

Exploring Postmodern Fictional Elements in The Count of Monte Cristo by Alexandre Dumas and The Seven Messengers by Dino Buzzati

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Abstract

This research study aims to explore postmodern elements in the work of Alexandre Dumas *The Count of Monte Cristo* and another work by Dino Buzzati *The Seven Messengers*. This research article is basically dealing with some prominent elements of postmodernism such as Fragmentation, Black Humor, Playfulness, Intertextuality, Metafiction, Objectivity, Magic Realism and Absurdity. This research is qualitative in which existing literature is reviewed and interpreted by textual analysis and close reading. The conceptual framework is given in this research that is Bran Nicol's (2009) concept of fictional narratives to express postmodern elements. This research article has interpreted these two works through textual analysis and come up with the text that expresses the postmodern narrative of the author that is within the text itself and in the context also. This research has analyzed works through postmodern elements and come up with the intricate ideas that there are elements of postmodernism that exist in various ways in the text. Postmodern elements are underpinned in the text that gives us various approaches when interpreted. This research has extracted postmodern elements within the text of both work.

Keywords: *Postmodernism, elements, textual analysis, interpretation, close reading*

INTRODUCTION

This research is going to explore postmodernism elements with the given works. In this article postmodern fiction has the best way to grab both literally and metaphorically text on a fleshly level that lets them wander further down paths of understanding elements of fiction and takes us more into experience that how these are incorporated in research works. Some

known examples are the novel *The Count of Monte Cristo*, by Alexandre Dumas and *The Seven Messengers* by Dino Buzzati as they contain postmodern literary elements. These are postmodern in their narrative style but when the points of view related to structuralist narration as well as themes and traits which reflect a post-modern approach. In *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *The Seven Messengers* the nature of subjectivity is directly addressed, narratives are fragmentation, intertextuality, playfulness, humor etc. another in relation with transformed new revelations outdistancing their context. These work weaves these traits into so many pieces of postmodern literature that it accurately represents the complexity fundamental to human perception. Dumas illustrates this subtly as only he can in *The Count of Monte Cristo*, showing us how Edmond Dante progresses from a young naive sailor to the charismatic dashing suave debonair persona of *The Man Called Monte Christo*. Dumas uses this text to illustrate the lengths characters go in seeking retaliation and revenge if they do not face their problems.

In this research the selected works *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas and *The Seven Messengers*, both examples having multi-level narratives that express postmodern elements. A qualitative textual analysis is methodological approach utilized to demonstrate how these texts have shown postmodernism techniques such as fragmented realities, multiple shifting identities and eradication of meta-narratives. It sought to read those texts through the lenses of particular theorists such as Fredric Jameson, Linda Hutcheon or Henri Bergson among others in all their work on postmodernity; and it wanted these readings always aimed at showing that not only is there no singular truth for any one human being in a text but also that different peoples' experience reveals many truths. Rare case studies in unique narrative structures, *The Seven Messengers* and *The Count of Monte Cristo* Both do not match the traditional storytelling conventions. In this history of change and revenge, which calls to mind Dumas himself on time and identity (that all men are not the same), we see a deep suspicion about fixed individuals after modernity has expired as is it a linear development. As with Buzatti, its narrative never finishes either preconditioning the idea of one story to be explored or a simple field where boundaries do exist but have already become so thin that no enclosing can ever take place emphasizing postmodernism at work again. The study decodes these pieces so as to ascertain the extent of their postmodernist burden, which in turn would explain why they have not become relics along with people fumbling through intricate lives that characterize our times within postmodern era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Twenty years ago, post-modernism responded to modernity and since then has taken deep roots in different parts of the world among which is education especially noticeable even in various countries. This way challenges our conventional wisdom but it asks for a different dimensions and assimilates diverse trends opposite pragmatic order or didactic systems. Intersecting with politics, society and pedagogy... so it is a significant area of academic critique or engagement. Postmodernism, in the view of Aydin (2006), is a continuation from where Modernism leaves aside with its wider horizon undermining globalist universal knowledge perspective while answering it with post-humanistic practices; therefore incorporating contra-aesthetic cultures and values neatly placing them alongside realistic objective stand over this philosophy to certain extents deductively contradicts some

establishments onto ontology, epistemology or rationality based on holistic human strategies only not discursively contesting those since as much pursuing their selfmanifestation over against any alternatives. Gandhi (1997) writes long story about what postmodernism is like. He further proposes that we can look back at it historically from the late 20th century onward, or as an age of knowledge trouble. Forgani et al. (2015) also stress this development (under western materialistic terms). It flourishes on diversity and contingency, shunning any Emperor Crawford with an Imperial Junta established bureaucracy. This theory can be seen as a counterargument against essentialisms which sees individuality among people's selves entirely constructed through society. In addition, he denies thinking that our values adapt over time since they are grounded in the changing reality and rejects the notion of a... sort of reverse causeand-effect relationship between what people do (i.e. life) and their fate - as if there was something which determines everything else- it is us who sets rules.

Akhter (2018) states that postmodernism expansively promotes and tolerates diversity of opinion and mutual comprehension. It entails a genealogy of canonical rational, representational and educational techniques that in the course calls for tide-watering modernist ideologies and monolithic conceptions of reality/ies as well. The performance of the actor highlighted postmodernisms place in a pedagogical environment for its advocacy and commitment to pluralism as well as multiple views being essential. Kahraman (2014) notes that postmodernism is a stance in which one engages modernity through analytic reason, refusing to acknowledge its logical incompleteness or the absurd problems of reference; and avows some accord with respect to cut it:) again separating from thought at any rate), thus accentuating self-examination regarding early- advanced dispositions other than doubt among different acts delineated by this political development. According to Abdullah (2013) the key focal point in postmodern thought is subjectivity, it also upholds that human value can be relative and situationally adapted -the opposing view from modernistic thinking which puts prime attention on logic, experimentation & technical know-hows over other things including good housekeeping. According to Abdullah, this

change came because of the negative impacts cause by world wars and imperialism which lead in making rejecting reasonableness realism absoluteness as inappropriate all these was conceivable through a more extensive seeing after those occasions has happened that should not be required around then either at any rate right before? This was the reason why Abdullah said post-modernists think after these events, people stopped to respect supremacy rationality realism universality truth? In this way postmodernity is a radical break from modernist epistemology, which grounds all knowledge claims in the idea that they are contingent upon social conditions underpinning them only such an era can manufacture so many different modes of knowing to be true false valid invalid according to who when where why how what interest – Gunshyam (2009). Postmodernism challenges modernist ideas in politics, art culture literature etc.by introducing contradicting meanings beliefs to those inherent with them. Hutcheon further notes that historians often cook their books, even as they write back about history; which is why a postmodern self-respecting historian has such hard a time figuring out what actually happened in the past and only then can he or she get to thinking otherwise of contemporary realities (p), thereby recast possibilities for how knowledge itself worked. So modernity can be described as an endless struggle between variants of itself that have always been post-modern.

Sharma (2011) argues that Postmodern literature surfaces with paradox, fragmentation, and polyphony following the aftermath of the Second World War. They are counter-Enlightenment and anti-modern because, particularly in the sense of being non-realist works as well. Many forms of them, as pointed out by Sharma, can be rather complex and indeterminate in interpreting or meaning. As Maule (2018) points out, post-modernism is just a blister to modernism's boil of entitlement and transparency. Bypassing critical thinking in favor of the stories with no basis or objective truth yet authenticity as first — culture wars like never seen! Maule states plainly what happened to society in this movement; he paints a picture for us of how culture and intellect were altered by postmodernity. Here are a few examples: *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas contains both narrative technique moments colliding with case study ones; justice being questioned (among others) along a fragmented structure. this is another hallmark of multiple perspectives employed within the text itself, showing subjunctive concern raised postmodern way folks can start to see that meaning might be unstable too since there's also an extra reading just around any available corner! *The Seven Messengers* is also referenced here – a film scenario by Dino Buzzati that exemplifies the post-modern ideas of meaninglessness in communication as such, and this all makes sense with what Farooq (2013) catalogs as scrutiny over absolute reality symptomatic for our era. So the illustration is that everything seems so real but isn't there at all except inside our heads maybe and how difficult it may become for one person to communicate his thoughts, also when everybody around understands perfectly well what he's trying to say. Human knowledge has no limits other than our self-imposed ones which embeds clear and concise communication in such deep problems a core issue of postmodernism.

Data Analysis Method

The data analysis for “*The Count of Monte Cristo*” and “*The Seven Messengers*” is based on textual analysis in the research. This research analysis strategy is to explore the text itself, and its context, and it helps us how it affects readers and interpreters to dig out context. In the data analysis method, textual analysis enables one to come up with different thematic and textual meanings from a single piece of work short story, or novel but it is depending on their viewpoint as well as the opinion as the reader.

DATA ANALYSIS

Postmodern literature is concerned with different methods and ideas such as metafiction, fragmentation, intertextuality, objectivity, magical realism, absurdity black magic, and comedy these elements are quite prominently available within these two works *The Count of Monte Cristo* and *The Seven Messengers*. This research examines these features in the above-mentioned novels to bring out how they are used by authors in their narrative construction while interacting with wider philosophical and literary debates. This is similarly constructed in a way that does not allow for immediate progression but his journey through his father's kingdom becomes an unending exploration where time is measured by the ambassadors. Each envoy takes more time than the previous one, thus making the story seem timeless and infinite. Both of these stories fracture time and space, challenging our sense of what is real in them; it is this quality that marks them as postmodern texts. Postmodern works often call into

question our understanding of who we are by showing characters who undergo radical transformations that disrupt personal integrity.

Metafiction

In postmodern literature the components of metafiction, where the text is itself self-conscious about itself being an artificial creation. The element of metafiction is demonstrated in "The Count of Monte Cristo" through Edmond Dantès's deliberate construction as the Count. Like an author explains a story, Dantès changes everything around him by using different identities.

"he added: "Lower the flag and pennant to half-mast and slope the yards!" "You see," said Danglars, "he already imagines himself captain." (p.35)

In the above text, it gives metafiction when symbolically expressed things such as half-mast and slope yards give the meaning of the scenario it's the moment when they are talking about the captain's death and its consequences. On the other hand, the perception and ideas related to the Danglars approach.

In the same way, other works that are related to postmodern works, "The Seven Messengers" also show a kind of control over what is going on next or how things should be done during a journey taken by the main character. The character of messengers especially the protagonist to communicate with versatility that exhibits the actual variation in the character and main element of postmodernism. The analysis of these works of contemporary also hints that such elements of metafiction are there when they change their identity and bring variety. These works are shaped according to the needs of the age that leads to following one after another narratively speaking under the metafiction element as the postmodern element.

Fragmentation

It is a narrative that is broken down into fragments that won't be in order of time and it is difficult for the reader to fit events together. This technique has been used in 'The Count of Monte Cristo' in which main events from the historical background have been disclosed not chronologically and different characters have shared their points of view. This kind of structure is a challenging way of telling a story that involves readers to rearrange things. In this context, it keeps changing from one point to another as observed it is shifting at multiple stages in the text. When Danglars has been discussing about captain but at the moment hatred against Dante is shown;

"and was the cause of our losing a day and a half off the Isle of Elba instead of making direct for Marseilles." (p. 37)

It shifts from one idea to another that gives birth to another event and most probably the conversation in such a situation creates fragmentation.

"Quite true! Quite true!" Monsieur Morrel exclaimed, delighted. "It was Policar Morrel, my uncle, who afterwards became a captain. (p. 47)

The above its showing that they changed the scene from one specific topic of the captain to another that is related to the uncle of Morrel who is discussing his own experience and past.

Intertextuality

The term intertextuality has been used to describe how texts are related to one another. Any kind of literary work is referred to as another literary work based on historical events sometimes it is a cultural artifact as is seen in the work of Dumas there is an example of revolutionary fighter Napoleon's exile and the concept of revenge as well as justice. There are such incidents from the historical perspective as references used in *The Count of Monte Cristo*. These historical and cultural context shows intertextuality in the novel and, such literary background makes it more profound than it would have been without them. In this element there is a reference to something that gives a context such as;

"and with that peculiar accent which lends so much character to what they say, "If Paris owned the Cannebière she would be a little Marseilles." (p. 85)

In intertextuality, it has been referred to as a historical context or person that shows some historical gesture such as when they talk about expeditions and equality they discuss Napoleon from the historical figures it gives us the concept of postmodernism element of intertextuality.

"Napoleon the personification of equality!" (p. 202)

In some aspects, the cities and countries or a geographical location is also part of the intertextuality that is mentioned in the text as ;

"You must look into that storm and shout as you did in Rome". (p. 236)

"Life is a storm, my young friend. You will bask in the sunlight one moment, be shattered on the rocks the next. What makes you a man is what you do when that storm comes". (p. 245)

Its fragmentation separately has mentioned various aspects in a few lines such as life compared with storm and basking sunlight moment that shatters on rocks. Such narrations portray fragmentation as a postmodernist element in the work. Further, other works, mainly focused on the protagonist's communication that is more and more based on fragmentation. There are long discussions from one incident to another in both works and the swing of characters gives us fragmentation. There is such fragmentation that does not only physical or emotional show but there are contextual incidents that also show fragmentation.

Objectivity

This element of postmodernism in literature raises the concept of objective truth and mainly emphasizes the subjectivity of reality in literary works. As it is mentioned in various stages "*The Count of Monte Cristo*", the story has been expressed from many points of view it shows that people have seen and interpreted things differently by the analysis of the text. When Dantès feels that is right to take revenge it is based on his feeling that what he is thinking on his own he is right. It is making us wonder whether that anything that has moral values are absolute or all actions should be analyzed and judged on the basis of an individuals perception. It shows objectivity in the perspectives of discussion of the characters and the context that has been portrayed by the author.

"All the preliminaries will be arranged with my father to-day, and to-morrow or the day after at the latest we shall give the betrothal feast at La Réserve here, at which we hope to see all our friends". (p. 177)

In the aforementioned text, it's obvious that things can be interpreted differently as Danglars says such narration that I am going to give you feast its nothing but thoroughly convening soft

intentions towards toward and his lover. On the other hand, it makes us feel that there are moral values and individual actions.

When moral values are discussed such as Dante mentions with the pain that he feels when trapped. His grief about his downfall and lost of his love and future as;

“Moral wounds have this peculiarity - they may be hidden, but they never close”. (p. 314)

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personal when he interacts and communicates with others such things show objectivity. Furthermore it has been analyzed from the character that there is lack of faith regarding the existence and there is ultimate element of postmodern creation of doubt toward fixed truths and reality but due to objectivity its denied.

Magic Realism

This term magic realism in postmodernism that gives fantastic and realistic settings by making them feel in the world of fantasy and exist in such narrative that expresses the reality in unrealistic things through magic. There are such examples that belong to supernatural and magical realism in the character of Dante. As main protagonist Dantès believe in apparently supernatural powers when it was observed while carrying out his plans which were magical realist components that has heightened drama. And, while making things towards magic

reality more slippery than what we were being understood. There is such text is available sentences and concepts that has been analyzed and explained the style of narration in which a magical sense is realized by the readers.

"said a beautiful, fair-haired girl with eyes of velvet floating in a pool of mother-o'-pearl". (p. 180)

In the above lines, it's floating in a pool of mother pearl which gives a sense of magic that can be realized because, in the real world, it is not possible to float mother pearl in the pool. In 'The Seven Messengers,' magic realism is seeming little bit but during journey of the character its observed as surrealism that is shown. This idea is much supported by notions such as an infinite kingdom which has been created that gives concept of mysticism around how these messengers travel in the story.

Absurdity

In postmodern literature absurdity is used to point out that humans sometimes in fictional narratives become irrational and meaningless in the ideas and dialogues. There are various incidents in the text the main character Dante seems useless plans that leads to sometimes horrible. Therefore, this is showing that it is a meaningless and useless thing for him to do; because they are not on the actual path that leads to get success easily as Dante wants to get how stupid and vain all his efforts faced vain in this direction and he has served no purpose but to demonstrate such folly. In this it has been shown how illogical claims are portrayed in the characters when the girl is asked by her friends whom you love, she replies no any boy but Dante then her dreams show how she is living in a world of absurdity.

"At first they saw nothing around them. Their intense happiness isolated them from the rest of the world". (p.145)

In the above lines author shows that there is the meaningless assumption that nothing is visible but the character is isolated from the whole world. Such things create absurdity in the character. In this context it's considered absurd, many other incidents also give meaningless and illogical assumptions. In "The Seven Messengers," the hero constantly moves uselessly and meaninglessly there in use of but he continues travels without specific aim while trying to contact the capital that is actual goal or aim. It is shown as mission that appears more pointless each time he received a message after long journey and awaiting and it is containing irrelevant data.

Playfulness

Often, in postmodern literature playfulness has been shown as a playful approach to language, structure, and genre conventions. As "The Count of Monte Cristo" is playful through complex plot interweaving and numerous disguises that Dantès takes up. This shows variations in the context of dialogues and interventions of the surroundings that effect the character and its role.

"A bout a hundred paces from the spot where the two friends were affect sitting sipping their wine the village of the Catalans rose behind a bare hill, exposed to the fierce sun and swept by the biting north-west wind". (p. 113)

"The Seven Messengers" is demonstrating playfulness using the main characters elaborate but useless planning activities. It is said that this narrative is playing with adventure and

exploration stories' conventions because of the detailed yet absurd nature of his way as well as more and more surreal elements appearing later on.

Metanarrative

Metanarratives in postmodernism literature challenge the conventional narratives of progress, justice, and truth. The "Count of Monte Cristo" represents the ideas about revenge and justice while posing a metanarrative that examines the legitimacy and morality behind them. Dantès' quest contests the traditional story of righteous anger by making it into an intricate moral undertaking where right and wrong are not clearly defined. In this text, it shows that past historical concepts interconnect with the present.

"has been built, rigged, and laden in the dockyard of old Phocaea and belongs to a shipowner of their own town". (p. 31)

In this context it is a discussion of real and imaginary when you realize reality then imaginative things never soothe such is the case here;

"When you compare the sorrows of real life to the pleasures of the imaginary one, you will never want to live again, only to dream forever." (p. 367)

In this context, it gives us the concept of being logical as reality is better than unreal things which leads toward dreams and imagination. The endless kingdom explored in "The Seven Messengers" as well as its search for meaning by the main character create a narrative that questions the traditional stories of discovery through exploration.

CONCLUSION

This paper is a qualitative research design and interpretative method of the novels *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas, and *The Seven Messengers* By Dino Buzzati form postmodernism nature. The analysis is framed within an approach based on Bran Nicol's book about postmodern fiction, ' The textual analysis revealed that these novels possessed many of the characteristics found in postmodern writing. In "The Count of Monte Cristo," for example, the narrative structure is complex but thematically rich making use of intertextuality, metafiction, fragmentation and objectivity amongst others; then you see a mixture of magical realism with absurdism along with various metafictional devices bringing about an unorthodox fantasy story. These results add to our knowledge of the modalities that post modernity can take in literature. By reading these texts through post-modernist prism. This research maintains writers really employ fresh approaches to either questioning stories in traditional ways or probing into hardcore matters concerning selfhoods justice truth-based on the reality. What has been achieved here barely skims the surface of some of the wealth involved with texts topically located within this bracket so much more in a similar vein is necessary if we are to wholly grasp what pertains to such forms. . Therefore, the findings from pursuing this unique research shall guide to have some elemental understanding for scholars willing to go deep into analyzing postmodern novels.

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