

Contemporary Aesthetic and Critical Theories and their Impact on Post-modern Cinematic Movements

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Research Summary in English:

At the present time, the aesthetic and critical theories of the cinematic art have taken into consideration other areas of study besides the knowledge of design, such as theological studies, legends, and sociology, in an attempt to integrate these different fields into contemporary critical and aesthetic theories such as structuralism, phenomenology, reception theory and deconstruction. The importance of this research comes from the necessity of integrating these theories of aesthetic into the cinematic art form to get a renewed and creative perspective of the cinematic image.

The term "postmodernism" was used at the end of the nineteenth century, but contemporary features began to form during the 20th century, to establish different aesthetic and critical theories that enrich the cinematography of the film artworks. This research deals with the most important aesthetic theories in by study and analysis. It deals with structuralism, study of signs and symbols, also phenomenology, Which deals with the cinematic image as a mental and emotional phenomenon, and the reception theory, which sets the foundations of social experimental methods to measure the interaction of the viewer with the cinematic image to allow audiences to engage in the process of artistic creativity, and finally deconstruction which formed the discussions about the cinematic medium itself, and paid attention to the individuality of each cinematic text, and its contradictions sometimes, The efforts that made the cinematic image self-conscious in an immensely unprecedented extent.

The research then explores the influence of these theories on postmodern cinematic movements, such as contemporary genre cinema, which combines pastiche and intertextuality, mixing genres to access an innovative vision of the cinematic imagery, and reach an effective communication with the viewer, then the research moves to: feminist cinema, ethnography and post-colonial cinema Which gives a special attention to the social, political and cultural aspects of the cinematic image, as well as (Dogma 95) movement, which prioritize the minimalistic artistic form of cinematography, and the transcendental cinema, that aspires to change the mental state of the viewer during the runtime of the film itself. This research aims to shed light on the most influential movements in the contemporary cinematic form, which is necessarily to affect the work of the cinematographer in innovative and creative ways.

The aim of this research is to define the modern aesthetic and critical theories related to cinema as an artistic medium, to study their impact on the cinematic image through postmodern cinematic movements, shedding some light on the new creative aspects in presenting contemporary cinematography in a manner that enriches meaning in films.

Structuralism:

The study of signals as a way the film conveys its meaning through, by defining symbols and recognizing the internal patterns and general code systems within the visual text. The structural school is not a new field of knowledge, it is a new entrance to older knowledge areas such as linguistics, and psychoanalysis.

This theory realizes what is general and comprehensive, but fails to recognize the specificity of each artistic voice separately. It tries to describe the rules that apply to a whole set of works belonging to a certain genre or artistic category. The shortcomings of the structural approach have led many of its theories to present poststructuralism, which is a method extending from structural analysis, but with a recognition of the individuality of the artist.

Phenomenology:

Studying film as a phenomenon assumes the viewer's openness to the experiment rather than any prior certainty about what he sees. The film experience includes "spectator" as well as "text," a form of reception and analysis that includes an active spectator rather than a passive one. The theory discusses not only the cinematic elements, but the general experience the viewer goes through. In the context of increased interest in television and new media, a renewed interest in phenomenology has risen to study the new forms of presentation such as streaming media services.

Reception Theory:

Reception theory has got its theoretical origins from phenomenology, where there is no way to measure objective cinematic perception beyond self-conscious scale, moving the general audience from the role of the consumer to the rank of partner in the creative process.

Deconstruction:

Deconstruction is closely related to postmodernism, a post-structural strategy for the analysis of texts and works of art, developed by the French philosopher Jacques Derrida in the 1960s. The practitioners of this strategy seek to question the traditional assumptions of "truth" and "right" by dismantling the rhetorical structures within the text, in order to prove that the real concepts that are based in their conflicting and unauthorized relationships. The contradictions within texts can also be observed through all its elements and even its marginal features.

Postmodern Cinema Movements:

Since the end of the 1970s, postmodern cinema has been focusing on form, style, and surface, which represents a gap between it and modernist approach, which is based on a specific, tightly controlled system of signs and symbols. This trend reduces the binary system of receiving or not receiving the movie as intended by its maker. There is a wide space for understanding the film at different levels, some of which even contradicts the vision of the author and director, thus opening the door to multiple visual and deconstructive readings of the film.

Contemporary "genre" cinema:

The traditional definitions of (Genre) is based on the idea that there are special traditions and customs of form that makes a group of films based on subject or aesthetic, postmodernism rejects this grouping and isolates each text as a separate entity in the overall context, but with regarding to "intertextuality", which are the diverse form or content links between particular text and other texts. Each film, according to this idea, exists through its relationship with previous films, and getting its own voice through shared experience.

Feminist cinema:

Interest in the feminist movement since the 19th century has been accompanied by the Romantic movement, shifting from a reformist and revolutionary rights critique of the first decades of the twentieth century to a critique of culture representation from the 1960s to the third millennium. The Feminist Movement is currently focusing on the analysis of many topics such as: understanding the nature of gender equality, stereotyping, and analyzing the roles, experiences and interests of both men and women.

The American cinema is witnessing a new visual wave of great devotion to the feminist vision. One of the most prominent characteristics of this wave is the pride of displaying the female body in ordinary way that do not conform to beauty standards, and marginalize the importance of romantic relationships, so that the female in these works is viewed in the center, and not just a mental image in the mind of a man.

Ethnographic Cinema:

Ethnographic film is defined as one of the non-fiction film theories, dealing with documentaries. It focuses on the historical and contemporary issues of different ethnic groups in a way that carries an anthropological mannerism. These topics include the interest in local customs, folkloric performance practices, and the care of identifying with the cultures, customs, and traditions of others.

Postcolonial Cinema:

The deconstructionist concepts created by French-Algerian origin Jacques Derrida relate to the social and political experience of the minorities and the fixed identity that the colonizer has built on Third World countries in Western culture. It is also related to the ethnographic aspect and paying close attention to different popular cultures. Postcolonialism is one of the most important cultural theories, because it links cinema to the real worlds problems and celebrates the marginalized cultures that have been long treated as "barbaric" or "primitive" by the white man. It defies the idea the West is the source of science, knowledge and creativity.

Dogma 95:

Danish filmmaker Lars von Trier and Thomas Venterberg announced the movement of Dogme 95 at the Centennial Film Festival in France, a radical, rule-based movement founded on the Manifesto statement distributed to the audience. The statement contains ten rules that must be followed by directors who want to create "pure" dogma films, called the Vows of Chasity.

Transcendental cinema:

Transcendental cinema is a theory that tries to go beyond traditional cinema, and aspiring to change the mindset of the viewer by pushing them to reflect in what they're seeing during the film itself.

Results:

The aesthetic and critical theories of the cinematic image take into account other aspects of knowledge as well as design, such as ideological, social and political studies, including several theories that analyze and understand texts.

One of the most important theories is deconstruction, which is dealing with the film in new angles that are different from the classical theories of aesthetic. These theories have produced postmodern cinematic trends such as: new gender cinema, feminist cinema, Ethnography, dogma and the transcendental cinema. Each of these approaches have distinct characteristics that are clearly affecting the film's expressive aspect and sometimes even the technical aspects.

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