

Abstract

John Fowles' *The Collector* and *The Magus* were written against the background of the society in which all things have lost its original value because of mass consumption. One of the features of this era, called the mass consumption society, is that the worth of things is symbolized. Mass production took away the irreplaceableness from all things, and imitations have been produced in large quantities. Jean Baudrillard, French philosopher, named such a phenomenon simulacrum and sounded the alarm bell to the modern social system that people are just playing with the symbol of things rather than original value of those. Characters in the two novels written by Fowles are closely related with such society. While they manipulate the symbols or are manipulated by it, they embody the essence of the society of the simulacrum. The main theme of this study is that they manipulate symbols that exist in the reality as if modern people play the electronic games (like video games and computer games) by using symbols that exist in the virtual space.

The Collector is the maiden work of Fowles, and it is constructed by narrative of the kidnapper Clegg and the diary of the victim Miranda. If readers pay attention to the brutality of the bizarre incident, they would think that this work put the theme in Clegg's depth psychology and his deviant desire. The way a story unfolds is similar to Thomas Harris' *Silence of the Lambs*, but the focus of *The Collector* is not the brutality but the general desire

of ordinary people. This incident is abnormal, but the mentality behind it is not special. This story is a simulation of one common person who is released from the social shackles of labor and just concentrates on using money. Clegg's desire is to add Miranda to his collection of butterflies. He regards her as a symbol of butterflies, and he wants to collect her, brought up her and manipulate her. This incident is a mirror which depicts the desire of the modern society where ordinary people live. This study compares the desire hidden in his collection and modern electronic games (especially *Pocket Monsters*) and clarifies true nature of his desire. On the contrary of Clegg's case, Miranda is a person who is manipulated by simulacrum. She does not have her own sense of value and is under the control of social evaluation like social status and property. It is not difficult to understand his crime and disease, that is escapism of human beings who lack the social adaptive capacity, but Miranda's disease is concealed from simulacrum. She is one of the snobs who are completely buried in social value, and the essence of snobbism is desire to put others into their own value system. She is affected with the disease which is the same quality as Clegg's one. This novel connotes Miranda is a reflection of Clegg in the mirror called simulacrum. *The Magus* is also a story about the person who manipulates simulacrum in a small island. That man, Conchis makes an untrue drama about his past days and creates a virtual theater in the island. He shows it to an audience, Nicholas. It is important for Conchis that Nicholas believes his drama is filled with

fiction and there is 'real things' outside of it. Conchis suggests the border between the reality and the fiction. In other words, he hid elements of fiction in real by showing his drama.

Two works written by Fowles are both concerned with simulacrum. Characters in novels are playing through manipulating symbols. It is possible to read that Fowles saw through to heart of the social system that turned into a huge simulator, and at the 1960s, he has already foreseen the future form of human desire.