POSTMODERNISM AND NEW REALISM: GENRE AND STYLISTIC EXPLORATIONS IN TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY FOREIGN LITERATURE

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Abstract This article examines the relationship between postmodernism and new realism in twenty-first-century foreign literature, focusing on their genre and stylistic characteristics. It analyzes how the principles of postmodernism—such as intertextuality, metafiction, and deconstruction—coexist with the tendencies of new realism, which seeks to portray reality authentically, interpret contemporary social issues, and explore the complexities of human psychology. The study also highlights genre hybridity, artistic experimentation, and stylistic innovation in the works of contemporary foreign writers.

Keywords: postmodernism, new realism, contemporary literature, genre, style, intertextuality, metafiction, literary thought, twenty-first-century literature, foreign novel.

Twenty-first-century world literature has evolved into a complex and multilayered artistic phenomenon. Globalization, the rapid development of information technologies, the expansion of intercultural communication, and the emergence of new socio-political challenges have significantly influenced both the content and form of literature. Consequently, contemporary literature has witnessed the emergence of new aesthetic perspectives and artistic concepts, while traditional literary movements have been reinterpreted from new viewpoints.

Having emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, postmodernism remained one of the dominant literary movements for several decades. This trend is characterized by its rejection of the concept of absolute truth, its reliance on intertextual relationships, and its extensive use of irony, parody, and playfulness. However, with the beginning of the twenty-first century, the need to address real social problems became increasingly significant, leading to the emergence of a new literary tendency known as new realism. This movement is distinguished by its aspiration to portray everyday life authentically while addressing issues such as social inequality, migration, war, environmental crises, and personal identity.

Today, postmodernist and realist principles are no longer regarded as mutually exclusive in contemporary foreign literature. Instead, they increasingly function as complementary literary strategies. Many contemporary writers employ postmodern narrative techniques while simultaneously depicting the realities of modern society. As a result, the boundaries between literary genres and stylistic conventions have become increasingly fluid, giving rise to innovative artistic forms.

Although postmodernism became the dominant literary paradigm at the end of the twentieth century, its meaning and function have undergone significant transformation in the twenty-first century. Contemporary postmodern works are no longer limited to textual playfulness; they also explore the spiritual quests, social concerns, and psychological experiences of modern individuals.

Contemporary authors construct multilayered literary texts through the use of intertextual references, quotations, and allusions, enriching the interpretative possibilities of their works. Metafictional techniques allow the creative process itself to become part of the narrative, thereby transforming readers from passive observers into active interpreters of meaning.

The contemporary evolution of postmodernism is frequently described through the concepts of post-postmodernism or metamodernism. These terms reflect a noticeable shift in literature from irony toward sincerity and from deconstruction toward reconstruction. This transformation demonstrates that contemporary literature seeks not only to question established meanings but also

to reconstruct new forms of human experience, ethical values, and artistic expression in response to the complexities of the twenty-first century.

New Realism and Genre-Stylistic Transformations in Twenty-First-Century Foreign Literature

In the twenty-first century, **new realism** has become one of the most significant trends in contemporary literary discourse. While preserving the traditions of classical realism, this movement seeks to represent modern reality through new aesthetic principles. Representatives of new realism explore the relationship between individuals and society by depicting factual realities, everyday life, and psychological depth. For these writers, the truthful representation of social reality, the portrayal of human destiny, and the artistic investigation of contemporary issues constitute the primary objectives of literary creation.

The principal characteristics of new realism include:

- the authentic representation of reality;
- a strong focus on social issues;
- an in-depth psychological analysis of characters;
- the synthesis of documentary and fictional elements;
- the exploration of the relationship between the individual and society.

This literary tendency is particularly evident in works dealing with migration, war, environmental crises, gender issues, and the consequences of globalization.

One of the defining features of twenty-first-century foreign literature is the increasing dissolution of traditional genre boundaries. Contemporary novels frequently combine elements of historical fiction, fantasy, detective fiction, biography, and documentary literature. Many authors reinterpret historical events through postmodern narrative techniques, while others integrate documentary materials into fictional plots. As a result, innovative artistic forms and experimental genres continue to emerge.

Furthermore, contemporary literature has witnessed the growing popularity of such genres as the autobiographical novel, memoir novel, documentary novel, and **autofiction**. This tendency reflects writers' efforts to merge personal life experiences with artistic imagination. Consequently, elements of postmodernism and new realism often coexist within the same literary work. Such a synthesis expands the aesthetic possibilities of literature and contributes to the emergence of new modes of artistic thinking.

Today, numerous contemporary foreign writers combine postmodernist and realist principles in their creative practice. Although their works often feature complex narrative structures, polyphony, and intertextuality, the central focus remains the human condition and contemporary social reality.

While examining the challenges of an increasingly globalized world, contemporary novelists employ postmodern experimental techniques on the one hand and strive to provide an authentic representation of real life on the other. Therefore, twenty-first-century literature has become not only a space for aesthetic experimentation but also an important means of understanding the spiritual, psychological, and social problems of modern humanity.

The relationship between postmodernism and new realism represents one of the defining characteristics of twenty-first-century foreign literature. The principles of postmodernism—particularly intertextuality, metafiction, and artistic experimentation—interact with the realist aspiration to portray reality truthfully, thereby generating new aesthetic forms and narrative strategies. Contemporary foreign novels demonstrate an active synthesis of genres, stylistic innovation, and artistic experimentation, all of which contribute to the ongoing development of literature. As a result, twenty-first-century literature provides broader opportunities for understanding the complexities of human existence and society, presenting reality from multiple perspectives while fostering new models of artistic expression and literary thought.

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