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Article

Fragmentation, Genre Mutation, And Interpretative Freedom In Postmodern English Literature

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Abstract: English itself is high in this article for a look of the historical background, development, and theoretical foundations of postmodernism as they relate to literature in English. It focuses on key differences between modernism and postmodernism–their attitudes towards tradition; meaning; genre; authorship; and cultural hierarchy, to name a few. Citation: This study has explored, how globalization, technological advancement and cultural hybridization led to post-modern thought. In particular, important postmodern ideas such as the "death of the author," intertextuality, deconstruction, and genre mutation are given special attention. The paper explains the changing function of the reader, who now takes the interpretative activity over which the reader left off as the central part of postmodernistic literature process. Beneath this, the article reflects upon the potential shift away from postmodernism into more recent movements, signalled in the writing to follow by metamodernism and metarealism, which suggest a newness and ongoingness of literary/literary-theoretical development.

Keywords: Postmodernism, Modernism, Intertextuality, Death of The Author, Deconstruction, Globalization, Genre Mutation, Logocentrism, Reader-Response, Metamodernism

1. Introduction

Literary tastes and fashions, like all things human, evolve with the larger worlds of the mind, the spirit and the body. Postmodernism is arguably the most intellectually significant of twentieth-century movements, dismantling conventional notions of authorial intent, meaning, genre, and textual authority. Postmodernism arose in opposition to modernist aesthetics, global socio-cultural changes and especially struggles against increasing centralised meaning and meta-narratives that appear as hierarchically-based cultural structures. Postmodernism in English literature evolved through a complex interplay of philosophical skepticism, technological advancement and cultural globalization. As media, information exchange, and cross-cultural interaction grew at a quick pace, so too did the artistic production and interpretation. Consequently, the literature began to reflect fracture and diversity, and hybridity, in rather than unity and coherence. This research is to study the specificities of postmodern relative to modernism, study its main theoretical notions and illuminate its effect on the nature of literary processes in the context of the changing place of the (postmodern) reader. In this way showcases the lasting importance of postmodernism in the discourse surrounding the contemporary literary.

2. Discussion

Thus, the history and evolution of post-modernism in English literature can be seen a complex interplay between ideas and the kinds of creative expression that allow them

to flourish. By questioning understandings of reality, narrative logic, and cultural norms, postmodern literature opens up reader engagement with the disjointedness of modern life and of interpretation. Contemporary authors are still feeling its influence and its place in the literary conversation will never grow stale.

The idea of postmodernism has different meanings in literary studies. Some argue it is a continuation of modernism, while others view it as a movement that not only broke from but possibly detested modernism. Of course there are several important distinctions between the two movements:

Modernism turns its back on old forms and purports to be making new kinds of literature and art; postmodernism embraces traditions but does so in an ironic fashion.

The modern world is disordered and needs to be free from the disorder; the postmodern world simply embraces disorder and engages with it as a game.

Where modernism seeks beauty in the transcendent — above the muck of the real world — postmodernism finds it in the muck of reality itself.

Modernism has its own brand of anthropocentric humanism, one based entirely on a love for humanity; and postmodernism has a kind of universal humanism, in which the target of love basically becomes the world.

Where modernism is rooted out of a Eurocentrism, viewing European culture as the center of world culture, postmodernism is especially concerned with the countries of the East, Africa, and Latin America, and sees all cultures as equally important.

Modernism leans towards elitist art produced for the higher echelon of society; postmodernism has no such concern, blurring the boundaries between elite and popular art and facilitating the coexistence of high and mass components in one work — in short, double coding.

Content (semantics) is king for modernism; rhetoric and the delivery of meaning are central to postmodernism.

Modernism has strict borders; postmodernism has peasants, and genres for the most part, intermingle and mutate.

Rather than the creative process resulting in a single and holistic work, as in modernism, in postmodernism the creative process itself is the most important phenomenon.

Modernism thinks creativity is something that gets done by a person, and has an active author; postmodernism says the author is not a topical subject, and alludes to the death of the author.

Globalization (the combination of different nations and cultures, the growth of living standards, the intensive insertion of innovations and advanced techniques and technologies into everyday life, the rise of Internet users, and the rapid speed of information distribution) was a basis of post-modernism as a movement. When different cultures met each other and shared with each other, new cultural forms were formed. At the same time, an attitude of disrespect for works of literature began to take shape. Fictional works were at the turn of the last century considered not just an individual art experience but a commodity for profit. Less focus was on what a work contained, more on the surface and ornamental details. Consequently, literary texts were written, not strictly in isolation of a single genre; but, rather, across a combination of several genres—or, in terms of Pamela, genre mutation, was the case. The combination of these made the quality of literature worldwide go down the hill. The way we humans thought and perceived changed humanly also. This, in turn, made people feel less or even hopeless about the future.

Modernist era means creating large gestures, grand narrative works, trying to make sense of the world. Postmodernism opposes these grandes narratives and rather than portraying a single world, creates micro-narratives that account for only the pieces of it. Trust in these fragmented bits is seen as the best option. Experts consider this function as part of what distinctly separates the two mainstream movements. Postmodernism,

therefore, says reality and the world are not explained through one, single, unified work, but through short, fragmented stories and narratives. This is why the creative process is the focus, rather than the final product of a work.

Postmodernism negates one of the key elements of modernism — that the world cannot be made sense of because it is meaningless — logocentrism, which is the idea that the meaning is central and foundational. Therefore, if the world is meaningless, then the creator who tries to make sense of it is equally meaningless. Where this meaning is impossible, there is no explanation of it, there is no author anymore. It follows from this perspective that the idea of the "death of the author" came about.

Consequently, literature was no longer seen as the intentional act of a single author, but rather an "intertextual phenomenon" built from the artistry of many. The text to be read is human life, and every step is a word and every word is an act. Codes are what a text is made of, and those codes, from generation to generation, are transmitted. Humanity itself, its life and culture, is an intertext (a total text) and any text, any work created by humanity is only a part of this intertext. This is referred to as intertextuality. So from this angle neither writer nor work → the work is not fixed, autonomous thing.

Like any literary movement, postmodernism has its own ideas:

Death of the Author – There is a text inherited from our forefathers and passed down through generations, yet the author is "dead" in the text. The written word doen not actually belong to this author, but the bits and pieces he has taken from the intertext. It's not the author who makes the work; the reader does. Hence the reader is all-important in postmodernism: the more intelligent the reader, the more they can plumb the text for its basic message – the "code".

INTERTEXTUALITY (from the Latin, "texts between"): every text is a spider web of previously written texts; no text is free of context. No work exists without an intertext preceding it.

Deconstruct — The destruction of existing forms and the reconstruction of a new work from the rubble.

Figurativeness (Metaphoricity) — The idea that abstract meanings are tied to concrete concepts in the outside world.

Interactivity – How the readers and the author generate a text together.

Artifact — A work that emerges suddenly, in an unexpected time and at an unexpected place, by pure coincidence.

Universalism – The mixing and mingling and intermingling of everything

Hedonism — Seeing a piece of literature as a tool for pleasing the reader.

Some think postmodernism in literature may be giving way to metamodernism, metarealism, or something else entirely. This is the merging and branching: These two new trends are exactly what are the two outcomes of the merger of modernism and realism.

As of today, the only parameters that matter when it comes to the reader are the three ones: Her worldview, knowledge and experience — including travel and exposure to different cultures. Earlier the author has written the book and put meaning into it. However, in the postmodern era, the reader is more than just the recipient of meaning– the reader creates the meaning of the work. Where once the author delivered the artwork to the reader complete, today the reader must engage their own intellect and actively contribute to the process of deciphering the text. Because of this, a lot of sources today believe the act of reading itself has become an integral component of the literary process.

3. Conclusion

Postmodernism can be viewed as a turning point in literary history, as in that it denotes a change from the modernist certainty to the postmodern plurality and skepticism. Postmodernism, in its rejection of meta-narratives, centralized meaning, and Author's dominance, conceptualized literature as an open, intertextual, participatory

thing. In its fractal thickets, its genre melting pots, and its double coding, the movement turned to face the complications of globalization and technological transformation. Postmodernism has made full use of the reader's potential. The author does not (and cannot) fix meaning; it must be interpreted. Thus, literature does not transform into a closed artistic object, but remains a continuous interactive process of text and reader. The ideas of intertextuality, deconstruction, and the death of the author fundamentally reshaped our view of the production and reception of texts. While current movements like metamodernism and metarealism may show us the way forward in terms of new literary advancement, postmodernism is still a necessary aspect of the evolution of the theory of literature. The emphasis on multiplicity, openness and interpretative fluidity has informed many aspects of contemporary critical discourse and artistic practice.

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