independent, and free.

Additionally, it can be seem that everything in the story invites the reader to individualism. The narrator addresses the reader in a direct way by using the pronoun 'you' for example she said "how can I tell you about the people of Omelas", and "Do you believe? Do you accept the festival, the city, the joy? Then let me describe one more thing."

These examples clarifies that Le Guin speaks directly to the reader as if she wants him to understand something by using symbols and the literary devices to convey him hidden

messages. She wants from the reader to have a role and define his viewpoint concerning this dilemma that has been discussed in the short story.

Consequently, the short story written by Ursula k Le Guin entitled "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" is considered as one of the best postmodern works and it has been chosen in this thesis because it deals with the theme of individualism in postmodern literature and represents an example of how writes started to introduce the philosophical theory of individualism in their literal writings.

Conclusion:

The third chapter has presented the theme of individualism in the postmodern literature particularly, in the postmodern short stories. The reader will understand how people started to adopt the culture of individualism; also he will take an idea about the use of symbols and the benefits of them in the literary work. So, this chapter has presented a short story entitled "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" Written by Ursula Kroeber Le Guin (1929-2018) who is an American author. She writes lots of essays, poetries, speeches, translations, and literary critiques which belong to realistic fiction and non-fiction works. First, the theme of individualism in "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" has been discussed in details relating to the event sequences of the story. After that, the indicator symbols of Individualism in "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" have been presented in which these symbols have been clarified and explained with examples. Finally, thoughts of Individualism on "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" have been presented which it has been discussed throughout its relation with the main elements of postmodern literature including: intertextuality and metafiction with an explanation of how Le Guin presents her postmodern work.

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

Individualism is a philosophy that focuses on the individual. It defends their rights, their desires, their goals and everything related to them as a human being. Also, it emphasizes that individuals have the right to choose their way of life without any unjust authority from society. Individualism has been transformed from being a philosophical idea or an ideology to the culture of peoples and countries from all over the world, such as; America, Canada, Australia and Great Britain throughout literary writings in the postmodern era, because any person is influenced by what they read from books, especially literary books that contain messages that address their subconscious mind, increasing their awareness and ability to analyze reality and events surrounding them in their society.

The main concern of this study was to analyze individualism in postmodern literature, and it has taken a literary story as a case study; an example of individualism is entitled *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas* by the American narrator Ursula.k Le Guin. This paper is divided into three main chapters two are theoretical and one is practical. First, it discussed the theme of individualism from different sides. It defined individualism, and historical information concerning its emergence is given. Also, it briefly mentioned its most important claims and features. Then, this dissertation provided a piece of theoretical information about the literature in postmodernism, and it focused on the two most important modes of writing used by writers at that time, namely intertextuality and metafiction. After that, it conducted an analysis of individualism in the story of le Guin that is *The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas*. It explains where the individualism is in the story ,and how the author expressed it by using symbolism and the two modes of writing that have been mentioned earlier which are intertextuality and metafiction.

The first chapter is a theoretical background about individualism. It clarifies the theme of individualism by giving different views of philosophers such as Ayn Rand (1982), and Hofstede(2020)regarding the definition of individualism. After that, it discussed the appearance of individualism and how it began to spread. Then, individualism cannot be examined without studying collectivism; hence a comparison was made between the individualistic culture and the collectivist culture. Later, claims of individualism have been presented. These claims include philosophical individualism (which is divided into three major aspects which are as follows: Ontological individualism, epistemological individualism, and methodological individualism), the dignity of the individual, the ideal of individualism, moral individualism and political individualism. Finally, it clarified the features of individualism including autonomy, self-responsibility, and uniqueness. This chapter presented the importance of the theme of individualism and how an individual recognize his rights, including living in dignity and freedom; as it explained how an individual should behave in terms of being self-governing, taking responsibility, and generalizing uniqueness.

The second chapter is a theoretical background of postmodernism and postmodern literature. First, it has been tried to define postmodernism from different perspectives such as the definition by the English theorist Terry Eagleton and David Harvey. Second, it has briefly analyzed postmodernism historically from 1917 to 1990 and how intellectuals, artists, and others present postmodernism in their works. Third, the common features of postmodern literature have been tackled. These features are divided into; first, intertextuality in which its origins and definition are discussed. Then, it dealt with how the writers used this mode of writing in postmodern literature; second, metafiction in which its origins and definition are presented. Besides, its relation with postmodern literature and how writers attempt to use metafiction in their writings are also presented in this section. This chapter analyzed how the theme of individualism has added a lot to literary writings in the postmodern era, as writers

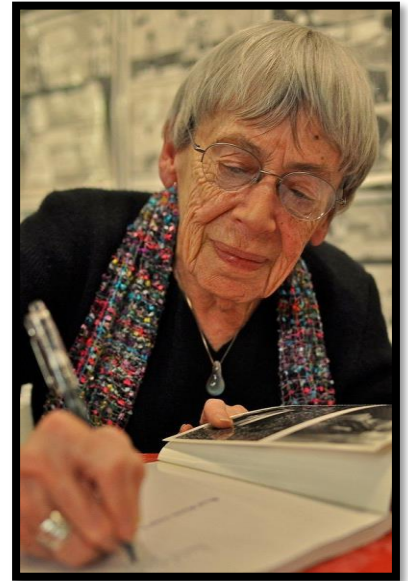
have become competing to convey this theme to people in their literary works, and this what foreground the creativity in writing because postmodern writers have used literary means such as symbolism, metaphors, imagination as well as intertextuality and metafiction in order to clarified individualism in a hidden way.

The third chapter attempted to analyze a short story written in the postmodern literature entitled 'The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas'. It shows where the theme of individualism is and how Ursula. K Le Guin, the writer of the story, expressed individualism by using indicator symbols and literary devices. After that, the chapter presents some thoughts on individualism like analyzing the title and its relation to individualism, evaluating the style of the narrator, and finding out where the narrator used the two modes of writing which are intertextuality and metafiction. In other words, this chapter clarified the role of the narrator Ursula. K Le Guin in introducing the theme of individualism in her short story, she child's character, who symbolizes the individual, and she described how he is oppressed in Omelas and how this city's happiness depends on the child's suffering. She sent hidden messages to readers that there are some societies that do not pay attention to the happiness of the individual and believe that is okay for the suffering of the one if this serves the happiness of the whole.

Appendices

Appendix 01: Ursula Kroeber Le Guin's Biography

Ursula Kroeber was born in 1929 and grew up in Berkeley, California. She was a celebrated author, whose body of work includes 23 novels, 12 volumes of short stories, 11 volumes of poetry, 13 children's books, five essay collections, and four works of translation. In 2000, she was named a Living Legend by the Library of Congress, and in 2016, she joined the list of authors to be published in their lifetimes by the Library of America. One of her best-known works is "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas" (1973) (Ursulaklequin.com)

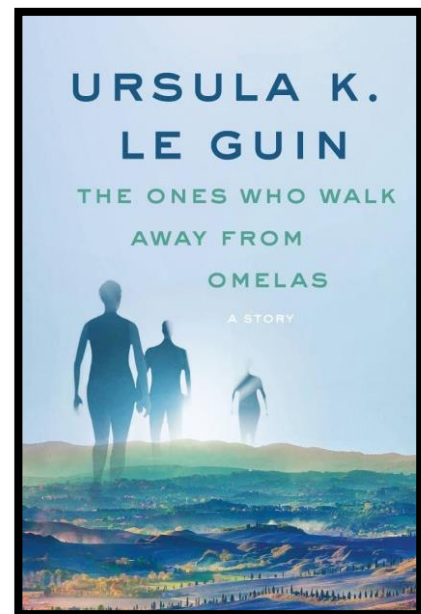


Ursula. K Le Guin by K.

Kendall via flickr

Appendix 02: Synopsis of Ursula. K LeGuin's The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas

The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas is a 1973 work of short fiction by American writer Ursula .K Le Guin. The idea behind Ursula's story came from her throughout reading a road sign for Salem, Oregon, ('Salem', O.) In her car's rear-view mirror .Also came from both Fyodor Dostoevsky and from the nineteenth century Psychologist, William James.



The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas by Ursula. K Le Guin

downloaded by

www.Amazon.com

In details, Le Guin tells us about the city of Omelas, she started her story with the festival of summer, an annual festival celebrating the arrival of the season. The people of Omelas are happy and they celebrated with a procession involving the whole city. However, there is a child of nearly ten years old who is kept imprisoned in a windowless room, this child is never allowed out of its prison cell. When children become old enough to understand, the citizens told them about the child but they warn them not to help him. So, the children are powerless to help the child. They know that the prosperity and beauty of their city "Omelas" would vanish if they tried to free the child.

At the end of the story, the narrator tells us about those people who cannot help the child, hence they have no choice but to leave the city, the narrator doesn't know where they are going, but they seem to know where they are heading, the ones who walk away from the city. (interesting literature.com)

Works Cited

Primary Sources:

Le Guin, Ursula K. "The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"(1973)." *The Wind's Twelve Quarters* (2018): 275-84.

Secondary Sources:

Allen, Graham, and New Critical Idiom Intertextuality. "Taylor & Francis Routledge." *London & New York* (2000).

Branden, Nathaniel. *Taking Responsibility*. Simon and Schuster, 1997.

Butler, Christopher. *Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction*. Vol. 74. Oxford Paperbacks, 2002.

Cahoone, L. E. "From Modernism to Postmodernism: An Anthology (Vol. 2)." *Malden, MA: Blackwell* (2003).

Dai, Hongbin, and Yini Huang. "Metafiction and Postmodernism." *7th International Conference on Education, Management, Information and Mechanical Engineering (EMIM 2017)*. Atlantis Press, 2017.

DARWISH, ABDEL-FATTAH E., and GUNTER L. HUBER. "Individualism vs Collectivism in Different Cultures: A Cross-Cultural Study." *Intercultural Education* 14.1 (2003).

Dworkin, Gerald. "The Nature of Autonomy." *Nordic Journal of Studies in Educational Policy* 2015.2 (2015): 28479.

Eagleton, Terry. *The Illusions of Postmodernism*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing (1997).

Forsyth, Donelson, and C. Hoyt, eds. *For the greater good of all: Perspectives on individualism, society, and leadership*. Springer, 2011.

Fromkin, Howard L. C.R. Snyder. *UNIQUENESS: The Human Pursuit of Difference* (1980)

Harvy, David. "The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change." *Massachusetts: Basil Blackwell* (1989).

Hoffmann, Gerhard. *From Modernism to Postmodernism: Concepts and Strategies of Postmodern American Fiction*. Brill, 2016.

Hoover, Herbert, and George H. Nash. *American Individualism*. Hoover Press, 2016.

Kohl, Lawrence Frederick. *The politics of individualism: Parties and the American character in the Jacksonian era*. Oxford University Press, 1991.

Kristeva, Julia. "Word, dialogue and novel. I T. Moi (Red.)." *Word, Dialogue and Novel* (1986).

Lukes, Steven. "The Meanings of" Individualism"." *Journal of the History of Ideas* 32.1 (1971): 45-66.

Realo, Anu, et al. "Three Components of Individualism." *European Journal of Personality* 16.3 (2002): 163-184.

Sharma, Ramen, and Preety Chaudhary. "Common Themes and Techniques of Postmodern Literature of Shakespeare." *International Journal of Educational Planning & Administration* 1.2 (2011): 189-198.

Snyder, Charles R., and Howard L. Fromkin. *Uniqueness: The Human Pursuit of Difference*. Springer Science & Business Media, 2012.

Stoutland, Frederick. "Self and Society in the Claims of Individualism." *Studies in Philosophy and Education* 10.2 (1990): 105-137.

Triandis, Harry C. *Individualism and Collectivism*. Routledge, 2018.

Waugh, Patricia. *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*. Routledge, 2002.

Webography:

Jane, Mary. "Individualism in USA." *Youtube*. 19 Apr. 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qHiBty9yKAQ>.

"Individualism." *Aynrandlexicon*. <http://aynrandlexicon.com/lexicon/individualism/2.html>. Accessed 28 April 2021.

"Individualism." *Macmillan Dictionary*. <https://www.macmillandictionary.com/dictionary/british/individualism>. Accessed 28 April 2021.

"Individualism." *Merriam Webster*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/individualism>. Accessed 28 April 2021.

"Intertextuality." *Merriam Webster*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intertextuality>. Accessed 28 April 2021.

Pigeon Extremist. "The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas." *Youtube*. 25 Jan. 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fT2QjwOO5l4>

Works Cited

"Postmodern." *Merriam Webster*. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/postmodern>.

[Accessed 28 April 2021](#).

"Postmodernism." *Your Dictionary*. <https://www.yourdictionary.com/postmodernism>.

[Accessed 28 April 2021](#).

<http://www.ursulakleguin.com>

<https://interestingliterature.com>