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Postmodernism:

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ABSTRACT

The concept of postmodernism is very complicated. Itis hard to define, because it is a concept that appears in a wide variety of disciplines or areas of study, including art, architecture, music, film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology. Perhaps the easiest way to start thinking about postmodernism is by thinking about modernism, the movement from which postmodernism seems to grow or emerge. Postmodernism, like modernism, follows most of the same ideas, rejecting boundaries between high and low forms of art, rejecting rigid genre distinctions, emphasizing pastiche, parody, bricolage, irony, and playfulness. According to Frederic Jameson, modernism and postmodernism are cultural formations which accompany particular stages of capitalism. Post- modern philosophy is an eclectic and elusive trend of thought.

KEYWORDS:- Postmodernism, Modernism, Approach, Capitalism, Philosophy.

Postmodernism is a complicated term, or set of ideas, one that has only emerged as an area of academic study since the mid-1980s. Postmodernism is hard to define, because it is a concept that appears in a wide variety of disciplines or areas of study, including art, architecture, music,

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film, literature, sociology, communications, fashion, and technology. It's hard to locate it temporally or historically, because it's not clear exactly when postmodernism begins. Perhaps the easiest way to start thinking about postmodernism is by thinking about modernism, the movement from which postmodernism seems to grow or emerge.

Modernism has two facets, or two modes of definition, both of which are relevant to understanding postmodernism. The first facet or definition of modernism comes from the aesthetic movement broadly labeled "modernism." This movement is roughly co-terminus with twentieth century Western ideas about art (though traces of it in emergent forms can be found in the nineteenth century as well). Modernism, as you probably know, is the movement in visual arts, music, literature, and drama which rejected the old Victorian standards of how art should be made, consumed, and what it should mean.

In the period of "high modernism," from around 1910 to 1930, the major figures of modernism literature helped radically to redefine what poetry and fiction could be and do: figures like Woolf, Joyce, Eliot, Pound, Stevens, Proust, Mallarme, Kafka, and Rilke are considered the founders of twentieth-century modernism. From a literary perspective, the main characteristics of modernism include:-

1. An emphasis on impressionism and subjectivity in writing (and in visual arts as well); an emphasis on HOW seeing (or reading or perception itself) takes place, rather than on WHAT is perceived. An example of this would be stream-of-consciousness writing.

2. A movement away from the apparent objectivity provided by omniscient third-person narrators, fixed narrative points of view, and clear-cut moral positions. Faulkner's multiply-narrated stories are an example of this aspect of modernism.

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3. A blurring of distinctions between genres, so that poetry seems more documentary (as in T.S. Eliot or E.E. Cummings) and prose seems more poetic (as in Woolf or Joyce).

4. An emphasis on fragmented forms, discontinuous narratives, and random-seeming collages of different materials.

5. A tendency toward reflexivity, or self-consciousness, about the production of the work of art, so that each piece calls attention to its own status as a production, as something constructed and consumed in particular ways.

6. A rejection of elaborate formal aesthetics in favor of minimalist designs (as in the poetry of William Carlos Williams) and a rejection, in large part, of formal aesthetic theories, in favor of spontaneity and discovery in creation.

7. A rejection of the distinction between "high" and "low" or popular culture, both in choice of materials used to produce art and in methods of displaying, distributing, and consuming art.[1]

Postmodernism, like modernism, follows most of these same ideas, rejecting boundaries between high and low forms of art, rejecting rigid genre distinctions, emphasizing pastiche, parody, bricolage, irony, and playfulness. Postmodern art (and thought) favors reflexivity and self-consciousness, fragmentation and discontinuity (especially in narrative structures), ambiguity, simultaneity, and an emphasis on the destructured, decentered, dehumanized subject. But--while postmodernism seems very much like modernism in these ways, it differs from modernism in its attitude toward a lot of these trends. Modernism, for example, tends to present a fragmented view of human subjectivity and history (think of The Wasteland, for instance, or of Woolf's To the Lighthouse), but presents that fragmentation as something tragic, something to be lamented and mourned as a loss.

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Many modernist works try to uphold the idea that works of art can provide the unity, coherence, and meaning which has been lost in most of modern life; art will do what other human institutions fail to do. Postmodernism, in contrast, doesn't lament the idea of fragmentation, provisionality, or incoherence, but rather celebrates that. The world is meaningless? Let's not pretend that art can make meaning then, let's just play with nonsense. Another way of looking at the relation between modernism and postmodernism helps to clarify some of these distinctions.

According to Frederic Jameson, modernism and postmodernism are cultural formations which accompany particular stages of capitalism. Jameson outlines three primary phases of capitalism which dictate particular cultural practices (including what kind of art and literature is produced). The first is market capitalism, which occurred in the eighteenth through the late nineteenth centuries in Western Europe, England, and the United States (and all their spheres of influence). This first phase is associated with particular technological developments, namely, the steam-driven motor, and with a particular kind of aesthetics, namely, realism. The second phase occurred from the late nineteenth century until the mid-twentieth century (about WWII); this phase, monopoly capitalism, is associated with electric and internal combustion motors, and with modernism. The third, the phase we're in now, is multinational or consumer capitalism (with the emphasis placed on marketing, selling, and consuming commodities, not on producing them), associated with nuclear and electronic technologies, and correlated with postmodernism. Like Jameson's characterization of postmodernism in terms of modes of production and technologies, the second facet, or definition, of postmodernism comes more from history and sociology than from literature or art history. This approach defines postmodernism as the name of an entire social formation, or set of social/historical attitudes; more precisely, this

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approach contrasts "postmodernity" with "modernity," rather than "postmodernism" with "modernism."

What's the difference? "Modernism" generally refers to the broad aesthetic movements of the twentieth century; "modernity" refers to a set of philosophical, political, and ethical ideas which provide the basis for the aesthetic aspect of modernism. "Modernity" is older than "modernism;" the label "modern," first articulated in nineteenth-century sociology, was meant to distinguish the present era from the previous one, which was labeled "antiquity." Scholars are always debating when exactly the "modern" period began, and how to distinguish between what is modern and what is not modern; it seems like the modern period starts earlier and earlier every time historians look at it. But generally, the "modern" era is associated with the European Enlightenment, which begins roughly in the middle of the eighteenth century.

Post- modern philosophy is an eclectic and elusive trend of thought. Beginning as a critique of continental philosophy, is was heavily influenced by phenomenology, structure and existentialism. Post- modem philosophy is skeptical of many of the values and basis of analytical philosophy.[2] Post- modern philosophy is closely related to three other movements, which are 20th century philosophy: post structuralism, decentralism and social constructionism.

Post modernism: Post modernism is a term applied to a wide ranging set of development in critical theory, philosophy architecture, art, literature and culture which are generally characterized as emerging from in reaction to modernism.

- Post modernism was originally a reaction to modernism. Largely influenced by the disillusionment induced by the Second World War, post modernism tends to refer to a cultural intellectual or artistic state lacking a clear central hierarchy or organizing

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principles and embodying extreme complexity, contradictions ambiguity, diversity and inter connectedness.[3]

- The term was coined in 1949 to describe dissatisfaction with modern architecture, leading to the post- modern architecture moment. Later, the term was applied to several movements including in art, music and literature. Postmodernism is architecture is marked by the re- emergence of surface ornament, reference to surrounding buildings is urban architecture, historical reference in decorative of man, leading to Auschwitz and Hiroshima.[4]
- Post modernity is the condition of being postmodem (that is in reaction to modern) particularly in reference to postmodern architecture, postmodern art and postmodern literature.
- In philosophy and critical theory post modernity refers to the state or condition of society which exists after modernity.
- According to Lyotard: Modernity is the cultural condition characterized by constant change in the pursuit of progress and Post modernity represents the culmination of this process where constant change has become a status and the notion of progress obsolete.
- Lyotard further argued that various Meta narratives of progress such as positivist science, structuralism and Marxism were defunct as methods of achieving progress.
- The literacy critic Fredric Jameson and Geographer David Harvey have identified post modernity with “late capitalism”, the stage of capitalism following financial

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capitalism. This stage of capitalism is characterized by a high degree of mobility of labour and capital and Harvey called it "time and space composition."

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2. Wikipedia :Article Post Modern Philosophy
3. Post Modernism : A Discussion (ed. Vibha Maurya) P.2
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