

The Evaluation and Assessment of Modernism

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Abstract : The term "modernism" is at the heart of debates about 20th-century literature and critical theory. Astradur Eysteinnsson argues here that the notion of modernity does not emerge directly from the literature it encompasses but is actually a product of critical practices related to non-traditional literature. By intervening in and relating them to modernist works and contemporary literary theories, Eysteinnsson takes a comprehensive look at the idea of modernity. Eysteinnsson critically examines various expressions of modernism in the rich spectrum of American, British, and European literature, criticism, and theory. He first explored a number of modernist paradigms and found a conflict between modernism's potential for cultural subversion and its relatively conservative status as a formalist project. In turn, he sees these paradigms as interpretations and inventions of literary history. Seen in this way, modernism presents both a historical change in the literary scene and the context of this change. Imbued with the connotations of tradition and modernity, modernity fulfills its primary function. Highlights and defines the complex relationship between history and post-realist literature. Eysteinnsson focuses on how concepts of modernism guide our understanding of literature and literary history and how they influence the evaluation of experimental and 3post realist works in literature and art. He discusses in detail the relationship between modernism and the key terms postmodernism, avant-garde, and realism. In staging a crisis of subject and reference, modernity is not a form of discourse but its subversion, the "other" that may reveal important aspects of our social and linguistic experience in Western culture.

Keywords : literature, modernism, western cultures, postmodernism

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