

## Dark Side of the Moon: Jameson, David Foster Wallace and the Critique of Neoliberalism in Brief Interviews with Hideous Men

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### Abstract

The purpose of the present research is to read Brief Interviews with Hideous Men in the light of Fredric Jameson's theories. In Brief Interviews with Hideous Men, the writer depicts how irony and self-consciousness have penetrated the culture of postmodern man and how capitalism and neoliberalism have influenced people's lives and identities and, with the help of ideology, have turned man into a thing incapable of human relations. Fredric Jameson declares that historicizing literary texts can help the readers understand the latent and deep layers of meaning in the works. Jameson's main concern is that in a neoliberal society, the authorities use ideology to preserve power, and by ideology, they turn citizens into consumers. The result is the alienation and reification of people, and they lose their true identities, which is the death of the postmodern man. By reading this short story collection from a Jamesonian perspective, the reader tries to investigate the man's identity in a neoliberal society to show how a closed system like a neoliberal system can preserve power by using ideology to influence the mindset of the citizens and reify and alienate them and impose the superiority of market on them. This research shows how Wallace investigates man's identity in a neoliberal society to show how a closed system like a neoliberal system can preserve power by using ideology to influence the mindset of the citizens and reify and alienate them and impose the superiority of market on them and how the identity of people is gone and how the death of the postmodern man has happened.

**Keywords:** Alienation, ideology, neoliberalism, power, reification

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## 1. Introduction

David Foster Wallace (1962\_2008) was an American writer who was famous for both his fiction and nonfiction. By historicizing his works and investigating the context in which he wrote, it can be seen that they were written in the last decades of the 20th century. From the second half of the 20th century on, America witnessed the rise of consumerism, the rise of the internet, the dominance of mass media, most importantly television, and the rise of the influence of popular culture on people's lives. The second half of the 20th century was the period of the dominance of neoliberalism in the USA, and most people lived a hard life. Buying life requirements or even paying hospital bills was difficult for many people, and having a reasonable life was a dream for them (Giroux 2004: XVIII). Wallace explores the complexities of American society and culture during neoliberalism in his works. This period was also a time of social change, and the government used individual institutions to influence the personal lives of people and change their identities based on what the whole system desired. The exploration of the power structure in different institutions of society can be seen in Wallace's works. This period was also the period for the rise of gender studies and feminism and the role and voice of women in society. It was also the time of self-revelation and confession and the government's obsession with machinelike perfection, which, according to Wallace, the government used to control people's minds and do the desired business. Irony penetrated citizens' lives, and it was used by the authorities and the market industry to conceal the problems and ills of society or its products. They ridiculed the issues, and in doing so, the difficulties became neutralized. People lost their power to resist because these problems were unimportant in their eyes, and some others were entrapped in their hyper sense of awareness, leading to their passiveness in society. Wallace's writings became more political, and he tried to show that popular culture was the reason for man's isolation and alienation. His writings focus on finding man's true identity and meaning in life (Clare 2018: 23). This period also reflects the dominance of postmodernism in literature, and the literary works demonstrate self-reflexivity, irony, fragmented narratives, and other characteristics of postmodernist fiction.

Wallace challenges many of these characteristics with his innovations in narrative techniques, voice and irony, and author-reader-text relationships. Wallace's works also reflect their time's concern about truth and the worldview imposed on people. *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men* include many innovations in style and a unique aim for each story. In *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, Wallace's standpoint on humanity and being human is depicted. He always tried to define the true meaning of humanity, and he showed the complexities of human actions and the inner self (Boswell 2020: 103). He also challenged the narrative point of view and engaged the reader in his works to make them share their thoughts and feelings in the stories. Showing irony in the actions and intentions of the characters is another way to attract the readers' attention to the hypocrisy of the authorities and the fact that they hide the

truth or transform it in their favor. He also shows how industrialization, capitalism, commodification, and reification have damaged human relationships and how they are alienated and reified and cannot communicate with people around them. He also finds the solution in returning to each other and saving these relations and human values.

## **2. Objectives of the Study**

The researcher in this research paper intends to read David Foster Wallace's *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men from Jamesonian perspectives*. *The researcher argues that liberalism and neoliberalism as the main products of modernity and postmodernity have much influenced the way that the American people's ideology has been shaped. Thus, how Wallace rejects the capitalist view of the American neoliberal society is the main objective of the present research. The researcher tries to show that liberalism and neoliberalism are there to develop an ideology in society only to reach their purpose which is improving capitalism.*

## **3. Research Questions:**

1. What is Wallace's standpoint about alienation and reification of the postmodern man in *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*?
2. How does Wallace show the death of a postmodern man in a neoliberal American society?
3. How does Wallace treat the manipulation of ideology to preserve power in a neoliberal society?

## **4. Literature Review**

In *Understanding David Foster Wallace*, Marshall Boswell comprehensively analyzes Wallace's life, works, and themes. He talks about Wallace's personal life and experiences that have influenced his literary works and explains the writers and critics who have influenced him in his career. Boswell talks about Wallace's position in literature, his challenges with modernism and postmodernism, and the conventional literary forms and styles. He explains the dominant themes and concerns of his writings and his desire to warn his readers and find a solution to the identity problem of the contemporary era.

In *The Cambridge Companion to David Foster Wallace*, Ralph Clare thoroughly analyzes Wallace, his personal life, the background history of his writing and his generation, and all the factors that have influenced him in his writings. He talks about the social, economic, and political conditions of the second half of the 20th century in which Wallace lived and his interests in the writings of other intellectuals of his time or before him. Clare also discusses Wallace's impact on contemporary literature and

his new ideas for reviving fiction. He analyses Wallace's themes and his influences on literary canon. This book can help the readers have a deeper insight into Wallace's writings. It makes reading his books easier, considering the vast philosophical and theoretical ideas the reader may not be familiar with.

*Conversations with David Foster Wallace* is a book by Stephen Burn, who managed numerous interviews with Wallace. Once the readers closely study these interviews, they will discover many secrets in Wallace's writings. Wallace clarifies many hidden ideas in his works, and reading his words facilitates understanding his works. The book offers Wallace's thoughts, writing process, literary influences, and perspectives on different topics like cultural and social matters. Wallace's approach to writing and literature and his ideas about popular culture and media are presented in this book to help the readers understand his writings and ideas.

Wallace's life and writing style and his themes and ideas are mentioned in several books such as the books mentioned and, in this research, the researcher brings the ideas of Fredric Jameson to the discussion to show Wallace's resistance to capitalism and neoliberalism. Fredric Jameson is a critic of capitalism and shows how the authorities can use all kinds of entertainment to help them distribute neoliberal and capitalist ideologies in society. Reading Wallace's in the light of Jameson can prove that Wallace was concerned with the identity of man in the time of postmodernity and was against neoliberal values in America.

## **5. Theoretical Framework: Fredric Jameson and Cultural Materialism**

Cultural materialists began to study the relationship between the text and the context of literary works. According to cultural materialists, a critic must consider the work's context and history. The other dominant approaches of the century are also crucial in evaluating the work because a literary work is an interaction of many societal forces that have influenced the work. For example, the leading forces in society are economic forces and gender, so they must be considered when analyzing work. Nonliterary works or secondary sources are as important as primary sources and must be read carefully to discover the truth about the work. What the cultural materialists think of culture is that it contains all forms of culture, from literary texts to social media; therefore, they are all critical in evaluating a work. The critic must examine history and culture to find the dominant ideologies in the society and the challenges and oppositions the work is proposing. Being aware of the subjectivity of the judgments, a cultural materialist is cautious of claiming the truth about the text and must consider all the other possible options (Barry 2002: 176).

Neoliberalism has always been criticized by Fredric Jameson, who desires to awaken people and help them fight against it. In this system, the market is the most essential element that makes a country's most crucial decisions. It changes the social and economic matters within a society. The government loses power, and the market

can choose the system's rules and limitations. Trade unions can only work under remarkable limitations and unavoidable circumstances, and people lose a considerable share of their social rights due to the importance of the market and production. Human values will give way to neoliberal values, and democracy will lose meaning (Giroux XIII). The only value of people is their ability to buy and consume the products and commodities, and the authorities use ideology to change the culture and identity of people to be good consumer citizens and never resist. With the rise of neoliberalism, Jameson announces the death of the universe and an improvement of capitalism under some other names (Jameson 1994: XII). Social media is in the hands of the authorities, and they use it to determine the meaning of everything for the citizens. They train people so they won't be obstacles to preserving power (Giroux 21). As a critic of capitalism, Jameson focuses on the reification and alienation of the postmodern man caused by neoliberalism and the role of ideology in preserving power and shaping people's identities in a neoliberal system. By reification and alienation, he means losing all human relations and values and becoming like objects. All relations and values become objects; the most important things in society are money and commodification. The system will manipulate ideology in different cultural phenomena to impose power on people and influence their identities to change them into obedient citizens who are only consumers.

### **5.1. Historicizing the Texts**

Jameson emphasizes the material conditions of culture and claims that people cannot understand cultural phenomena such as literature, art, and popular culture without considering the social, economic, and political conditions that cause them. He claims that the material conditions of the society shape the cultural production of that society. If someone wants to understand these material conditions, they should understand the culture. On the other hand, to understand the culture, it is vital to understand the material conditions in a society. "Art simply reflects the reality around it" (Roberts 2001: 41). He emphasizes the importance of the economic base and believes that the economic base of the society determines the cultural production of the society. For example, art is directly influenced by the economic base of the society in which it is created. Therefore, in a capitalist society where production is of primary importance, the market and the means of production determine the cultural production, such as art and literature. In other words, cultural production is the direct outcome of the economic base of the society in which they are created. Jameson coined the term political unconscious to show how unconscious ideas and desires of people in a society shape the cultural phenomena produced in that society. He claims that during cultural production, people don't only add everything consciously to their production, but some unconscious forces and desires are reflected in their production. Their cultural production can show their political unconscious in that society; in other words, the political unconscious is everything that is in the mind of people because of all the

forces in society that are reflected in their cultural production (98).

## **5.2. Reification and Alienation of Postmodern Man**

Jameson believes that cultural and social forms are all changed into objects and commodities to be bought and sold in society. Commodification influences people's cultural production and culture because it turns them into consumers in a capitalist society. The most essential factor in a capitalist society is production, commodities, and the things that people can buy and sell products with. Money, the worthless thing, turns into the primary value of society. People struggle to have money to buy the products even if they don't necessarily need them. The human values give way to neoliberal or capitalist values, and human relations will be lost. The only thing that matters is the products they bought (41). People evaluate everything, even human relations like love with money and objects, and the reification of man happens in society. Due to the impact of postindustrial life, technology, and consumerism, people get isolated and alienated in their struggle to succeed in a materialist society (41). Jameson believes that in capitalist societies, people feel separated and isolated from everything in their lives, such as their family, friends, and even their jobs and the system, and they don't feel connected. He believes that alienation is a crucial factor in capitalist society and can be traced to people's culture and life conditions.

## **5.3. The Importance of Ideology in Capitalist Societies**

To Jameson, capitalism is not over, and he calls neoliberalism late capitalism and claims that the world is in the stage of global capitalism. Human beings are not facing the death of capitalism but a new version, which he calls late capitalism. He believes that the existence of people in a society, their relations and interactions with other people, and their reactions and responses to a society's social and economic forces determine the identity and consciousness of people within that society, and their identity is shaped in the society. One crucial element in shaping the identity of people is ideology. Jameson criticizes capitalism and finds it a threat to man's life condition and identity, and he sees capitalism as a manipulative and alienating system. He believes that capitalism uses its dominant ideology to shape all aspects of modern life and all conditions of people's lives, including culture, and he adds that the authorities use cultural production (like art, literature, and media) to impose the dominant ideology of capitalism on people's minds. Jameson argues that ideology is an essential factor in creating cultural productions. For example, cultural texts such as literature or movies are products of a society's dominant ideology. All artists are influenced by the dominant ideology, whether they agree with it or not. The authorities control people's minds and lives, determine their way of life, and alienate them. Ideology in every system refers to all the system's dominant beliefs, ideas, and values that influence a society's culture, cultural phenomena, and social relations. Through ideology, one

can see how cultural phenomena are produced in, for instance, capitalist society and how ideology can help this system preserve its power. Jameson agrees with Althusser that ideology is something more than false consciousness. It gives people identity and determines how people define themselves or their perspectives of life or the truth of the world. Many institutions, such as religion, family, and education, help the authorities distribute the ideology. According to Jameson, the most dangerous ones are social media and popular culture entertainment (36). He pays attention to popular culture as a means to distribute ideology. Jameson finds popular culture interesting and believes the conflict between the dominant ideologies in society and all other subordinate ideologies happens in popular culture. He believes that the authorities use popular culture to produce and distribute their dominant ideology, which can even be used to challenge any ideology they disagree with. He believes that popular culture reflects the collective consciousness of people in society. Jameson thinks this ideology, which has structured culture and art, has constructed people's identities. As a result, neoliberalism creates an identity for people and claims it is the best for modern man. For Jameson, the right or wrong of these ideas is not essential. The identity they create is more critical than anything else (19). Manuel Castells, as a sociologist and critic is also concerned about the factors that are influencing people's identity and "he stresses the fact that in this global world, digital communication technologies, media and content are rapidly flourishing, thus affecting social identity. He applies the idea of a network to sociopolitical analysis of states and accentuates that networks are becoming the most important form of social organizations, societies and states" (Masoomi 2019: 736).

#### **5.4. The Concept of Power**

The dominant power in the society plays an essential role in citizens' lives. "According to Chantal Mouffe, genuine democracy is unattainable, and all democracies involve the dominance of the majority, while minorities are granted limited space to create an illusion of freedom and choice" (Bornaki 2023: 1). Jameson believes that the dominant, influential circles in society take control of people, control all other groups and institutions, and make them work for them. For example, according to Marx, religious institutions use religion to stupefy people and help capitalism preserve its power easily (Roberts 18). The relationship between culture and power in a capitalist society is intertwined. Jameson finds the relationship between culture and power significant and explains how the authorities use cultural production to have power in hand and to preserve power in capitalist society. He claims that the authorities use culture to support their interests and values. They even use culture to decide how people can see the world, and they influence their understanding and perception of the world. Jameson considers these institutions and how the authorities manipulate them to control culture and preserve their power in society. Jameson emphasizes the interweaving dynamics of power, culture, and capitalism. He claims that in the

postmodern era, or as he calls it, late capitalism, there are no traditional forms of power in the societies, and there is no dominant power like the royalties in the center. However, the power is hidden in the culture of capitalism and consumer society. Therefore, there is no evident and explicit political control; instead, it includes all the techniques that form our desires, worldviews, and everyday life experiences in a media-saturated society. Power is a complex influence, surveillance, and oppression network through cultural production, consumerism, and everyday activities. Therefore, to Jameson, power is not only in the hands of the authorities or the different institutions in the society, but it is also exercised through media, entertainment, and any cultural phenomena that can shape people's desires and perspectives (Jameson 2000: 53). Jameson offers the concept of cognitive mapping, which means understanding the social and economic relationships within a society, which is essential for any political action, and this understanding helps people understand dominant systems of power that influence people's lives and minds. Therefore, according to Jameson, a person who wants to figure out the dominant system of a society should understand the social and economic relationships that exist in society, which is called cognitive mapping (Roberts 141). The methodology the researcher is using in this study is qualitative research in which the researcher uses books, articles, and library sources. To be able to conduct qualitative research, the researcher applies library research and close reading as the main techniques to read Wallace's selected works from Jamesonian perspectives. Qualitative research consists of studying the social and cultural phenomena from subjective perspectives which can be found in a close reading of documents, interviews, and library sources. This type of methodology relies on the information gathered from observations of written or audiovisual documents to reach a deep understanding of the subject of the study. It also relies on the context in which the primary or secondary sources were written to prioritize a subjective reading of them and focuses on the social, cultural, and historical factors that have influenced the individuals to write the primary sources. Qualitative research is inductive meaning that during the research, new insights, understandings, and themes may emerge without prior anticipation. In qualitative research, the researcher can contact the participants and value their perspectives. The researcher analyzes the received information and the gathered documents by a selected approach and can give detailed information about the subject to reach a better understanding of it. Qualitative research gives the researcher this opportunity to read the sources several times and to revise the research questions to make a more appropriate argument for the study.

## **6. Discussion**

### **6.1 Reification and Alienation**

Jameson claims that when the values of the market become superior to human values and capitalism dominates its ideologies in society, reification happens, and lots of problems come with it (Jameson 1990: 180). With the distribution of neoliberal



and capitalist ideologies and the changes in people's perspectives of life, the price of things determines their values, and even abstract ideas are determined by money. At this point, society faces the reification of everything, and the ways of human communications are shattered, and the alienation of the postmodern man begins. Wallace wrote the story 'A Radically Condensed History of Postindustrial Life' to show the disaster of this alienation. Two characters in the story meet at a restaurant on a date. They engage in an artificial relationship, trying to attract each other's attention and have a positive impact, but they are unsuccessful. They part and return alone without being able to lead their communication correctly (Wallace 1999: 1). Despite the desire to be with others, these characters cannot communicate, and they probably go back home to watch TV or drown themselves in social media. This is the condition of the postmodern man in a neoliberal society. In Wallace's works, some characters fail to communicate with others, and some of them cannot even utter meaningful sentences. In another story named 'Yet Another Example of the Porousness of Certain Borders (VI),' Wallace features a couple who had a fight or probably used to fight and argue, and now they have decided to divorce. They talk about their truck and their double-wide, and they argue over who can have which of them, and then precisely as another thing and object in their life, they talk about their son, referring to him as "the boy," and they say what about "the boy" as if it is a car. Wallace shows how everything in life has turned into objects, and no feeling or affection is left in people's lives. They argue over their son emotionlessly and cruelly, as if arguing over an object, and they want to flip for the boy to see who can have him (183). That is the man's condition in a society that values commodification more than anything else (Roberts 40).

## **6.2. Power**

Wallace claimed that this short story collection is "A parody (a feminist parody) of feminism" (qtd. in Clare 83). According to Clare Hayes-Brady, as Wallace was not familiar with and experienced in the world of women and what they wanted and desired, he attempted to show the complexities of the relations between the two genders and the inferiority of women in the world (83). These interviews can be studied from feminist perspectives to show Wallace's attack on patriarchal societies and the way they always have dominance and power. In Interview # 28, two men discuss what women want, and they impose their ideas on women without letting them answer this question. Even if they ask a woman what she wants, they believe whatever she answers is not what she wants, and men only know what she truly wants. One of the men says that when a woman is asked a question and answers with no, she doesn't exactly mean no; she means something else, and only men understand what she wants (Wallace 234). She says no, but that is not what she truly means. Therefore, they believe men should control women in society and help them understand what is good for them and what they need. According to men, women need to be rescued by men even if they don't declare it. They decide for women that they want men to come and

rescue them; it is what they desire and are waiting for. In a patriarchal society, men see themselves as saviors of women because they assume that women cannot protect themselves or they are not able to fulfill their desires. The men in this interview claim that modern women are so contradictory in what they want that they cannot decide what to expect and do. This statement is the dominant ideology of a patriarchal society in which women are inferior to men and have no freedom of thinking. Such patriarchal ideologies are imposed on women's minds to give them a feeling of inferiority to prevent them from being able to resist or react, and to prevent them from gaining power and control. In this interview, Wallace shows how a group of people can use power to control people, dictate a mindset and way of life for others, and control and dominate them. When power is in the hands of a group, the most important thing is to preserve it, which is what the authorities desire.

### 6.3. Ideology

In the short story 'Forever Overhead,' a young boy spends his birthday with his family in a pool. This story is written in a second-person point of view to have more intimacy and involvement with the reader. While going up and standing on the diving board, he notices his self-consciousness and begins to think in a different way than ever. The boy notices the monotonous life of people in the pool and how they follow each other in a line to the diving board as if they are following some orders. He notices their entrapment in a closed system and sees his chance to jump into an open system and live a different life. The readers know the boy's transmission from the closed system of capitalism to an open system. At the beginning of the story, Wallace depicts the routine, everyday lives of people in the pool and repeatedly uses the word "blind" to refer to people who live in the closed system. The character's sister, also in the pool, plays Marco Polo with her friends. The writer repeatedly mentions that she is blindfolded (6). People in a closed system are blind and only follow the sounds that represent the ideology that people follow in their lives unthinkingly. These ideologies are set to prevent people from thinking and being creative, and the authorities who spread these ideologies want people to have a routine, passive, and static life. The family in this story is one of the institutions in the system or society where the character lives. When the character does what they say and follows their orders and instructions, they will appreciate and approve him as one of their members. Just like the system that approves of the citizens who follow the norms, obey the rules, and follow the ideologies blindly. This is how the capitalist systems have always tried to gain and preserve power because an unruly citizen will endanger the system. The boy sees the diving board and people standing in line to go up there and dive, and he decides to join them. The scene in which people are standing in line and Wallace's use of the word "machine" in different parts of the story reminds the reader of the factory production line, where there are lines of commodities that get shaped and produced and come out. These people who are bored, standing in line, and moving very slowly

represent the citizens who are getting into the factory of ideologies that produce consumers. Their lives are portrayed here as dull. The boy continues to think and wonder about reality and the natural world (Boswell 112). He was told about the world and its reality and never questioned anything. He thought the real was the world he used to live in before that day. Now, he is older and begins to think differently. For Wallace, people must become aware of the identity the authorities impose on them. They should be conscious of all the other possibilities of the truth existing in their lives and distinguish the false ideas and ideologies. He demands that people who read his works find their true identity, forget about all the rules and norms and the limitations the authorities impose on them, and find an open system and regain their freedom. After the boy jumps into the open system, Wallace finishes the story by saying hello. It is as if he is welcoming the newcomer to the open system and inviting him to come and discover the true self and identity that awaits him there (16).

Wallace's standpoint about alienation and reification of the postmodern man is shown in his works. Examining the context of Wallace's works, the reader can see that the main concern of a neoliberal society in the last decades of the 20th century was the flourishing of the market and production. A capitalist society values market and commodities more than human values in society and an object like money surpasses any other values in society. People are trained to value materials, capital, and money more than anything else and they turn into consumers. Human relations and human values will be lost and man will lose his ability to communicate. By showing broken communications in his works and by showing lonely people who cannot have a real relationship with others, Wallace shows his standpoint about the alienation and reification of postmodern man which is the result of commodification and consumerism. In his works, people are either addicted to drugs or alcohol or are hypnotized by different kinds of entertainment like TV shows and cannot have real communication with other people in society. Wallace warns people about what will happen to a man if he doesn't pay attention to the advancement of consumerism and capitalism in society. "Berkowitz and Lutterman evaluate social responsibility and how identity is affected by society through assessing attitudes related to each individual's responsibility to help others and about a range of political and social issues" (Masoomi 734). However, Wallace asks people to have empathy, understanding, and kindness towards each other instead of rivalry in the process of life and work. He shows people's lives after industrialization and shows how lives are empty and how human values and relations are all lost. He gives hope to people by offering them solutions to their problems and teaches them to get back to each other and save each other.

Wallace's depiction of the death of the postmodern man in a neoliberal American society is noticeable in his works. The death of identity has happened to the postmodern man according to the ideas and perspectives of Wallace. A Jamesonian reading of Wallace's works can show the death of the true identity of man. People in a neoliberal society have turned into people who have lost their identity in favor of a society that

only pays attention to appearance, entertainment, and superficial aspects of life. They have sold their human relations and values to buy commodities and they struggle all their lives to buy more items and products. They accept boring jobs without the desire or ability to resist and the only thing that matters to them is the matter of commodity. All the values are reified even the abstract ideas like love or parenthood responsibilities. With the citizens' dead identities, the governments will have no fear of rebellion or resistance and can be sure of the maintenance of their power. In his works, Wallace shows people who have boring mundane lives and works. They are like pieces of a bigger machine that have no identity and no value in their minds except for neoliberal values. The characters only follow the rules and cannot get out of the closed system. Some characters are sent to mental hospitals to be kept there because of the resistance they desire to have with the system and the mental disorders they get because of the pressures of the system. There are lots of characters who go to psychiatrists to solve their mental problems and lots of others who struggle with mental disorders in their lives. He depicts characters who face the death of their identity due to the pressures of the system and the ideologies in society. Wallace shows some characters who understand the closed system and the existence of the open system and try to escape and be free of the limitations imposed on them. He shows that there is still hope for the postmodern man.

The manipulation of ideology to preserve power in a neoliberal society is another important point in Wallace's works. As Jameson has always emphasized, capitalism has not ended and has only changed its name to neoliberalism. It has been more than a century since capitalism has risen and has worked on the identity of man to shape it and turn it into a passive consumer. This has been facilitated by the manipulation of ideology and its distribution among the citizens. The main concern of a capitalist society is the improvement of the market which is valued more than human values. Therefore, the system works on the ideologies that can teach people how to be consumers and how to compete with each other to buy more things and to pay attention to appearance and wealth. The ideologies are clear and direct and the important matter is the way these ideologies are distributed. Jameson is concerned about the distribution of ideology through different cultural phenomena like social media, Television, and entertainment. In Wallace's works, the ideologies are shown to be distributed through social media mainly television as he has always criticized popular culture and popular culture references that have a great impact on the minds and lifestyles of people. Popular culture references turn into modern archetypes in neoliberal societies and people desire to be like them; to be wealthy, beautiful, attractive, and surrounded by supporters and fans. The consequences of watching these entertainments or being involved with them are what the authorities desire because they prefer static indifferent citizens who never think and resist. A neoliberal society always manipulates ideology in its favor to control people to be able to preserve its power and Wallace shows it in his works.

## **7. Conclusion**

Working on the influence of neoliberal society on man's identity in the postmodern era, Jameson considers it a new version of capitalism. He focuses on how the authorities use ideology to preserve power in society and change the identity of people by imposing the ideology through different cultural phenomena like literature, art, media, or even religion. He focuses on the influence of television and social media on people, which can help authorities easily control people. By considering Jameson's ideas, Wallace's short story collections, like *Brief Interviews with Hideous Men*, can be studied to see how man's identity is influenced by the ideologies within a neoliberal society. All around the world, the authorities, whether in traditional forms of power or modern forms, have tried to preserve their power by changing the identities and perspectives of people with the help of ideology. In this research, it is argued that modernity and postmodernity have caused the birth of liberalism and neoliberalism and they have influenced the shaping of the American people's ideology. Wallace rejects the capitalist values and ways of life and proves that the identity and self that are imposed on people by liberalism and neoliberalism are false and it is only for the benefit of the American neoliberal society and in other words capitalism. In his stories, Wallace shows that people have lost their sense of connection, human relations are gone, and they have become the commodities they use daily. They cannot communicate or build genuine relationships in a postindustrial world. He shows how power is applied to people through different institutions or by men on women and how it controls them precisely like the authorities control people. He shows how ideology in society can change people's identities and change them into mere consumers and followers of rules without the ability to resist and rebel. However, in all his works, he offers solutions to his readers to help them escape the closed system. He asks them to stop being like everyone else, to be creative, and to move to an open system in which they can decode the rules for their own lives and follow their regulations and norms.

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