

THE IMPORTANT FEATURES OF POSTMODERN IDEAS IN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURE

Sulaymonova Dildora

Master student at NamSFLI

sulaymonovdildora@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

The postmodern is a philosophical way of thinking about life that is not confined by conventional cultural conventions. This literary period started in the 70 - 90ss in Britain and America. It is a new phenomenon and has features which make it different from modernism and realism. If modernism is seen as the movement that cleared the way for a new era in English literature, postmodernism is the descendant that was created from the principles of modernism and developed into a super force that has dominated for decades. It is difficult to understand the author's intentions in postmodern era as the literary devices employed in a work make it quite complex. The reader has to focus hard to understand where the fragments are leading and where they are joining together to reveal the plot. It sounds difficult, but the use of simple language by postmodern writers helps a lot in understanding the complex structure. However, it is not enough for fully realizing of this period's ideas in literary works. The main purpose of this article to demonstrate the main characteristics of postmodernism and analyze the writers' ideas about this term in English and American literature.

Keywords: Postmodern, characteristic, idea, works.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are numerous English and American writers and scholars who made several successful researches in Postmodern Literature. Hogue argues the insufficiency in the theory and practice of postmodernism in American literature. Hogue locates the insufficiency in postmodernism's inability to successfully overthrow the prevailing version of modernism that is Eurocentric, patriarchal, capitalist, instrumentalist, and imperialist. On the other hand, in British literature we can find similar and different views in writers' works. Particularly, in the given case of the British short story genre, identity discussion seems relevant when the plots and genre preferences, choices of style and means of its actualization, content intricacies, protagonists, time and space peculiarities are considered, and the subculture and milieu of the society are also given thought to. It is no surprise, then, that both the identity and behaviour of human beings have been seen as very much defined by their particular sociocultural positionality (Sell, 2004, pp. 30-31). However, In every postmodern fictional text there are many implications of archetypes, allusions, references, quotations, fantasy, events and

episodes, often ambiguous connotations and mystic occurrences as well as fairy tale and mythical plots, it can be presumably mentioned that the reader should be familiar with the reality manifested, otherwise it would be impossible to fully comprehend the text in its full capacity of semantic, emotional, ideological and moral integrity (Byatt, 1994, p.71). It therefore seems useful to distinguish between linguistic and non-linguistic expressions of identities in the stories that are being given.

METHODOLOGY

According to English postmodernism, reality is relative and there is no such thing as absolute truth. It claims that truth is not reflected in how humans comprehend it, but rather that truth is created when the mind seeks to make sense of its own unique world. Facts and lies can therefore both be true. Western ideals and beliefs are frequently rejected by postmodernism since they are seen as merely a minor portion of the human experience. Postmodernism tends to focus on an object's external appearance rather than making inferences about its inner or revealing hidden meanings. We can see several terms in Postmodern literature that show this period's ideas in fiction works. For instance, Pastiche is the term for combining or "pasting" together several parts, which is related to postmodern intertextuality. Intertextuality is the process through which the meaning of one text is shaped by another. Many postmodern authors use metafiction to make the reader aware of its fictionality, and, sometimes, the presence of the author. In American Postmodern Movement, this literary period is sometimes (though not always) defined as a style or movement that originated in the years following World War II. It is marked by a heavy reliance on methods like fragmentation, contradiction, and dubious narrators. The Postmodernist period focuses on several themes that are evident in the works of the time period. The fundamental themes of this historical period include racism, identity, and the search for human decency. Identity is a theme commonly found in many African American works as they began to write about their culture and heritage. The theme of identity can also be seen in the women's civil rights movement of the time where women fought for their place in society.

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

In order to explain my opinions on this subject, I have found several examples in writers' works and facts to fully understand the characteristics of postmodernism in foreign literature. British Postmodern authors used irony, playfulness, black humor in their works as the hallmark of their style. In fact, several novelists later to be labeled postmodern were first collectively labeled black humorists. : John Barth, Joseph Heller, William Gaddis, Kurt Vonnegut, Bruce Jay Friedman, etc. Some examples of texts that bear the above features-Roland Barthes's „The Pleasure of the Text”. The central concept of Joseph Heller's „Catch-22” is the irony of the now-idiomatic "catch-22", and the narrative is structured around a long series of similar ironies. Additionally, „Pastiche” is widely used in British and American literature. „In Postmodern

literature, many postmodern authors combined, or “pasted” elements of previous genres and styles of literature to create a new narrative voice, or to comment on the writing of their contemporaries. For example, William S. Burroughs uses science fiction, detective fiction, westerns; Margaret Atwood uses science fiction and fairy tales” (Mohammad Ataullah Nuri. Bangladesh Army International University of Science & Technology). In postmodern literature, intertextuality might take the form of a comparison or allusion to another literary work, a detailed analysis of a work, or the adoption of a style. This frequently appears in postmodern writing as allusions to fairy tales, as seen in the works of Margaret Atwood, Donald Barthelme, and many others, or as allusions to well-known subgenres like science fiction and detective fiction. Authors sometimes use metafiction technique to allow for flagrant shifts in narrative, impossible jumps in time, or to maintain emotional distance as a narrator. Though metafiction is primarily associated with Modernist literature and Postmodernist literature, but is found at least as early as Homer’s *Odyssey* and Chaucer’s 14th century *Canterbury Tales*. (Mohammad Ataullah Nuri. Bangladesh Army International University of Science & Technology)

In American literature „The brand of racism is never explicit but often so camouflaged by a metalanguage that it emerges not as a social fact but as an aesthetic” (Vijay Mishra, 2018, 30 p, „Postmodern Racism”). Salecl points out, in this new form of postmodern racism ‘culture itself functions as a “natural” determinative force: it locks individuals and groups a priori into their cultural genealogy’. The search for identification in African-American life and literature during the 20th century is complicated by the reality that color, rather than what a person projects, determines identity. „The resulting mode of existence for African-Americans is marked by what W.E.B. Du Bois, in his text, *The Souls of Black Folk*, calls “double-consciousness,” and a sense of invisibility in the presence of oppression.” (Nicholas Major, „Identity and Invisibility in African American Literature, 2014). Identity is a theme commonly found in many African American works as they began to write about their culture and heritage. The theme of identity can also be seen in the women’s civil rights movement of the time where women fought for their place in society.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, The idea of fragmentation, provisionality, or incoherence is not bemoaned by postmodernism; rather, it is celebrated. It was a term used in literature to describe various post-World War II literary traits, such as fragmentation, contradiction, dubious narrators, etc., as well as a backlash against Enlightenment concepts that were latent in Modernist writing. In postmodernist works it is common to mix high culture and mass culture. You can see combination of different moods: comic, tragic, humorous, etc. There is usually no general tone in the books. These features lead to readers to have difficulty in understanding the main ideas in literary works. So, The readers should pay attention to these points when they address to postmodern literature.

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