



COMMENT ON “POST MODERNIST CRITICAL SPIRIT: ITS CULTURAL INFLUENCE AND IMPACT ON MUSIC AND SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT”

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COMMENT ON “POST MODERNIST CRITICAL SPIRIT: ITS CULTURAL INFLUENCE AND IMPACT ON MUSIC AND SCHOOLS OF THOUGHT”

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The comment to the reviewed paper will expand on the variables in the topic to explore the cultural influence of postmodernism, and its impact on music and various schools of thought (Wang; Wang, 2024).

In the history of philosophy, postmodernism is largely a reaction against dominant western philosophical narratives the intellectual assumptions and values of the modern period in the history of Western philosophy (from the early 17th to the 19th century). In line with Duignan’s (2009) thinking, many postmodern doctrines reject the fundamental philosophical assumptions that emerged during the 18th century Enlightenment, which had become generally accepted, although these ideas were not exclusive to that era. On its emergence, postmodernism has had a significant impact on various aspects of society. This includes music, culture and schools of thought. The most influential and astute critic of philosophical postmodernism is Jürgen Habermas. Through his work on modernity, Habermas engages with postmodernism at the intersection of society and communicative action and provided a comprehensive analysis of its core tenet. As noted by Malpas (2012), he protects the idea of the individual self or consciousness from postmodernist perspective but also supports logical reasoning in inclusive conversations, opposing the unorthodox and experimental approaches of postmodernists. For example, Habermas argues that Nietzsche, Heidegger, Derrida and

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Foucault engage in modern rationality to critique modernism thus contradicting their own arguments.

Angela McRobbie, a feminist scholar, in her book *Postmodernism and Popular Culture* published in (1994) recognizes postmodernism as a revolutionary catalyst, arguing that it gives voice to those who were previously silenced by the dominant, patriarchal, and imperialist narratives of modernism. She further posits that postmodernism has enfranchised an emerging group of intellectuals comprising voices emanating diverse positionalities of difference, including ethnicity, gender, class, sexual preference are characteristic of what she calls the 'new generation of intellectuals.' This group is asymmetrically represented by black, female, and working-class individuals who are redefining the dynamics of philosophical exchange (Mambrol, 2018). The proliferation of diverse voices and experiences has been robustly promoted, fostering a vibrant culture of inclusivity and diversity.

During the 1960s, a wave of innovative composers like Terry Riley, Henryk Górecki, Bradley Joseph, John Adams, Steve Reich, Philip Glass, among some others rejected the perceived elitism and dissonant sound of atonal academic modernism. They advocated for a minimalist and harmonious approach emphasizing simplicity and consonance. Meanwhile radical thinkers like John Cage challenged the very foundations of modernism and subverted the traditional notions of beauty and objectivity to create a more avant-garde and inclusive approach to music.

Brown (2003) posited that the late 20th century experimental academics described Madonna, the American singer as the "embodiment of postmodernity". This classification was grounded in the idea that postmodernism is marked by five key features: fragmentation, de-differentiation, eclectic pastiche, retrospection, and rejection of grand narratives: all of which were seen in Madonna's music and public persona. According to the Christian writer, Graham Cray, Madonna is the most celebrated illustration of postmodernism making her perhaps its most visible representation, (McGregor, 2008) and Martin Amis portrayed her as the most exemplary embodiment of postmodernism worldwide. Olivier Sécardin, a prominent literary critic, also argued that Madonna embodies the essence of postmodernism (River; McCamley, 2020, p. 222).

The effects of postmodernism on music have led to the creation of new genres and subcultures. For example, punk, post-punk, and alternative rock challenged mainstream norms by incorporating Do It Yourself (DIY) ethics and anti-establishment sentiment.

The influence of postmodernism on schools of thought has challenged traditional notions of truth, reality, and deconstruction.

In postmodern thought, values are not fixed or essential, but are subjective and relative, chosen through social and cultural negotiations. It is important to note that

postmodernism dismisses the notion of a shared human nature that could legitimize values. Poorshafei (2009, p. 5), therefore suggests that being a modest and suitable person is deeply connected to specific social, cultural, and historical circumstances.

The postmodernist critical spirit has penetrated various schools of thought across disciplines. In the field of philosophy, postmodernism has influenced movements like deconstructionism and post-structuralism and problematized core Western philosophical concepts. In education, postmodernism has led to a reevaluation of pedagogical practices which encourages the development of innovative, interdisciplinary research methods and approaches. The fields of Critical theory and Cultural Studies have also been shaped by postmodernism resulting in power dynamics, social context, and cultural critique. This fusion of influences has enabled scholars to examine how power is executed and preserved within cultural systems.

The arts have been subject to backlashes against postmodernist ideas and practices. These include objections to the abandonment from conventional beauty and aesthetics, the over-reliance on language to create meaning, a lack of coherence or intelligibility, deviation from clear and established forms, and consistent reliance on dark and negative themes.

This paper is well-detailed. It adequately discussed postmodernism, its positive and negative impact on music, and its impact on schools of thought, however, observed that a major part of the study was dedicated to defining and explaining postmodernism which made it a bit monotonous and cumbersome to read instead of weaving a discussion around the variables. For instance, discussions on the impact of postmodernism on culture were terse.

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