

WILLIAM SCHULTZ

A NOTE ON POSTMODERNISM AND LYOTARD'S ROLE AS FOUNDER

Known to be the founder of Postmodernism, Lyotard humorously refers to his usage of the term when he writes, «I have myself used the term postmodern'. It was a slightly provocative way of placing (or displacing) into the limelight the debate about knowledge» (*Inhuman* 34). Since there is much debate about the meaning of «postmodernism» even among its adherents, some clarification is needed. In the following note on this movement, I characterize it in a limited way by referring the discussion to its founder's views. I will discuss the use of the term, the range of applications, the traits of the postmodern, some specific perspectives about it, the change of modernism into it (from the viewpoint of Lyotard), the effect of the change on myths (and grand narratives), and finally I hope to dispel three misconceptions about the perspective called postmodern.

The Use of the Term «Postmodern»

He borrowed the term from American literary critics and sociologists, only to give it a new deeper meaning (*The Postmodern Condition* or *PC* xxiii). Lyotard acknowledges the influence of Ihab Hassan (*The Dismemberment of Orpheus: Toward a Post Modern Literature*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1971); Michel Benamou and Charles Caramello, eds, *Performance in Postmodern Culture*, Wisconsin: Center for Twentieth Century Studies & Coda Press, 1977); M. Köhler, «Postmodernisms: ein begriffsgeschichtlicher überblick», *Amerikastudien* 22, 1 (1977) [*PC* 3]. Much of the concern with modernism is a reaction to the views of T.W. Adorno [e.g. the decline of modernism in *Negative Dialectics*, his *Aesthetic Theory*, and *Minima Moralia*, in which he is said by Lyotard to anticipate postmodernism (*Political* 28)] and Jürgen Habermas' e.g. the problem of legitimation in late capitalism *Legitimationsprobleme im Spätkapitalismus*,

Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1973); in English *Legimation Crisis*, Tran. Thomas McCarthy, Boston, Beacon Press, 1975, and other works). Also, important are the works of Walter Benjamin, *One Way Street*, *A Berlin Childhood*, and *The Arcades*. A well-known writer on the movement, Charles Jencks traces the term to its first usage in Spanish in an anthology of poetry by the writer Federico de Onis in 1934, who used it to mean a reaction within the Modernist movement, and in English to Arnold Toynbee in *A Study of History* in 1939, who said that the modern period waned away between 1850 and 1918 and gave way to a new historical period characterized by «the end of western dominance, the decline of individualism, capitalism and Christianity, and the rise to power of non-western cultures» and «it referred to a pluralism and world culture», writes Jencks, «meanings which are still essential to its definition today, and positively so» (*What Is Post-Modernism?*, Art and Design, 1986, p. 37). Jencks adds that in 1963 and 1966 the literary critics Irving Howe and Harold Levine used the term pejoratively, as had often occurred when similar terms applying to intellectual movements had been used at their beginnings. Leslie Fiedler used the prefix «post» positively in a variety of ways to indicate heterodoxical literary, artistic, and cultural reactions to the Modernism of the early twentieth century. What is important is not the exact location of Lyotard's borrowing of the term, as if knowing this would reveal the secret to its meaning, albeit there are affinities with his eventual use of the term; what is important is the fact that the idea of postmodernism does not spring solely from the head of Lyotard, as by parthenogenesis in the case of Zeus's offspring coming from his head; instead, postmodernism was a new climate of thinking becoming revealed in different places, at different times, in different cultural fields. Lyotard does not decide to invent a movement but finds one in the making. To it he perhaps gives the deepest and most well-known expression of the signs of the times. He is like the leading goose in a flying arrow of birds, the flight of the followers made easier by the leader through the cutting and the quickening of the air.

The Range of Application or Interest

The broad, diversified range of interest in the movement is expressed well by Mike Featherstone [«In Pursuit of the Postmodern: An Introduction», *Theory Culture, & Society*, 5, 2-3 (June 1988), 196].

We have music (Cage, Stockhausen, Briers, Holloway, Tredici, Laurie

Anderson); art (Rauschenberg, Baselitz, Mach, Schnabel, Kiefer; some would also include Warhol and 1960s pop art, and other Bacon); fiction (Vonnegut's *Slaughterhouse Five*, and the novels of Barth, Barthelme, Pynchon, Burroughs, Ballard, Doctorow); film (*Body Heat*, *The Wedding*, *Blue Velvet*, *Wetherby*); drama (the theatre of Artaud); photography (Sherman, Levine, Prince); architecture (Jencks, Venturi, Bolin); literary theory and criticism (Spanoz, Hassan, Sontag, Fielder); philosophy (Lyotard, Derrida, Baudrillard, Vattimo, Rorty); anthropology (Clifford, Tyler, Marcus); sociology (Denzin); geography (Soja).

Within any field there may be many meanings of postmodernism. According to Fredric Jameson, himself a recognized figure in the movement, «postmodernist architecture, for example, comes before us as a peculiar analogue to neoclassicism, a play of ('historicist') allusion and quotation that has renounced the older high modernist rigor and that itself seems to recapitulate a whole range of traditional Western aesthetic strategies: we therefore have a mannerist postmodernism (Michael Graves), a baroque postmodernism (the Japanese), a rococo postmodernism (Charles Moore), a neoclassicist postmodernism (the French, particularly Christian de Portzamparc), and probably even a 'high modernist' postmodernism in which modernism is itself the object of the postmodernism pastiche. This is a rich and creative movement of the greatest aesthetic play and delight... («Foreword», *The Postmodern Condition* xviii).

Traits of Postmodern Cultural Products

Similarly rich and diverse are the traits of the postmodern. Featherstone lists these features in the arts: «the effacement of the boundary between art and everyday life; the collapse of the hierarchical distinction between high and mass/popular culture; a stylistic promiscuity favouring eclecticism and the mixing of codes; parody, pastiche, irony, playfulness and the celebration of the surface 'depthlessness' of culture; the decline of the originality/genius of the artistic producer and the assumption that art can only be repetitious» (203). The postmodern can be identified as «any creative endeavor which exhibits some element of self-consciousness and reflexivity. Fragmentation, discontinuity, indeterminacy, plurality, metafictionality, heterogeneity, intertextuality, decentering, dislocation, Luddism: these are the common features [that] widely differing aesthetic

practices are said to display» (Edmund J. Smyth, ed. *Postmodernism and Contemporary Fiction*, Batsford, 1991, p. 9).

Specific Perspectives about the Movement

In yet another way Cecil Lindsay classifies the many attempts to give order to the movement, to institutionalize it into various types or parties:

Many theorists of literature and the arts see postmodernism as a radical intensification of self-consciousness and reflexivity, as exemplified by techniques of collage, pastiche, and formal experimentation. Indeed, Fredric Jameson identifies pastiche as one of the fundamental features of a postmodern culture in which stylistic innovation is no longer conceivable («Postmodernism and Consumer Society», in *The Anti-Aesthetic*, p. 130). Similarly, for Charles Jencks, the pioneer theorist of the postmodern in architecture, a parodic, hybrid relationship between old and new, between mass and elite codes, signals the end of modernism's faith in progress (*The Language of Postmodern Architecture* [New York: Rizzoli, 1984]). Others have stressed the transgressive, subversive nature of postmodern works, and in particular their potential for eroding generic and disciplinary boundaries and for rupturing phallo— and ethnocentrism. Still others have pointed to a loss of faith in the referential capacity of language or, like Baudrillard, to the «precession of simulacra» cut off from any model in the real as signposts of postmodernity. For Alice Jardine, the postmodern is nothing less than a «new episteme» of «complex relays, loops, and feedbacks» («Copyright 2000», *Copyright 1* Fall 1987]: 28). Susan Suleiman provides an excellent survey of recent debate on the subject of postmodernism in *Subversive Intent. Gender, Politics, and the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, M. A.: Harvard University Press, 1990). [Lindsay, *L'Esprit Créateur* xxxi, 1(Spring 1991, 46].

All of these attempts are put by her in a footnote to the text where she characterizes Lyotard's postmodernism as a critique of general narratives since the Enlightenment (33). Lindsay, as do others, assumes Lyotard to have a leading role in postmodern theory.

Amid all this variety of «postmodern» viewpoints, the variety being a characteristic of any movement, where do the views of Lyotard stand?

«Fashionable yet irritatingly elusive to define» as the term is (Featherstone), this fact does not mean that Lyotard's definition is unclear. Often, the critics of Lyotard blame him for *their* confusion. Jencks calls his main idea that postmodernism is somehow prior — to be defined at length later in the present article — «crazy» (39). Taking the intellectual issues onto a personal level, Jencks resorts to jokes about Lyotard when he tells of an incident in which Lyotard appears to a reporter as a frightening figure: «Given this nihilism and the sociological jargon, one can understand why our Sunday reporter at *Le Monde* was so upset by the spectre about to descend, like a fog of waffle, onto the breakfast table» (39). Douglas Kellner, arguing less emotionally, simply concludes that Lyotard's theory is self-contradictory, because his critique of grand narratives of culture creates one in their place [«Postmodernism as Social Theory: Some Challenges and Problems», *Theory, Culture, & Society*, 5, 2-3 (June 1988) 239].

In a different tone, scholars who do not dismiss Lyotard's postmodernism address the issue of the source of confusion and resulting rejection of the French philosopher's views. Speaking of the importance and the origin of the theory. Rodolphe Gasché praises it as equal in scope and value to Derrida's deconstruction—even a «monument» [«Deconstruction as Criticism», *Glyph* 6(1979), 182]. Gasché raises the discussion of Lyotard's work from popular culture to the main philosophical currents of the twentieth century, including Derrida and European intellectuals before him. Gasché points out how movements generally divide into the critics and supporters of a few leaders, both camps failing to understand their ideas fully. In the case of both deconstruction and postmodernism, «it is precisely this misinterpretation that makes its accommodation by American criticism possible, and, by the same token, transforms it into a mechanical exercise similar to academic thematism or formalism» (178). The implications of these statements clear up a lot the discomfort about the variety of views in the postmodern movement in general and possible confusions arising from Lyotard's views in particular. Any large-scale intellectual movement would have many levels of understanding about the founding ideas, just as in the spectrum of political understanding present in any nation. Instead of becoming a mechanical exercise as in the case of deconstruction, I would like to add that the later movement becomes a fashion and an excuse for a debate about what is being debated— a kind of self-generating «culture news».

A leading translator and scholar of postmodernism, Geoffrey Bennington notices the «unusual degree of disagreement as to what it [postmoder-

nism] is» but explains away the confusion as Gasché does. The theory, as does deconstruction, undergoes a kind of reduction in meaning in order for it to be disseminated throughout society («Deconstruction and Post modernism», *Deconstruction: Omnibus Volume*, ed. Andreas Papadakis Catherine Cooke and ;Andrew Benjamin, New York, Rizzoli, 1989, 85-87). The rejections of Lyotard's views tend to be much simpler than the original texts. As is generally true, the confusion and sometimes outrage is common in the initial stages of movements —intellectual or political— until they become fully institutionalized.

Concerning the confusion and related rejection, Jane Moore similarly explains the reason to be the origin and nature of postmodernism [p. 6]. Having developed out of deconstruction, it still shares some of its traits, namely, its iconoclastic origins. The fact that postmodernism would mean some kind of reaction against past ways of thinking would make it at first unintelligible and unacceptable. In her view, and so it seems in the views of Gasché and Bennington, works are «postmodern» «precisely in their *contradictory* relation to past and present lives, cultures, meanings».

The Change of Modernist Culture into the Postmodernist

Along with the idea of the «internal erosion» of modernism, Lyotard expresses the transformation positively.

... The postmodern is always implied in the modern because of the fact that modernity, modern temporality, comprises in itself an impulsion to exceed itself into a state other than itself. And not only to exceed itself in that way, but to resolve itself into a sort of ultimate stability, such for example as is aimed at by the utopian project, but also by the straightforward political project implied in the grand narratives of emancipation. Modernity is constitutionally and ceaselessly pregnant with its postmodernity (*Inhuman* 25).

Sofar the decline of modernism has been described as a process of self-transformation within modernism itself, as one-celled organisms realize an important achievement in their life form —perhaps the most important— by dividing in order to reproduce. Lyotard also describes the end of modernism as a project to be undertaken actively. «Rewriting modernity» is not enough; that is, remembering the injustice of a group and the ideal of the emancipatory movement or the goal of speculative inquiry and changing it or attempting to abandon it will merely reproduce

the same cultural process as modernism though with a different explicit goal; the process will still be conceived in the terms of eschatology. «The point being», writes Lyotard, «writing it is always rewriting it. Modernity is written, inscribes itself on it self, in a perpetual rewriting» (*Inhuman* 28).

It is not that we should «abandon» the project: not that we should start «the clock again from zero, wiping the slate clean, the gesture which inaugurates in one go the beginning of the new age and the new periodization» and repeats modernism in slightly new terms (*Inhuman* 26). Instead, we should «liquidate» it (*PEC* 62). Abandoning it would mean repeating it in another form, revising it because of a wrong turn in its development, an inadequate reaction to a prejudice against us or a wrong method used in speculative research. Liquidating it would mean that it did not turn out to be wrong but had been so all along. In this way not only would a past prejudice be given up, also the future project and the desire which links them in a teleology which is the eschatology of modernism.

There are artistic and stylistic implications of the attempt to start again at zero.

Lyotard uses the term «anamnesis», a mixed action of remembering and feeling different afterward, to describe the active liquidation of modernist thinking (*PEC* 117). It means an «inquiry into what remains as yet unthought, even when it is already thought». He gives the example of German parents who lived during World War II and kept silent about the disaster so as not to permit anamnesis by their children. Although the forbidden memory may seem to protect the children from the danger, it actually may serve to perpetuate the possibility of its recurrence. The memory of a failure or a lack of knowledge can cause a person to revise an entire way of thinking—in that case, nationalism. Lyotard doubts whether genuine progress, one involving a change not just in contents but in perspective, can occur without anamnesis.

This idea is important to the crisis of modernity at which postmodernity originates. The change occurs with the help of anamnesis. «The postmodern», he explains, «is not a period, but the refusal, *from within modernity*, to forget what cannot be remembered in modernity» or to allow the force of a desire to pass away (See *Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics*, by Bill Readings, London. Routledge, 1991, p. 138; in the French *Le Postmoderne expliqué aux enfants* 126). Thus, the past is repressed rather than surpassed (*PEC* 90). I interpret this to mean that the modernist thinker remains so if he/she cannot allow the ideal to be rejected because its emptiness is never admitted. The subject knows it

has a lack, that the hope promised by the ideal is not yet fulfilled, and the inadequacy of the modernist is not to demand that the ideal be made actual now or at a definite time. Doing so would expose to the subject his or her own emptiness; the modernist projects an ideal while hiding the fact that it is empty and can never itself be justified or reveal the manner of its own realization. Anamnesis would help a person overcome modernism by exposing the dissimulated ideal. Concerning anamnesis, it is one thing to retain the desires of a modernist way of thinking and quite another to feel no more desire or importance in the ideal while nonetheless feeling that there must be something to be desired, or many things, some kind of narrative, though not the grand narrative. This is the postmodern melancholy. Postmodernism remains related to modernism in a way similar to a child's values retaining a distant echo of the parental values, whether rejected or accepted. Then, postmodernism requires anamnesis, a kind of remembering with a change in meaning, or since something is no longer remembered in the same way, there is an «initial forgetting», which inaugurates the postmodern way of thinking (PEC 93). The initial forgetting is a loss of desire for the ideal of emancipation, accompanied by a loss of value placed on the past that belongs to the great narratives.

The Effect of the Change on Myths (and Grand Narratives)

Postmodernism is still continuous in some altered respects with modernism. The slate of thinking cannot be wiped clean and rewritten instantly and completely so as to produce a new full worldview. If I may use an idea from Slater's *Pursuit of Loneliness* about the change of one type of society into another, the fantasy of one becomes materialized to form the beginnings of a new type of society. Gradually, a new type of fantasy begins to appear in the new material products, procedures, and social relations. There are two main ways in which modernist fantasy becomes the material for postmodernism: concerning society, the fragmentation of the desire for a universal goal into an indefinite number of achievable projects and, concerning science, the fragmentation of the ideal of speculative knowledge into quantities of information.

The modernist social bond is characterized by a strong and universal sense of «we». Lyotard defines a culture as a relative consensus based on similar criteria which others do not make. This consensus is created by a narrative which the people tell themselves. At first myths and later in human civilization narratives defined the criteria of membership in a cul-

ture, thus stating rules of behavior, which make a bond among the people actual and legitimate without there being any need for someone to argue the right of it in relation to the right of some other culture or any need to argue the right of it in the abstract. In less advanced societies, explains Lyotard, narratives fulfilled the modern function of keeping records past and forecasting the future, since some idea of the past and the future was part of the story of the community. These functions of looking back and forward are performed in the grand narratives of modernism as well although in them the legitimation or the right is something yet to be achieved. Consequently, in modernist societies the grand narratives are accompanied by lesser, more minor narratives called by Lyotard «the people's prose» (*PEC* 31) or local narratives without a legitimating function, yet with other ones. Lyotard must mean that these narratives would explain why some things are done in certain ways or contain wisdom about different situations in life. The grand narratives are too grand for such direct application to life and cannot be enough to pattern life when societies become as large, as diverse, and as structured as they do in the modernist type. As Jacques Ellul explains in *The Technological Society*, nations that have been colonized retain some traditional myths and values which form a stabilizing factor in people's lives to counter the destabilizing effects of rapid social change, in this case modernization; nevertheless, they gradually disappear as are the lesser narratives of modernism.

A very important feature of «the people's prose» is that it can escape the delegitimation of modernism, thus enabling them to serve as forces of continuity in the life styles of people through the generations of increasing postmodernism alongside some persistence of modernism. Equally important is that the former grand narratives become fragmented and localized into something like the modern minor narratives, into different discourses set up for specific communicational tasks in which the rules would be specific *PC* (41). In this way the legitimacy of performance is expressed in various differently defined situations that can be associated with reductions of the previous grand narratives; the building of a dam can acquire the mythical dimensions of the preservation of democracy whereas it is done for the sake of economic performance in a specific area (an example given by Ellul in *The Technological Society*). Specific products are more sellable if accompanied by an ideology for the occasion; paper products are more sellable if they are advertised as coming from recycled paper, which advertisement contains the ideology of ecology while hiding the fact that even more paper would be saved if the consumer did not buy it in the first place. The opposite also happens;

culture is made to accommodate the market place: variety, selection, novelty, shock value (Greenaway films).

Lyotard's Clarification of Three Misconceptions

To summarize the distinction of postmodernism from modernism, Lyotard clarifies three misconceptions about his new idea (See *PEC* 89-93). The most common misconception is that «postmodern» means a period after the modern. Instead, «The 'post-' indicates something like a conversion: a new direction from the previous one. «Lyotard defines the difference by giving the example of the change in the Modern Movement (1910-1945) in architecture:

To follow Gregotti, the difference between modernism and postmodernism would be better characterised by the following feature: the disappearance of the close bond which once linked the project of modern architecture to an ideal of the progressive realization of social and individual emancipation encompassing all humanity. Postmodern architecture finds itself condemned to undertake a series of minor modifications in a space inherited from modernity, condemned to abandon a global reconstruction of the space of human habitation. The perspective then opens onto a vast landscape, in the sense that there is no longer any horizon of universality, universalization or general emancipation to greet the eye of postmodern man, least of all the eye of the architect. The disappearance of the Idea that rationality and freedom are progressing would explain a 'tone', style or mode specific to postmodern architecture. I would say it is a sort of 'bricolage': the multiple quotation of elements taken from earlier styles or periods, classical and modern; disregard for the environment, etc.

Here, some features commonly ascribed to the postmodern style can be seen to have their origin in a general theory, whereas often they are used without this network of explanation.

The second misconception, claims Lyotard, is that the decline of the great narratives means an end to all progress, the destruction of civilization, or the unavoidable deterioration of cultural values. The decline of the ideal of progress in this way becomes a new grand narrative to replace the former ones (Kellner accused Lyotard of being guilty of this self-contradiction; «Postmodernism as Social Theory: Some Challenges

and Problems», *Theory, Culture, & Society*, 5, 2-3 (June 1988) 239). The new desire may be the destruction of the agent of decline, technology, or new ideals for human society (the short-lived attempts at communal living in the 1960s by Eric Fromm and others). Lyotard believes there must be «a positive orientation which would open up a new perspective» —the postmodern. In a new positive perspective, not all progress would be suspect, but what would be defined as progress and what would be a situation in which progress might be a value would have to be determined case by case, time after time, and without a fixed attitude or formula. An acceptable postmodern attitude toward this value is difficult, for reasons coming into play after the change from modernism, as we will see in the discussion of the new legitimation of the social bond.

As a third misconception about Lyotard's theory, some thinkers believe it requires a fixed attitude toward the avant-garde, most often a rejection. Perhaps, being followers and commentators, the people about which Lyotard writes need the security of fixed concepts if they are to borrow them quickly and use them in a minor discourse of their own. Whatever the case may be, Lyotard believes «the true process of avant-gardism was in reality a kind of work, a long, obstinate and highly responsible work concerned with investigating the assumptions implicit in modernity». Here he calls for a free-play of the imagination in creativity; Derrida calls for the same. On the other hand, Lyotard does not believe the investigation of the assumptions should be a simple rejection (nor does Derrida), for doing so would merely repeat the ideals in a new form (*Reader* 317).

What is needed is an «initial forgetting» or a new beginning with new desires, and not just one but an unplanned series of new starts (an idea anathema to the areas of the postmodern world other than high cultures, especially those dominated by technology). For this reason, Lyotard does not want postmodernism to be a rigid institution as is the fate of political parties; he believes intellectual movements can become doctrinaire like political parties that lose their radical value to change society.

Conclusion: The Truth of Postmodernism Is Its Circulation through Culture

If someone sought a single definition of «postmodern», there could only be disappointment. And this lack of consensus or rather richness of interpretation is what is to be expected if very original ideas are to affect more and more people with varying educational backgrounds and areas of knowledge in a kind of chain reaction. What this note shows is that

Lyotard is aware of the circulation of his ideas of the postmodern through society and the necessity of varying interpretations — this coexisting variety of perspectives is sometimes itself thought to be a trait of the postmodern.

ΠΕΡΙΛΗΨΗ

W. Schultz, «Σημειώσεις για τὸν Μεταμοντερνισμό καὶ τὸ Ρόλο τοῦ Λυοτάρ ὡς Ἰδρυτῆ».

Δεδομένου τοῦ ὅτι ὑπάρχει πολλὴ ἀσάφεια ὅσον ἀφορᾷ στὸν ὅρισμό τοῦ μεταμοντερνισμοῦ, τὸ παρὸν ἄρθρο ἐπιχειρεῖ νὰ δώσει κάποιες ἐρμηνεῖς ἐξετάζοντας τὴ χρήση τοῦ ὅρου, τὸ εὖρος τῶν ἐφαρμογῶν του, τὰ χαρακτηριστικὰ αὐτοῦ ποὺ νοεῖται ὡς μεταμοντέρνο, κάποιες συγκεκριμένες προσεγγίσεις τοῦ θέματος, τὸν τρόπο μὲ τὸν ὁποῖο ὁ μοντερνισμὸς μετατράπηκε σὲ μεταμοντερνισμό, καὶ τὴν ἐπίδραση τῆς ἀλλαγῆς αὐτῆς πάνω στοὺς μύθους ἢ τὶς «μεγάλες ἀφηγήσεις». Ἡ διερεύνηση αὐτὴ ἀποσκοπεῖ στὴν ἀνατροπὴ τριῶν λαθασμένων δοξασιῶν, σχετικὰ μὲ τὸν μεταμοντερνισμό. Ὁ ὅρος δὲν ἦταν εὕρημα τοῦ Λυοτάρ, ἀλλὰ προήλθε ἀπὸ ἕναν Ἰσπανὸ συγγραφέα τοῦ 1934, τὸν Φεδερίκο ντὲ Ὀνις, καὶ ἀπὸ τὸν Ἀγγλο ἱστορικὸ Ἀρνολντ Τόινμπη τὸ 1939. Παρόλο ποὺ ὑπῆρξαν ὕστερες χρήσεις τοῦ ὅρου πρὶν ἀπὸ τὸ *Μεταμοντέρνες Συνθήκες* τοῦ Λυοτάρ, τὸ ἔργο αὐτὸ ἦταν ποὺ ἔδωσε στὸ τότε ἀναπτυσσόμενο κριτικὸ ρεῦμα τὸ ὄνομά του. Τὸ εὖρος τῆς ἐφαρμογῆς τοῦ μεταμοντερνισμοῦ στὴ λογοτεχνία, στὴν ἀρχιτεκτονικὴ, στὸν κινηματογράφο καὶ στὶς ἄλλες τέχνες περιγράφεται ὡς ἔνδειξη τῆς ὑπαρξῆς ἑνὸς πολιτισμικοῦ καὶ πνευματικοῦ κινήματος μὲ αὐτὸ τὸ ὄνομα. Ἐπίσης ἀναφέρονται ὁρισμένα χαρακτηριστικὰ ποὺ ἀποδίδονται συχνὰ στὸ μεταμοντερνισμό, παρότι ὕπως γίνεται σαφές στὶς ἀναλύσεις ποὺ ἀκολουθοῦν, τὰ χαρακτηριστικὰ αὐτὰ —μαζὶ μὲ διάφορες θεωρήσεις τῆς τέχνης καὶ ἄλλων πολιτισμικῶν πτυχῶν— εἶναι συνήθως πρὸ δημοφιλῆ ἀπὸ ὅτι οἱ αὐθεντικοὶ ὅρισμοι τοῦ Λυοτάρ ἢ τοῦ Χάμπερμπας καὶ τοῦ Ἀντόρνο, ἂν καὶ αὐτοὶ εἶναι οἱ ἱδρυτές, οἱ στοχαστὲς ποὺ διατύπωσαν τὶς καινούργιες πολιτισμικὲς ιδέες. Ἡ σημασία τοῦ Λυοτάρ γιὰ τὸ μεταμοντερνισμό ὑποστηρίζεται ἀπὸ ἀναφορὲς σὲ μελέτες ἐρευνητῶν, καθὼς καὶ ἀπὸ τὸ δικό του ὅρισμό τοῦ μεταμοντέρνου ποὺ ἐκπηγάζει ἀπὸ τὶς ιδέες του περὶ ἀναμνήσεως καὶ περὶ τῆς παρακμῆς τῶν μεγάλων ἀφηγήσεων. Τὸ ἄρθρο ὁλοκληρώνεται μὲ τὴ διασάφηση, ἀπὸ τὸ Λυοτάρ, τριῶν λαθασμένων δοξασιῶν: πὼς ὁ μεταμοντερνισμὸς σημαίνει («μετὰ τὸ μοντερνισμό»), πὼς ἡ παρακμὴ τῶν μεγάλων ἀφηγήσεων σημαίνει αὐτόματα τὴν ἀδυναμία περαιτέρω προόδου, καὶ πὼς ἕνας ὁπαδὸς τοῦ κινήματος πρέπει ἀπαραίτητα νὰ ἔχει μιὰ πάγια θέση πρὸς τὶς ὕποιες πρωτοποριακὲς ἐξελίξεις στὸν πολιτισμό.

ABBREVIATIONS

CPM	<i>La Condition postmoderne</i>
Fables	<i>Postmodern Fables</i>
MK	<i>H Metamonterna Katastasi</i>
Moralités	<i>Moralités postmodernes</i>
PC	<i>The Postmodern Condition</i>
PE	<i>Le Postmoderne expliqué aux enfants</i>
PEC	<i>The Postmodern Explained to Children: Correspondence 1982-1985</i>
Political	<i>Political Writings</i>
Reader	<i>The Lyotard Reader</i>

SELECTED LIST OF WORKS

- Benjamin, Andrew. See under «Lyotard»: *The Lyotard Reader*.
- Bennington, Geoffrey, *Lyotard: Writing the Event*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1988.
- Docherty, Thomas, «Postmodernist Theory: Lyotard, Baudrillard and Others», *Twentieth-Century Continental Philosophy*. Vol. VIII. London: Routledge, 1944.
- Ellul, Jacques, *The Technological Society*. Tran. from the French by John Wilkinson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1970. *La Technique ou l'enjeu du siècle*. Copyright 1954 by Max Leclerc and Proprietors of Librairie Armand Colin.
- Gasché, Rodolphe, «Deconstruction as Criticism», *Glyph* 6 (1979), 177-214.
- Jameson, Fredric, «Foreword», *The Postmodern Condition*. Not in *La Condition postmoderne*.
- Jencks, Charles, *The Language of Postmodern Architecture*. New York: Copyright by Art and Design, 1977.
- Lyotard, Jean-François, «Appendice svelte à la question postmoderne». See *Tombeau de l'intellectuel et autres papiers*.
- , *La Condition postmoderne*. Paris: Minuit, 1979.
- , «Histoire universelle et différences culturelles», *Critique* (May 1985) 41 (456), 559-568. See «Universal History and Cultural Differences».
- , *L'Inhumain: Causeries sur le temps*. Editions Galilée. 1988. *The Inhuman: Reflections on Time*. Tran. Geoffrey Bennington and Rachel Bowlby. Cambridge: Polity Press. 1991.
- , «An Interview with Jean-François Lyotard», with Willem van Reijen and Dick Veerman, *Theory, Culture, & Society*, 5, 2-3 (June 1988), 277-309. See «Les lumières, le sublime».
- , «Les lumières, le sublime. Un échange de paroles entre Jean-François Lyotard, Willem van Reijen et Dick Veerman. Paris/Utrecht, avril 1987. *Jean-François Lyotard: Réécrire la Modernité. Les Cahiers de Philosophie*, Printemps 1988, 63-98. See «An Interview with Jean-François Lyotard».

- , *Moralités postmodernes*. Paris: Editions Galilée, 1993. In English translation by Georges van den Abbeele, *Postmodern Fables*. Minnesota: The University of Minnesota Press, 1997. The page references are to the English.
- , *Pérégrinations: Loi, forme, événement*. Transcrit de l'américain par Jean-François Lyotard. Paris: Galilée, 1990. This first appeared in English.
- , *Political Writings*. Tran. Bill Readings with Kevin Paul Geiman. London: UCL Press, 1993.
- , *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. Tran. from the French by Geoffrey Bennington and Brian Massumi. Foreword by Fredric Jameson. Minnesota: The University of Minnesota, 1984. *La Condition postmoderne: rapport sur le savoir*. Les Editions de Minuit. 1979.
- , «Presenting the Unpresentable: The Sublime» (*ArtForum*, April 1982).
- , «Réponse à la question: qu'est-ce que le post moderne?» *Critique* (April 1982) 38 (419), 357-367. The English translation is added to *The Postmodern Condition*.
- , «The State and Politics in the France of 1960». See *Political Writings*. This originally appeared in *La Guerre des Algériens*. Paris: Editions Galilée, 1989.
- , *Tombeau l'intellectuel et autres papiers*. Paris: Galilée, 1984.
- , «Universal History and Cultural Differences», in *The Lyotard Reader*. Ed. Andrew Benjamin. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989.
- , *The Postmodern Explained to Children: Correspondence 1982-1985*, Tran. Julian Pefanis and Morgan Thomas, London: Turnaround, 1992. *Le Postmoderne expliqué aux enfants*, Editions Galilée, 1986.
- Moore, Jane, «Postmodernism», *Literature Matters*, Newsletter of the British Council's Literature Department, 16 (June 1994), p. 6.
- Readings, Bill, *Introducing Lyotard: Art and Politics*, London: Routledge, 1991, 31.
- Readings, Bill, Kevin Paul Geiman. See under «Lyotard»: *Political Writings*.
- Schultz, William, *Genetic Codes of Culture? The Deconstruction of Tradition by Kuhn, Bloom, and Derrida*. New York: Garland, 1995.
- Slater, Philip, *The Pursuit of Loneliness*. Twentieth Anniversary Edition. Boston: Beacon Press, 1990.
- Van Reijen, Willem; Dick Veerman. See under «Lyotard»: «An Interview with Jean-François Lyotard».
- Wellmer, Albrecht, *The Persistence of Modernity: Essays on Aesthetics, Ethics, and Postmodernism*. English translation by David Midgley, Cambridge: the MIT Press, 1993.