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*Corresponding author:

Prof.Dr. Lamiaa Ahmed Rasheed

Leqaa Saeed Fadhel

University: Tikrit University

College: College of Education

for Women

Email:

Lamia.ahmed62@tu.edu.iq.com

leqaa.s.fadhel@gmail.com

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Info Technology and Mental Health: A Study of Chuck Palahniuk's Fight Club in the Scope of Berardi's Theory

ABSTRACT

Throughout history technology has proven to be not only a means of progress but also a dangerous weapon of destruction. Instead of saving people's lives, technology can lead its users to be depressed and to have many mental diseases. The study argues that the mental diseases of post modern people is caused by info technology and acceleration of new life that affects human minds and leads people to be depressed, schizophrenic, bored and so on. The main aim of this research is to argue that these mental diseases are not a psychological state, but a defensive mechanism that the mind uses to get rid of the pressures of the new life. This paper attempts to explain the relevance of such figurations in Chuck Palahniuk's novel Fight Club by drawing on the observations and views made by the Italian communist thinker and philosopher Franco Berardi. According to his semio-capitalism concept, which is the consuming of the human mind for the sake of capitalism, the information technologies of 21th century have separated us from our social, physical or sensual body. Fight Club exposes the darkness at the core of our new world of info technology concentrating on a depressed man just sick with his life and wants to change it.

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تكنولوجيا المعلومات والصحة العقلية: دراسة عن رواية نادي القتال لتشاك بالانيوك في نطاق نظرية بيراردي

إ.د. لمياء احمد رشيد / جامعة تكريت / كلية التربية للبنات

لقاء سعيد فاضل / جامعة تكريت / كلية التربية للبنات

الخلاصة:

أثبتت التكنولوجيا عبر التاريخ أنها ليست وسيلة للتقدم فحسب ، بل هي أيضاً سلاح تدميري خطير. ف بدلاً من إن تنقذ حياة الناس ، يمكن أن تؤدي التكنولوجيا إلى إصابة مستخدميها بالاكتئاب والإصابة بالعديد من الأمراض العقلية. تناقش هذه الدراسة بأن الأمراض العقلية لأشخاص ما بعد الحداثة سببها تكنولوجيا المعلومات وتسارع الحياة الجديدة التي تؤثر على عقول البشر وتؤدي إلى الاكتئاب والفصام والملل وما إلى

وقائع المؤتمر العلمي السابع تحت شعار (العلوم الانسانية بين التحديات الراهنة والافاق المستقبلية) الذي اقامته كلية الآداب في جامعة

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ذلك. الهدف الرئيسي من هذا البحث هو القول بأن هذه الأمراض العقلية ليست حالة نفسية ، ولكنها آلية دفاعية يستخدمها العقل للتخلص من ضغوط الحياة الجديدة ، و تهدف هذه الورقة الى شرح مثل هذه المسألة في رواية نادي القتال ل تشاك بالانيوك بالاعتماد على الملاحظات والآراء التي أبداهها المفكر والفيلسوف الشيعي الإيطالي فرانكو بيراردي. وفقاً لمفهومه سيمورأسمالية ، وهو استهلاك العقل البشري من أجل الرأسمالية ، فقد فصلتنا تقنيات المعلومات في القرن الحادي والعشرين عن عالمنا الاجتماعي أو المادي أو الحسي. تكشف رواية نادي القتال عن الظلام الكامن في عالمنا الجديد لتكنولوجيا المعلومات مع التركيز على رجل مكنتب مريض بحياته للتو ويريد تغييرها.

الكلمات المفتاحية: تكنولوجيا المعلومات ، التسارع ، الاكتئاب ، السيمورأسمالية، نادي القتال

1.1 Introduction

Chuck Palahniuk is an American novelist and freelance journalist, born on February 21, 1962, in Pasco, Washington. He is best known for his novel "Fight Club," which was later adapted into a successful movie directed by David Fincher and starring Brad Pitt and Edward Norton. Palahniuk's writing style is often described as transgressive fiction, characterized by its dark humour, unconventional narrative structure, and controversial subject matter. His works often explore themes of consumerism, masculinity, sexuality, and identity. They also have been praised for their originality and creativity but have also been criticized for its graphic violence and disturbing content. Despite this controversy, he has developed a devoted following of fans who appreciate his unique voice and perspective. According to an Interview with Palahniuk in the Guardian (2022), he begins writing as a way to cope with the stress of his job as a diesel mechanic. He eventually quit his job to pursue writing full-time and published his first novel, *Fight Club* in 1996. Since then, Palahniuk has become a cult favorite among readers and has been recognized for his contributions to literature. In 2019, he was awarded the Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters by the National Book Foundation. In addition to "Fight Club," Palahniuk has written several other successful novels, including "*Choke*," "*Lullaby*," "*Invisible Monsters*," and "*Haunted*." He has also written non-fiction books on writing and publishing.

Fight Club was satirical novel; it was talking about an unnamed man, protagonist and narrator, has been described as "macho porn", and "a celebration of violence" and also as an "uncompromising American classic". He was a typical American man lives in a post postmodern society and works for a company this man was suffering from insomnia and depression, he couldn't sleep for a long time. He loses all his motivation to live and he was bored with his work. He suddenly meets a man called Durden, and then both of them start gathering places for men to fight and to get rid of their negative feeling and anger, which they refer to as fight clubs. This project evolves into "Project Mayhem," whose anti-consumerism objective is to give guys, like the narrator, a reason to live by using violence, murder, and bombs. Later on the novel, Durden is revealed to be the narrator's alter ego and a hallucination, proving that they are both the same person. The regulations that Durden has established for the project prevent the narrator from changing their course of action as Project Mayhem progresses. He subsequently fights to put an end to the endeavour and finds himself trapped in his own thoughts, unable to get rid of his uncontrollable alter ego Durden. An important issue for character analysis is this complex connection and the subsequent moral conundrums set against an anti-consumerist and individualistic ideological backdrop.

In this paper, Palahniuk novel *Fight Club* will be analysed according to the post Marxist thinker called Franco Bifo Berardi and adapting his thought about mental diseases in a post postmodern society. Berardi (2010) believes that people are depressed and frustrated as a result of the effect of info technology on their minds which in turn threatens their mental health. In the post-postmodern period, information technology has completely transformed the way we work, live, and communicate by changing our life into a virtual one. As Eischen (2000) state that "Information Technology is the conversion of social knowledge and practices into digital form" (7). With the coming of internet, smartphones, social media, and other digital devices, people are constantly receiving this information at an unprecedented rate. This situation is known as "info acceleration," and it has significant implications on our mental health. Floridi (2002) says that "[n]o previous generation was ever exposed to such an extraordinary acceleration of technological power over reality, with the corresponding social changes and ethical responsibilities" (127). This mean that the former generation were less exposed to be mentally affected as illustrated in many domains of psychiatry:

Compared with 1900, when Kraepelin and Freud were putting forward the ideas that would shape modern psychiatry, by 2000 there had been a fifteen-fold increase in rates of admission to psychiatric wards. There had also been a three-fold increase in rates of detention for psychiatric disorders. And psychiatric patients afflicted with schizophrenia or manic-depressive disorder, the disorders at the core of psychiatric business, were likely to spend more time in a service bed during their psychiatric illness than they would have done a century ago. (Esposito and Perez1, 2014, p. 329)

Berardi also noticed this increasing of mental illness in the new life and he presented a political and clinical diagnosis of these contemporary mental diseases of Western society. He argues that the mental diseases that we have experienced today is not solely a result of biological thing but it is a defensive state that the mind utilize to get rid of the pressure of accelerated life and it is caused by the dominion of capitalism over technology. He (2017) states that “the events of economic and psychic depression have to be understood in the same context, because they are interrelated”; he coined the term semiocapitalism, which refers to the system that exploits people mentally and treating their mind as a product that could have benefit from, without taking into consideration the huge effects that might cause, whether social or mental ones. Semio-capital is capital-flux that coagulates in semiotic artefacts without materializing itself (p. 1). Berardi (2009) writes on his book:

Semio-capital is in a crisis of overproduction, but the form of this crisis is not only economic but also psychopathic. Semio-capital, in fact, is not about the production of material goods, but about the production of psychic stimulation. The mental environment is saturated by signs that create a sort of continuous excitation, a permanent electrocution, which leads the individual mind as well as the collective mind to a state of collapse.” (p. 45)

According to several psychological, sociological, and medical studies, using technology excessively can increase the risk of developing depression, anxiety, and other mental health issues. A feeling of information overload may result from the constant flow of information. This

may result in stress, worry, and even depressive symptoms. This is due partly to the way that technology has altered our interpersonal relationships. The culture of continual comparison and competitiveness has been cultivated by the advertisements that appear through TV, or blogs, or social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter. Through these types of information technology, people frequently compare their lives to the highlights of others, which can cause inadequacy and low self-esteem. They become a consumer and want to have every thing that is found on these advertisement and platforms, to feel some luxury and get rid of the feeling of depression and boredom that comes as a result of the pressure of modern life. Technology has also made it simpler to operate around the clock, which is another aspect. Due to long time of working on computers, email notifications and other digital communication technologies, many people feel under pressure to be accessible round-the-clock. Burnout and lack of work-life balance may result from this.

As Berardi has observed, people are left in a condition of exhaustion and overstimulation due to “the intensity and precariousness of late capitalist work culture”. A besieging of attention results from insecure employment and digital interactions. He also thinks that civilization becomes eroticized in this insomniac, overburdened state (Fisher, 2009). And while the narrator's diagnosis of insomnia is symbolic of the state many modern-day workers are in because many turn to the constantly available and addictive micro-stimulation provided by their technological devices, which often keep them awake at night (more on this later), even though post-Fordist capitalism may not be the true cause of his lack of sleep because he has an alter-ego awake. Berardi's identification of insomnia at night is symbolic of the condition many modern-day workers are in because many turn to the always-available and addictive micro-stimulation provided by their technological devices to treat their insomnia when work is over (if it ever is, since some have to be answering emails at 10 PM today). Mark Fisher's who is he? concept of capitalist realism functions in the present day. “Over the past thirty years, capitalist realism has successfully installed a 'business ontology' in which it is simply obvious that everything in society, including healthcare and education, should be run as a business” (Fisher, 2009, 17). The general perception that capitalism is not the only economically and politically acceptable system, but that also it is currently impossible to even imagine a cogent alternative to it, is known as capitalist realism. Also, the phrase describes how capitalism has developed into a sort of "natural

order". Fisher further states that “capitalist realism insists on treating mental health as if it were a natural fact, like weather, but weather is no longer a natural fact so much as a political-economic effect” (Fisher, 2009, P.19).

1.2 *Fight Club* in the Scope of Berardi's theory

Overall, *Fight Club* can be seen as an exploration of Berardi' ideas about depression, insomnia, boredom, schizophrenia and other mental diseases in contemporary society. The novel portrays characters who are struggling with the acceleration of information that leads them to be mentally diseased and grows inside them feelings of disconnection and alienation brought on by the rapid pace of technological change, societal upheaval. Information acceleration's effect on the mental health is a complicated topic that demands more investigation. It is certain that technology has altered our way of life in ways that could be harmful to our mental health, though setting limits on technology use is crucial to reducing these harmful consequences. “This pervasiveness of Information Technology in all aspects of life must inevitably have a massive impact on society and the individual. Through Information Technology, society has experienced a revolution that is comparable to that of the Industrial Revolution”. (Floridi, 2002, P. 3). The impact of this development of 21th century was great just like the impact of industrial revolution, but it harms people in a way that they couldn't live a normal or a healthy life.

This novel reveals a very important point in post postmodern society, when we analyse it, we will notice that it holds a clear political thought. It is a clear attack towards contemporary capitalist system and how this system control people by exposing them to a great amount of information without taking in consideration that the human mind couldn't manage whole this information that could lead people to be depressed, bored lost and with many psychological illnesses. Palahniuk wants to give a message that people are depressed with a shattered feeling and there is no ability even to make a decision under this info acceleration of new life. Franco Berardi imputes that these diseases, which emerge as a result of info technology, by the capitalist system that controls everything. He argues that capitalism has created an “informational dictatorship” which must be overthrown through collective action and solidarity among workers. (Hugill, 2012)

Berardi (2010) argues that contemporary society is characterized by a "death of feeling" and a general sense of depression. He suggests that this is due to the overwhelming pace of technological change, the erosion of traditional social structures, and the increasing complexity of decision-making processes. "The info-sphere has dramatically changed and accelerated, and this is jeopardizing the very possibility of communication, empathy and solidarity" (10-11). Among the large number of characters suffering from mental illness in Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* (1996), the narrator is a case in point. This character is suffering from a mental disease like depression, insomnia, anxiety and so on. Early in the novel, after being examined by a doctor, the narrator is described in a language which more typifies a string of unconnected pure data rather than a human being:

Palahniuk (2005) notes in the introduction to his collection of nonfiction writing, *Stranger than Fiction: True Stories*, "all my books are about a lonely person looking for some way to connect with other people" (Palahniuk, 2004). In *Fight Club*, we see many examples of such as characters struggling with these issues. The protagonist, known only as "the narrator," is a young man who feels trapped in his mundane job and his consumerist lifestyle. He is unable to connect with others on a meaningful level and finds solace in attending support groups for various illnesses he does not have.

I went to my first support group two years ago, after I'd gone to my doctor about my insomnia, again. Three weeks and I hadn't slept. Three weeks without sleep, and everything becomes an out-of-body experience. My doctor said, "Insomnia is just the symptom of something larger. Find out what's actually wrong. Listen to your body." (Palahniuk, 1996, 16)

It is an obvious declaration that the narrator suffers from a mental disease. As shown by U'ren (1997) both capitalism and psychiatry place high value on work and productivity. Capitalism ascribes good character to the individual who works conscientiously and promotes hard work as the route to individual success. Psychiatry reinforces this by maintaining that the ability and desire to work (and consume) is a sign of mental health. (p. 4). Physicians, for instance, primarily consider the issue from the standpoint of chemical biology and entirely disregard or perhaps even reject any political or social causes. We seldomly take into account how the

economic and social environments of production and consumption could influence us psychologically because they're perceived as being so inevitable when examining the causes of mental disorder. This is what Berardi tried to change, by pointing out how some mental disorder may be viewed as political, as opposed to natural, categories. When the narrator loses patience, he tells the doctor, "Hey, come on. I'm in pain," yet there's nothing the doctor can really do, and if the narrator looked for solutions elsewhere, he would probably run into the endless stream of advertisements and TV commercials urging him to buy this medication or sign up for that service, neither of which deal with the underlying reasons of insomnia but instead strengthen the insomniac situation. As Berardi says in his book *After The Future* "The radio becomes in Khlebnikov's words a gigantic screen in the central place of all the cities and the villages so that the people can receive news and suggestions and lessons and medical instructions". (Berardi, 2010, p. 20). The doctor did offer him another piece of advice, telling him to be grateful that his situation is not worse while contrasting it with that of guys who have cancers and other disease. "My doctor said, if I wanted to see real pain, I should swing by First Eucharist on a Tuesday night. See the brain parasites. See the degenerative bone diseases. The organic brain dysfunctions. See the cancer patients getting by". He wants him to be thankful that he isn't one of those guys as if they were not further victims of post-Fordist capitalism. Despite not being ill, the narrator does go see the guys at their self-help group meeting, and he finds that sobbing with them actually helps him. As a result, he starts participating in several groups.

Doug Mann (2008) in his essay "*Fight Club* as a satire of consumer capitalism" states that "The narrator's alienation from his work and his life is symbolized by his need to visit self-help groups for people with deadly diseases such as cancer and brain parasites. After visiting these groups The narrator says he's never felt more alive, presumably because the spectre of the decaying bodies in these groups contrasts so sharply with his own healthy body, however alienated from it he might feel.". When faced with something as awful as cancer, this made-up reality full of spectacles starts to crumble. An illustration of this is when the members of cancer support group, shares with each other their former life and the feeling of deprivation, they are crying their normal life. But returning to the narrator's state of insomnia, the narrator says, "With insomnia, nothing's real. Everything is far away. Everything's a copy of a copy of a copy." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.21)

Berardi argues that this kind of distance or the disconnection from reality is a symptom of depression brought on by the overwhelming pace of modern life. Durden says that “we are the middle children of history, raised by television to believe that someday we’ll be millionaires and movie stars and rock stars, but we won’t. And we’re just learning this fact,” Durden said. “So don’t fuck with us (Palahniuk, 1996, p.166). In other ways, those "middle children "were brought up in a society that constantly surrounded them with images of luxury and celebrity that the majority of people would never experience. They felt angered when they saw this difference between promise and accomplishment, which is the main reason of establishing fight clubs. The feeling of anger toward their future they are shocked from what they become and how they don’t have the right to change anything. How their dream is vanished now and nothing will be done. Looking for meaning in this society and bored life is just like looking for a needle in a haystack. The narrator's inability to feel anything real or meaningful leads him to seek out increasingly extreme experiences, such as participating in underground fight clubs and eventually joining a terrorist organization .Similarly, other characters in the novel also struggle with decision-making processes. With this bored and meaningless life, people become unstable; they cannot even have a decision in their life. They cannot manage their life. In the novel another character, Marla Singer, the narrator's love interest, is portrayed as someone who cannot make decisions for herself and instead relies on others to tell her what to do. Durden, the charismatic leader of the fight club, encourages his followers to reject societal norms and make their own decisions based on their instincts .

Berardi says that now we are living the “slow cancellation of the future” where life continues, but time has somehow stopped. This leads to the postmodern side of the narrator’s picture of the society of the spectacle. “His insomnia distances the narrator from his daytime activities, notably his job. In his book *Ghosts of My Life*, Mark Fisher elaborates on this concept, writing “it is the contention of this book that 21st-century culture is marked by the same anachronism and inertia which afflicted Sapphire and Steel in their final adventure. But this status has been buried, interred behind a superficial frenzy of ‘newness’, of perpetual movement. The ‘jumbling up of time’, the montaging of earlier eras, has ceased to be worthy of comment; it is now so prevalent that it is no longer even noticed”.(Fisher,2014) In essence, he thinks that there is no longer any real, substantial cultural growth and that there is no hope for the future. He argues that having

20th-century culture available on high-definition screens and delivered over high-speed internet is what it means to live in the 21st century; it is the advent of digital communicative capitalism. Naturally, both producers and consumers are subject to the besieging of attention that Berardi describes. Creating the new requires specific types of withdrawal, such as from sociality as well as from pre-existing cultural forms. But, with the present dominating form of socially networked cyberspace and its plethora of YouTube connections, disengagement has become more challenging than ever before. Daily life has accelerated recently, yet culture has slowed down.

According to Christoffersen in her essay *Fight Club: A Commentary on the Crises of Capitalism*, she states that "*Fight Club* also highlights society's obsession and infatuation with consumerism" (Christoffersen,2016). This is evident in the moment where the narrator describes his apartment near the beginning of the novel. He claims that he is like so many others had surrendered to the IKEA nesting urge, buying things he doesn't need but he feels that he is obliged to do so like others.

The narrator must have it if he finds a nice yin yang table in the IKEA catalog. The item turns into a need that he finds difficult to live without. Both Marcuse was concerned that in rich societies, we would acquire erroneous demands and desires and end up as slaves to those who could satiate them, such as IKEA. As a result, capitalism manages to cover society's widespread exploitation, leading to what can be called a "collective forgetting." (Marcus, 1966)

After that, the narrator continues by listing all of the other items he has in his apartment, such as his "Rislamp wire lights of ecologically friendly unbleached paper." (Palahniuk, 1996, p.41) It's interesting that he included the phrase "environmentally friendly" here considering that IKEA, the company he is a slave to, has a climate footprint of 26.9 million tons of carbon. He will buy a few items that have the "eco-friendly" green sticker on them, just like almost every other consumer, and take pride in them, thinking of himself as a responsible person who helped fight climate change; however, in reality, his actions are incredibly insignificant, and he just ended up falling for this eco-friendly spectacle that IKEA creates for more consumers while they continue exploiting the Earth dioxide equivalent, and the lamp itself requires. The notions of identity and the self in modern culture have changed as a result of the pervasive phenomenon that our identities are provided as commodities. Nowadays, brands use symbolically charged

visuals and imagery that show how their products may help customers "fulfill" themselves and discover an inner identity or meaning. This is accomplished through process-improving marketing tactics and algorithms. (Mathews, 2005)

Mark Fisher writes that “climate change and the threat of resource-depletion are not being repressed as much as incorporated into advertising and marketing. What this treatment of environmental catastrophe illustrates is the fantasy structure on which capitalist realism depends; a presupposition that resources are infinite, that the earth is merely a husk which capital can at a certain point slough off like a used skin, and that any problem can be solved by the market.” Fisher (2009) .The voracious character of capitalism, which must be halted, is the real source of the ecological calamity that is approaching us (or that we are currently suffering). This reality lies underneath the delusion that IKEA is environmentally good. Buying lights that seem environmentally benign in the name of "helping the environment" overlooks the real causes of environmental damage and gives IKEA more money to invest, which furthers environmental catastrophe. Because of its "growth obsession," or demand for a perpetually growing market, capitalism is fundamentally hostile to the idea of sustainability.

“As long as you're at fight club, you're not how much money you've got in the bank. You're not your job. You're not your family, and you're not who you tell yourself.” (Palahniuk, 1996, p.143)

This is one of the most powerful words that have been said by the second and main character in this novel. Durden once again on an aircraft, the narrator encounters Durden, a strange man. He is vehemently opposed to our contemporary consumerist society, unlike almost everyone else. He is aware that individuals are not truly defined by their possessions, and that it is absurd and divisive to try to define oneself and others in terms of possessions perspective. Berardi also argues that contemporary society is characterized by a "death of feeling" and a general sense of depression. This death of feeling has turned people to be just like a machine, without feeling, without realization of their situation. “Digital and bio-technologies have turned the external machine of iron and steel into the internalised and recombining machine of the bio-info era. The bio-info machine is no more separable from the body and the mind, because it is no more an external tool, but an internal transformer of the body and of the mind, a linguistic and cognitive

enhancer. Now the nanomachine is mutating the human brain and the linguistic ability to produce and communicate. The Machine is us". (Berardi, 2010, 16)

Beraedi (2010) suggests that the overwhelming pace of technological change, the erosion of traditional social structures, and the increasing complexity of decision-making processes are the main reasons behind many mental diseases. His work always focuses on how digital technology has changed our lives and how it affects our communication with each other. He argues that digital technology has created a new form of alienation due to its ability to disconnect us from our physical environment and from each other. The sensation of being completely cut off from the perception of the world is caused by the world's endless acceleration in relation to the mind. And then it instantly flips back, forgetting the feeling that makes sense. The world may not make sense, but what we are able to create does. What helps us to make sense is what moves in the realm of friendship, love, and social solidarity, but the acceleration of our life lead us to Depression which is characterized as a loss of sense and the inability to make meaning of one's actions, communications, or experiences in general. The incapacity to generate sense precedes the inability to locate it. Peter F. Ducker reflects in his book *Post Capitalism Society* (1993) that the problem was not in the development that the revolution bring, especially in the 1900 and then but it was un the acceleration in these information". (17)

Ducker further argues that this kind of rejection of traditional decision-making processes is a response to the overwhelming complexity of modern life. In *Fight Club*, we see characters struggling to navigate a world where everything seems predetermined by corporate Interests and technological systems beyond their control .It also suggests that traditional decision-making processes are no longer adequate for navigating this complex world and those new forms of resistance and rebellion may be necessary. According to Berardi who believes that depression is not a biological illness but it is an acquired one, it couldn't come to people through heredity, but it emerges due to the difficulties of the new society and the capitalist system. The narrator is then informed that we are all "consumers. "We are by-products of a lifestyle of obsession" he then realizes it at that very time. Also, according to Durden, "you're trapped in your lovely nest, and the things you used to own, now they own you"(Palahniuk,1996,44) then he said It's only after we've lost everything that we're free to do anything." (Palahniuk,1996,70) There is so much

more to live than IKEA tables when we take a step back from commercial culture and societal domination.

The rest of the novel centres on The narrator's quest to live independently and reject Durden's advice to reject the basic assumptions of civilization, especially the importance of material possessions. Durden says "Project Mayhem will break up civilization so we can, make something better out of the world." (Palahniuk,1996,125). In essence, Durden is an anti-consumerist and non-conformist, and he even resembles the philosopher Diogenes, who not only chose to live in poverty but also disregarded the majority of societal conventions. As Durden is The narrator's projection of his Freudian id and sees more to live than simply drooling over worldly stuff, he entirely avoids any societal conventions that may "repress" us. Durden is believed to be a Freudian projection of The narrator. He mistakenly believes that Durden is a different person for the most of the novel, someone who disobeys all societal norms and defies the law. By the time The narrator understands it at the end, Durden isn't actually another person; he's only a projection of his mind, his inner Id, one of Freud's elements of the psyche that was at odds with the others. the narrator suffers from schizophrenia and he got duality on his character.

The doubling in *Fight Club* is placed into a postmodern framework by means of two elements, which also shed light on the "subversive forces" which lie in the narrator's brain. The postmodern state of schizoid reality is the first element. As Fredric Jameson put it, "This differentiation and specialization or semiautonomization of reality is therefore anterior to what occurs in the psyche postmodern schizo fragmentation, as opposed to modern or modernist fears and hysterics-, which adopts the shape of the world it models and aspires". (Jameson,1997) The narrator, troubled by how materialism has come to define his existence and a general sense of "historical deafness," starts to suffer a fragmentation of self that shows up. The idea of narcissism as it is presented in Christopher Lasch's 1978 book *The Culture of Narcissism* becomes the second part of the doubling in *Fight Club*. Lasch's social critique echoes the same notions of "historical deafness" that Fredric Jameson discussed in his writings from the 1980s. Lasch claims that "to live for the moment is the prevailing passion-to live for yourself, not for your predecessors or posterity" (Lasch,1979,5). We are rapidly losing our feeling of historical

continuity and our sense of being a part of a line of generations that goes back in time and extends into the future. The feeling of historical time is fading.

Lasch describes the world of the narcissist in a manner similar to how Jean Baudrillard characterizes the postmodern person as being a passive "screen" or recipient of the inundation of the postmodern media frenzy: "For the narcissist, the world is a mirror, whereas the rugged individualist saw it as an empty wilderness to be shaped by his own design" (10). His (sic) apparent freedom from familial obligations and institutional restraints "contributes to his insecurity, which he can only override by seeing his "grandiose self" reflected in the attentions of others, or by attaching himself to those who radiate celebrity, power, and charisma," according to the author (Lasch 10)

By demanding immediate gratification and ignoring any potential social repercussions, Durden quite literally violates the Freudian pleasure principle. Durden also clearly violates Thanatos, the death instincts, as evidenced by his creation of the fight club, which will be further examined. At times, Durden served as The narrator's alter ego. Durden was awake when The narrator went to sleep and could engage in nefarious activities, which was one of the reasons The narrator experienced insomnia. Hence, once Durden enlightens The narrator (teaching him to reject social standards, materialism, and so forth), our narrator's life undergoes a dramatic turn. He starts acting in ways that are not deemed proper yet make him happy. He liberates himself from the constraints of capitalism, the society of control, and the deceptive promises of the spectacle of consumerism. For instance, he confronts his employer in a scene with violence, something he had previously been unwilling to do. He doesn't, however, attack his employer or be violently hostile toward him as one might anticipate. Instead, he hits his own body in front of him as he continues to strike himself in the face. Slovak Zizek writes in his study of this scene from *Fight Club* that it "is genuinely freeing, far from standing for some kind of warped masochism or regressive desire of violence." Zizek (2008) Durden, who has his sights set on a genuine large-scale revolution, spends his time engaging in these small uprisings, vulgar acts of mischief against consumer capitalism. This is the reason he (who is actually the narrator) starts a fight club and attracts members. What at first appeared to be a group of guys quietly seeking to escape the oppression of modern capitalism quickly evolved into Durden's massive cult known

as Project Mayhem that he could command ad nauseum to devastation through The narrator's body.

Mann writes in his essay *Hunting Elk In the Ruins: Chuck Palahniuk's Fight Club as Neo-Situationist Satire of Consumer Capitalism* "Later his protégés, the more brutal Project Mayhem, play dangerous games of chicken on the motorway, set fire to a corporate building and paint a demon face on its side, and threaten to chop off the testicles of officials who try to close down the fight club." Yet, Palahniuk's goal to mock both materialism and its more radical opponents is consistent with this more overt violence. Although it may be amusing to some, this group of anti-consumer capitalist activists has grave ideological ramifications. To start, the film's satirical portrayal of Project Mayhem, the sole actual opposition to capitalism, as a messy, chaotic organization only serves to reinforce capitalist realism. When the only realistic alternative to the existing quo that is provided is a cult led by a shirtless Brad Pitt who smuggles obscene images into family films, the Left's chances for mobilizing towards something beyond capitalism are worsened. So we conclude that these things that the narrator passed by are result of capitalism and its greedy system. The narrator is pushed into one ditch by Durden before being pulled out of another. He frees him from enslavement just to throw him into chaos. The narrator was rushing around even back then, and he is still doing it today. He used to have trouble falling asleep, and he still struggles with it today. As though the issue still exists, but the illness has evolved. And this also is our past. Additionally, we recently modified illnesses in the name of revolution. Even if our lives and the way they are organized have changed, we remain in the same location. We have always been empty and hollow. Yet, Durden is also not a revolutionary mostly because he is not a solution to the problem. In fact, he may make things worse. Durden is a sign as he represents the diagnosis of our boring lives. He represents a diagnostic of our internal turmoil. The most recent attempt to celebrate our uniqueness is Durden. He represents our final attempt to reawaken. Our conscious and unconscious are at war in Durden. In a way, Durden represents our rebellion against ourselves.

We conclude that the issues brought about by post-industrial society can be addressed in Durden, Fight Club, and Project Mayhem. It is a satire of the current situation intended to show us through dramatization how false, careless, and most importantly, disconnected from the quality

of life in modern society is. Sub-clinical detachment is accepted in *Fight Club* as a predictable and even unavoidable result of modern civilization, similar to how subclinical, non-morbid anxiety and depression are commonly recognised as a common result of stress and isolation that are present in modern life. Prioritizing self-care activities like exercise, meditation, and family time is also crucial despite the fact that information technology has greatly improved our lives in the post-postmodern period, it also poses serious risks to our mental health. We may lessen these negative impacts and advance general wellbeing by using technology with awareness and by giving self-care activities priority. *Fight Club* clearly reminds us of the enormous influence of personal, societal, and socioeconomic variables in a society where our obsession with matter causes us to choose biological explanations of psychological challenges.

1.3 Conclusion

Fight Club provides us with a great perspective of post postmodern capitalist system. It present how people are controlled by capitalism in an undirected way. According to Berardi's philosophy, this system uses info technology to manage these societies, which in return, leads people to be depressed, insomniac, and schizophrenic. In this novel, we have the Narrator who is an American man lives in a post postmodern society, suffering from insomnia as a result of the new info technology and info acceleration in the phase of life. This man starts to attend cancer patients group in order to find a meaning for his life, and then he meets Durden, a man who will give him this meaning by beating him and establishing with him a fight club for angry people who are depressed and could not find a meaning in their life. At the end, the narrator starts to encourage people to make chaos and express their anger against this life. But this anger leads to a different way and discovered that he is a schizophrenic man and could not manage this life and was obliged to use schizophrenia as a defensive state against the pressure and acceleration of capitalist system.

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