Myth-Magic Elements in Contemporary Postmodernist Aesthetics

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**Abstract**

Contemporary postmodernist literature presents the functions of myth and magic not merely as artistic devices but also as philosophical and ideological structures. This article links the key principles of postmodern texts—deconstruction, intertextuality, irony, parody, and non-linear temporality—to the role of myth and magic. It is shown that while myth in classical times functioned as an archetype explaining the relationship between cosmos and chaos, postmodernism fragments it, creating new semantic possibilities. Magic, on the other hand, permeates the structure of the text, dissolving the boundaries between reality and fantasy, and transforming the reader into both observer and participant. Drawing on the ideas of theorists such as Derrida, Kristeva, Jameson, and Hutcheon, the analysis reveals that myth and magic in postmodern texts operate simultaneously through processes of degradation and reconstruction. Thus, these elements provide readers with opportunities to discover new meanings not only on aesthetic but also on psychological and philosophical levels. The main mission of myth and magic in postmodern literature is to challenge traditional values, reconstruct them, and engage the reader in an internal dialogue within the text.

**Keywords:** Postmodernism, Myth, Magic, Deconstruction, Intertextuality

**Introduction.**

The literary movement of postmodernism emerged in the second half of the twentieth century as a multifaceted and complex aesthetic-philosophical trend, shaped by the influence of social, political, cultural, and philosophical transformations taking place globally. This movement is often regarded both as a consequence of modernism and simultaneously as a critique directed against it. The system of values established by modernism in literary and cultural life generated interesting tendencies by juxtaposing the past and the present through a nihilistic approach. As a result, a suprastructural system of values began to take shape. In fact, the notion of value within postmodern aesthetics was constructed on the basis of denying the traditional values destabilized by modernism. Whereas modernism maintained a somewhat hesitant position within literary-cultural space, postmodernism rapidly gained traction across a wide sphere, encompassing all domains of art and creative thought. Within this process, a kind of disorderly order could be observed.

Postmodernism did not limit its impact to the literary field alone; it also extended its influence to art, architecture, philosophy, and other branches of the humanities. Overall, certain principles became dominant within the domain of postmodern aesthetics, serving as the foundation and pillars of postmodern thought. The essence of postmodernism is primarily characterized by notions such as decentering, multiplicity, irony, parody, intertextuality, fragmentation, and simulacra. Rejecting traditional narrative structures and classical heroic figures, this movement instead proposed a literary model based on non-linear chronology, fragmented text structures, and the active participation of the reader. Although unconventional narrative structures inherently contain disorder, it is nevertheless impossible to overlook the presence of an inner order within textual organization and interpretation.

**Methods**

The methodology of the article is based primarily on analytical and comparative approaches. First, the theoretical foundations of postmodern aesthetics—drawing on the works of Derrida, Kristeva, Eco, Jameson, and Hutcheon—are established. Then, the functional aspects of myth and magic are comparatively analyzed across classical (Eliade, Campbell, Jung) and postmodern texts. The analytical method is applied to identify the structural, symbolic, and aesthetic functions of myth and magic, while the deconstructive approach is used to demonstrate their fragmentation and reconstruction in postmodern narratives. As a result, the methodological framework provides a multi-layered interpretation that encompasses both literary-theoretical and philosophical dimensions.

**Main part**

The theoretical basis of this movement is rooted in the ideas of postmodern philosophers such as Jean Baudrillard, Jacques Derrida, and Michel Foucault. The emergence of postmodernism is generally linked to the period following the Second World War, particularly in Western societies, where cultural skepticism, ideological void, and the destabilization of traditional values became prevalent. Despite this widely accepted perspective, it is also important to acknowledge the views of intellectuals who rejected this chronological limitation and traced postmodern thought back to earlier periods. Indeed, indeterminate approaches, skepticism, and nihilistic attitudes toward traditional values were evident in European literature of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century. What distinguished the postmodern aesthetic, however, was its greater capacity to exploit these tendencies, to cultivate a mass “void,” and to introduce it to the broader public as an artistic phenomenon—actively defended, preserved, and promoted. By the second half of the twentieth century, such perspectives had entered the focus of literary criticism and scholarship. During this period, writers increasingly began to question the existence of “grand truths” and “universal values.” This questioning gave rise to a new aesthetic paradigm—postmodernism.

Analysis. Postmodernism, as an aesthetic-literary movement, is the most widely employed literary tendency in contemporary literary processes. In terms of its scope, it may be stated that postmodernism is not merely a literary phenomenon, but rather an event of art, culture, creative expression, and intellectual production that has permeated all dimensions of socio-cultural life. Indeed, the adoption of a new value system that emerged as a global cultural-literary phenomenon by Eastern nations—particularly the post-Soviet countries—after the collapse of the Soviet regime, reflected the initial steps of these societies, after seventy years of ideological closure, to engage with world literature and thought. Their encounter with modern and postmodern modes of thinking, and their gradual assimilation of these concepts, soon became evident in Eastern, including Azerbaijani, literature.

Consequently, in post-Soviet countries, efforts to keep pace with world literature and culture transcended the confines of literary discourse and transformed into a broader societal concern. From this perspective, it may be asserted that in Eastern societies postmodernism should not be understood merely as a new literary current, but as the dismantling of traditional social paradigms and the assimilation of a new intellectual orientation. The trajectory of the past thirty years demonstrates that postmodern tendencies in Eastern thought attest unequivocally to the fact that postmodernism is not only a literary event but, more fundamentally, a phenomenon of thought. Through the opportunities afforded by its nihilistic stance, postmodernism encourages the reevaluation, renewal, and reconfiguration of traditional values in accordance with the demands of the contemporary era, thereby fostering a new system of values.

The central question is how postmodern aesthetics regulates these processes, and wherein lies the strength of this literary-philosophical orientation that allows it to intervene in, and be accepted by, the traditional values of entire nations. Examining the fundamental principles of postmodernism—its influence on thought and the “playfulness” it constructs on the path from thought to text—reveals its true power as a phenomenon of intellectual transformation.

From the perspective of literary criteria, postmodernism is distinguished by several defining features:

Intertextuality – explicit or implicit references to other texts within the work;

Metatextuality – the presentation to the reader of the very process of constructing the text and its narrative structure;

Irony and parody – the rendering of serious subjects with ridicule or humor;

The dissolution of boundaries between reality and fiction – blending historical events with artistic imagination;

The reworking of myths and symbols – the deconstruction of classical myths and symbolic systems.

In postmodern literature, the “open” structure of the text renders it accessible to the reader’s interpretation. Thus, the reader is no longer a passive observer but assumes the role of a co-author of the text. Unlike traditional literary plots, the postmodern text draws the reader into the center of a constructed play-element, whereby the writer intervenes in the worldview of the reader, and consequently the social stratum to which the reader belongs. This constitutes one of the key distinctions between postmodernism and earlier literary movements.

Postmodernist literature simultaneously functions as a form that reflects the contradictions of the contemporary age and the complexity of individual experience. What is particularly striking in this literary-aesthetic tendency is its dual approach: the postmodern text both relies upon tradition and deconstructs it. The deconstruction of traditional thought and perspectives compels the reader to reflect, to engage critically, and to reconsider not only their emotions but also the deeper taboos embedded within their memory. Such deconstruction either strips taboos of their value, endows them with new meaning, or at the very least provides substantial stimuli for an alternative approach to tradition.

The deconstruction of traditional values in postmodernism has, at times, provoked harsh reactions. Critics contended that postmodern aesthetics undermined or devalued established traditions. However, time has shown that within the deconstructed text, the reader perceives themselves in alignment with their own worldview; in other words, postmodern thought opens up possibilities for the reader to recognize themselves anew. For instance, Gabriel García Márquez, in One Hundred Years of Solitude, traced the historical genesis of the Colombian people, thereby instilling in society new ways of thinking, showing that the historical evolution of Colombia could not be conceived outside such contours. Traditional historiography, by contrast, often recorded only those components of history it sought to highlight, while elements lying in the background remained unarticulated until addressed through postmodern approaches.

Postmodern thought, by grounding itself in myth-magical realities, brought forth the play-element in depicting the processes of nation-building, the assimilation of values, and the transformation of historical evolution into a phenomenon of collective memory. The deconstructive approach, through the device of “play within play,” frequently conveyed to the reader, sometimes with irony, the subversion of taboos. This, in turn, enables postmodernism to be presented as a literary current that is rich, polyphonic, and capable of generating new perspectives on tradition.

As Nobel laureate and world classic Umberto Eco observes, “Postmodernist literary texts code themselves with mythological symbols, thereby transforming the reader into a participant” (Eco, 1994). Indeed, the central feature of postmodern literature lies precisely here: through the coding of the text and the incorporation of myth-magical elements, the reader is drawn under its spell and transformed into an active figure within the unfolding events. Among the characteristics of postmodern texts that condition binary structures is the strategy of situating the reader between opposites—keeping them within the text’s gravitational field, directing their thoughts, or converting them into a reflective pole at the center of events, thereby creating the figure of the “reader” within the narrative.

As Eco also notes, the codes inscribed for the reader within the text, through the interplay of myth and magic, not only persuade the reader of the text’s internal reality but also ensure readability across temporal layers, simultaneously contributing to historical-typological enlightenment.

Since the second half of the twentieth century, postmodern aesthetics has assumed a dominant position in literature, philosophy, and the arts. One of the defining features of this movement is its challenge to the stability of reality and truth, which it deconstructs and reconstructs through the use of play. The perspective that approaches the matter through the lens of play is particularly intriguing: “In postmodern novels, the rewriting of myth is the play of memory and time” (Hutcheon, 2006). According to Hutcheon, the use of myth-magical elements in postmodern literature not only serves the function of play but also develops through the theses of historical memory and temporality. In this context, the concepts of myth and magic occupy a crucial role in postmodern literature, both in terms of content and form.

The functions of myth and magic in postmodern texts—their symbolic and structural roles, as well as the new possibilities of reinterpretation they provide—reveal the inevitability of approaching perceived reality from alternative perspectives. Campbell argues that “In postmodern art, myths are not merely memories of the past but the contours of the future” (Campbell, 1949). Among the issues emphasized in postmodern aesthetics is Byatt’s view that “Postmodernist writers return to myths in search of answers to the eternal questions of modern humanity” (Byatt, 2000). This raises a critical question: what are these questions within postmodern thought, and how are the expectations addressed in aesthetic discourse?

In fact, as Jameson observes, “In contemporary postmodernist narrative, mythological and magical elements transcend the boundaries of time and space” (Jameson, 2005). Jameson’s insights are particularly compelling, for through the intervention of magical elements into the text, the boundaries of time and space are transgressed, instilling in the reader a reality beyond the visible, dictated by the overarching concern of seeking answers to profound literary questions.

Accordingly, the approach to the subject must be both analytical and comparative: the interrelations between classical mythological perspectives and postmodern approaches open up new interpretative possibilities for the phenomenon of the text, while also highlighting their broader implications for contemporary thought.

In postmodernism, myth and magic appear not merely as visual representational devices but as semantic tools actively participating in the structuring of reality. This approach demonstrates that the inclusion of mythological elements in the postmodern text is considered not only for aesthetic effect but also for the shaping of worldviews. Unlike in the classical era, where myth sought to explain the opposition of cosmos and chaos, within postmodern literature it reflects the multilayered, fragmented, and unstable character of contemporary reality.

From a psychoanalytic perspective, C. G. Jung’s concept of the collective unconscious assumes particular significance. Jung argued that archetypes exist unconsciously in the mind of every individual and influence both behavior and modes of thought. Thus, “Myths, in postmodern texts, play a role in the structuring of both individual and collective consciousness” (Jung, 1964, p. 76). By employing these archetypal codes, postmodern writers transform the text into not only a reflection of individual experience but also a bearer of shared mythological frameworks. In this sense, “Myths in postmodern texts function as the structuring agents of both individual and collective consciousness.”

On the other hand, mythological structures in postmodernism become one of the primary instruments for the deconstruction of reality. Imaginary representations of reality are fragmented, and in their place arise alternative worlds and multilayered fields of meaning. In this regard, John Barth is justified in noting that “In postmodern novels, mythological structures serve as instruments for the deconstruction of reality” (Barth, 1988, p. 62).

Accordingly, the role of myth is not limited to the revival of obsolete traditions; rather, it ensures the inevitability of the text’s deconstructive renewal. As a result, myth and magic in postmodernism serve as gateways to new interpretations of history and reality. The rewriting of the past through mythological structures, the literal deconstruction of historical events, and the creation of alternative meanings constitute one of the central strategies of postmodern literature. This not only opens the reader’s consciousness to new experiences but also deepens and expands the interpretative dimensions of the text.

Eliade emphasizes myth as a primordial and universal structure through which human beings seek to understand their relationship with existence, noting that “The return to myth in postmodern literature is an attempt to recover the meaning lost by modern humanity” (Eliade, 2012). In essence, the meaning that humanity is believed to have lost is not truly absent, but rather a fact obscured or relegated to the background by traditional approaches. This view resonates with Campbell’s mythology of the hero’s journey. In The Hero with a Thousand Faces, Campbell presents the cyclical structure of departure, initiation, and return, which in postmodern novels is disrupted by fragmentation and non-linear sequencing, yet retains its archetypal essence (Campbell, 1949). The author himself observes that “In postmodern art, myths are not merely memories of the past but contours of the future” (Campbell, 1949). This perspective affirms the reality and necessity of the postmodern return to myth and magic within contemporary world literature.

In this context, the reader witnesses the presentation of myth in new formats. For instance, in Calvino’s If on a Winter’s Night a Traveler, the reader is simultaneously both protagonist and observer, while the inner elements of myth consciously take the form of a game (Calvino, 1979). Thus, although postmodernism alters the form of myth, it preserves its functional foundation—fulfilling, in original fashion, the mission of establishing connections between human beings, time, and space. Calvino likewise articulates the role of magic in contemporary texts: “In contemporary narratives, magic dissolves the boundaries between reality and fantasy to create new worlds” (Calvino, 1979).

The necessity of returning to myth in postmodern art, and the incorporation of myth’s essence into aesthetic thought, in turn reinforce the principles of magical realism. Approaching the issue from this perspective, Zamora remarks that “Magical realism, as one of the most influential expressive means of postmodernism, merges myth with reality” (Zamora, 1995). The intervention of myth into the text thus embodies and conveys the very aesthetic and theoretical principles of postmodernism.

One of the key features of postmodern literature is the rejection of the notion of fixed, immutable, and universal meaning. In spiritual literature, mythological structures emerged as stable models that explained a certain reality and systematized human relations with the cosmos, as well as with historical and social processes. However, in postmodern texts, myth no longer fulfills this function and instead participates in the process of deconstruction. In Dissemination, Jacques Derrida points out that “the text does not carry a fixed meaning, and every reading creates new contexts” (Derrida, 1981). This approach also questions the fixed semantic load of expression. In other words, myth in postmodern texts is not the same immutable symbolic code as before; rather, it is a code that is constantly degenerating, fragmenting, and breaking apart across different groups of readers. Based on Derrida’s idea, it can be concluded that the deconstruction of mythological structures in postmodern texts begins in two main directions. For example, in postmodern novels, the hero archetype does not appear in the same way as the “ideal state” concept in classical mythology. More often, it is presented in fragmented, contradictory, and even ironic ways. This occurs as a result of the deconstruction of myth. As Derrida notes, “the deconstruction of the text has become one of the main strategies of postmodern texts” (Derrida, 1981). Through this strategy, the author does not provide the reader with ready-made meanings but instead invites them into an active dialogue with the text. The reader not only accepts the myth but also expands its meaning.

It is clear that in postmodernism, the deconstruction of the text must be carried out in parallel with the unwritten text. This approach shows that postmodern fiction is not a static symbol or merely an expression of the past; rather, it is a dynamic and interactive structure. In other words, myth exists within the text only through the meanings generated by the interaction between the reader and the writer, and this meaning, as Jacques Derrida points out, emerges in the process of deconstruction, where it is described as an element fragmented and reconstructed within the multilayered structure of the text. By emphasizing that “the text has no fixed meaning and each reading creates new contexts” (Derrida, 1981), Derrida demonstrates that in postmodern texts, the stability of the text is lost and constantly placed under question.

This approach unites the classical functions of the genre—such as the structuring of civilization, history, and collective consciousness—in a new form under postmodern conditions. Conversely, Julia Kristeva, in The Powers of Change, asserts that the postmodern theme is both a source and a result (Kristeva, 1982). Here, myth emerges not only as a reflection of the past but also as a contour of the future. Kristeva emphasizes the temporal dynamism of the postmodern myth. It is not only reinterpreted but also influences the construction of future civilizational and literary processes. Therefore, myth in the postmodern text becomes a phenomenon that requires both deconstruction and re-formulation.

An intriguing dialogue arises between Derrida and Kristeva. While Derrida stresses the dissolution of the motif, Kristeva emphasizes its reconstruction. Postmodern texts simultaneously engage in both processes. The myth is fragmented, deconstructed, but at the same time reinterpreted within new contexts, remaining relevant. This dynamic process not only decorates the text but also activates the dialogue between reader and author through the very structure of the text.

This approach can also be observed in the stories of A. S. Byatt. Byatt employs genre elements both as parody and as carriers of serious meaning (Byatt, 2000). Parody allows the reader to approach the moral function of the text with skepticism, while serious interpretation demonstrates that it still retains its relevance. As a result, the deconstruction of the motif becomes a process that increases rather than diminishes its relevance.

This shows that in postmodern texts, the function of the motif does not remain merely as a relic of the past but persists as a creative tool for future readings and semantic possibilities. Therefore, in postmodern texts, the deconstruction and reconstruction of the motif emerge as two complementary strategies. This process aligns perfectly with the fundamental principles of postmodernism—plurality, the absence of a fixed center, and the interpretive role of the reader. Myth is no longer merely a residue of the past; the text itself becomes active, dynamic, and interactive.

In postmodern texts, magic is not presented within the framework of magical realism; rather, it permeates the very structure of the text, playing with reality itself. Todorov explains the entry of magic into the text as a structure of ambiguity—the reader is never certain whether what is happening is real or entirely fantastic. Todorov also emphasizes that “the poetics of magic creates possibilities for multilayered signification in postmodern texts” (Todorov, 1975). This, in turn, generates the ambiguity of reality and fantasy hidden within the layers of multiplicity. Such ambiguity corresponds to the central aesthetics of postmodernism. Zamora and Faris evaluate magical realism as a literary model standing at the boundary between myth and reality (Zamora, 1995).

Here, an interesting dual dynamic emerges: while myth seeks the human connection with existence in the deep layers of time, magic embodies this connection in the very moment when time and space collapse within the text. For instance, in Salman Rushdie’s The Satanic Verses and Gabriel García Márquez’s One Hundred Years of Solitude, magical elements are not merely decorative; they are imbued with cultural and political symbolism.

In Anatomy of Criticism, Frye highlights the universal nature of archetypal structures in literature, stating that “all texts are connected to preceding mythological systems” (Frye, 1995). Postmodern writers either distort these archetypes or re-contextualize them through parody. At this point, Kristeva’s concept of abjection becomes relevant—the “symbolic rebirth of fear and abjection objects from myths within the postmodern text” (Kristeva, 1982). In postmodern novels, the hero archetype often undergoes deformation, diverging from Campbell’s structure to become an ironic or even meaningless wanderer. This demonstrates both the persistence of the need for myth and the variability of its form.

U. Eco emphasizes that the postmodern text regards the reader not as a passive recipient but as an active participant (Eco, 1994). This enables myth to be presented as an interactive code. The reader deciphers mythological symbols to generate meaning within the text, with each code producing a distinct worldview. Hutcheon, in A Theory of Adaptation, describes this process as an “act of rewriting” (Hutcheon, 2006). In other words, the manifestation of myth in the postmodern text takes shape through both the consciousness of the author and the reader. As Jameson notes in Archaeologies of the Future, “the postmodern text both references the past and envisions the possible structure of the future” (Jameson, 2005).

If we take into account Belsey’s assertion that “in postmodernism, myth and magic are the fundamental aesthetic structures that express the indeterminacy of reality” (Belsey, 2002), then shifts in time and space within the literary text become inevitable.

In Man and His Symbols, C.G. Jung emphasizes that the collective unconscious is transmitted to the human subconscious through symbolic structures (Jung, 1964). In classical literary traditions, these structures were regarded as carriers of civilization, historical experience, and collective values. Postmodern literature, however, examines them not only within historical or nostalgic contexts but also through psychological and phenomenological lenses, thereby contributing to the formation of new individual and social identities.

In this approach, myth functions not merely as a cultural symbol of the past but also as a psychological tool structuring the inner world of human consciousness. Consequently, the reader is compelled to analyze not only the aesthetic layers of the text but also its psychological and interpretive dimensions. Kristeva’s concept of abjection is particularly significant in this context: the use of fear and repulsive symbols in myth engages the reader’s inner world, transforming reading into a performative experience (Kristeva, 1982).

In postmodern texts, myth becomes a complex instrument structuring both collective and individual consciousness. In this process, the reader is not a passive observer but an active participant in the interpretation of the text.

In Archaeologies of the Future, Fredric Jameson addresses the postmodern conception of time, noting that “the notion of time in the postmodern text is non-chronological and conditionally unified” (Jameson, 2005). This observation highlights one of the most fundamental features of postmodern literature: the deconstruction of time. In classical and modernist literature, time is often presented chronologically and sequentially; events unfold along a linear trajectory from past to future, creating a specific perspective for the reader and establishing causal relationships.

In postmodern texts, this linear succession is disrupted. Time is instead relative, conditionally unified, and closely tied to spatial and semantic dimensions. According to Jameson, the deconstruction of time in postmodern literature transforms the reader’s experience: events and plot fragments do not conform to a fixed chronological framework but are simultaneously presented from multiple perspectives and temporal layers. This is crucial in shaping the multilayered structure of postmodern texts.

Non-chronological time allows for the parallel processing of myth, history, and reality across multiple strata. Moreover, it fosters an interactive dialogue between the reader and the text: as readers navigate the chronological sequence of events, they simultaneously compare and connect various layers of the text, ultimately discovering new levels of meaning. As Jameson emphasizes in Archaeologies of the Future, postmodern texts are thus not only read but actively read by the reader.

In postmodern novels, past, present, and future events often intertwine. Historical parameters and collective foreign elements are presented in parallel, compelling the reader to correlate them with both social and individual contexts. This perception of time supports the postmodern processes of myth deconstruction and reconstruction: by destabilizing chronological continuity, the meaning of myth is reconfigured in new contexts.

Furthermore, Jameson’s approach underscores that postmodern texts are disruptive not only in terms of content but also in their temporal organization. The presentation of time as linear or unified is closely linked to postmodern principles of pluralism, reader engagement, and deconstruction. Within this framework, myths and magical elements subvert linear temporality, replacing it with a symbolic conception of time. For instance, in Calvino’s novel, the protagonist’s repeated entry into a new text reconstructs the experience of time: the reader does not merely traverse time but experiences it directly. This demonstrates how magical structures function as a poetic mechanism within the text. Consequently, myth and magic in postmodernism serve as central instruments directly tied to the deconstruction of time and space.

In postmodern literature, the fragmentation of metanarratives and the transformation of the text into a game-like situation constitute fundamental aesthetic and conceptual features. In classical literature, metanarratives—grand narratives that unified historical, religious, and civil ideologies—provided readers with a fixed line of meaning. Postmodernism, however, rejects this stability, deconstructs metanarratives, questions them, and consequently establishes an interactive dialogue between the reader and the text.

John Barth elaborates on this idea in The Literature of Replenishment (1988), arguing that the primary strategy of postmodern literature is the deconstruction of metanarratives and the play inherent in expressing the text’s essence (Barth, 1988). This approach demonstrates that postmodern authors do not regard the reader merely as a passive observer of events; rather, they transform the reader into a “living” participant within the text. When the text assumes a playful tone, moral order, sequentiality, and conventional reader expectations are suspended, events proliferate, and the playful element gradually becomes a defining feature of postmodern textuality.

According to Barth, the fragmentation of literary structures and metanarratives enriches the postmodern text both aesthetically and conceptually. The reader is no longer merely a passive observer but an active participant. The text freely expresses its essence, engages in dialogue with the reader, and generates new meanings and interpretations with each reading. Thus, the playfulness of postmodern literature and the disintegration of metanarratives constitute not merely technical strategies but also philosophical and epistemological approaches. Through this methodology, the author reconstructs genre, temporal perception, history, and reader experience, rendering the text dynamic, interactive, and multilayered.

While Barth draws on mythic structures, he often presents them ironically and, frequently, parodically. This approach contributes to the postmodern rewriting of myth, stripping it of sacred status. Myth in this context functions both as a source and as an object—revealed within the text itself and subjected to ironic deconstruction. Barth’s method questions the inherent value of classical myth and expands the possibilities of textual play. Consequently, myth becomes not merely a form but an integral component of narrative play.

A crucial element in the integration of myth within the textual layer is the linguistic factor. In Critical Practice, Catherine Belsey emphasizes the ideological function of language and the distancing of the text from fixed meaning as central features of postmodern narrative. She notes that the multilayered semantics of the text do not establish a definitive interpretive link with the reader. Within this framework, myth and magic, rather than merely serving as structural elements, become tools enabling multiple interpretive possibilities for the reader. According to Belsey, deconstruction entails not only the dismantling of meaning but also the exposure of ideological structures. Accordingly, in postmodern texts, myth and magic function not only as aesthetic devices but also as gateways to the analysis of social and ideological contexts.

**Conclusion**

Based on various theoretical frameworks and authors’ perspectives, it can be argued that in postmodern literature, myth and magic do not function merely as representational devices. They possess profound philosophical, ideological, and structural functions. This approach encapsulates one of the most fundamental characteristics of the postmodern text. Myth in postmodern literature is no longer confined to serving as a historical or civilizational symbol; for the writer, it becomes a tool for inquiry, disruption, and the reconstruction of meaning. Jacques Derrida, by emphasizing the deconstruction of the genre, undermines its stability and opens new interpretive possibilities for the reader (Derrida, 1981). Similarly, Julia Kristeva notes that the postmodern genre functions both as a reflection of the past and as a contour of the future, demonstrating dynamic interactions with time and space (Kristeva, 1982). Therefore, myth in the postmodern text serves simultaneously as a structural and deconstructive instrument.

Magic, in turn, operates as a method that aesthetically frames myth within the postmodern text. Through the use of magic, the author elevates the reader beyond the confines of ordinary reality, presenting events, symbols, and archetypes in extraordinary contexts. This process captivates the reader while engaging them in active interpretation. In this way, magic functions as an instrument in the aesthetic “laboratory” of myth deconstruction.

In the postmodern text, deconstruction and reconstruction, archetype and parody, symbolism and play are interdependent strategic elements. Through deconstruction, traditional symbols and archetypes are fragmented, and their meanings are questioned. Parody provides the reader with both a critical and entertaining perspective, challenging the conventional functions of classical motifs and expressions. Reconstruction interprets fragmented elements within new contexts, rendering the text dynamic and expansive. In this process, the learner is not a passive experiencer but an active interpreter, analyzing myth, magic, and symbols to explore the text’s multiple semantic layers.

This approach aligns seamlessly with the fundamental principles of postmodernism—multiculturalism, the application of non-linear temporality, the fragmentation of metanarratives, and the implementation of play. Consequently, in postmodern literature, myth and magic function not merely as physical instruments but as aesthetic laboratories in which time, the foreign, ideas, and meaning are reconstructed. They integrate the text’s philosophical, ideological, and aesthetic functions, providing the reader with opportunities for interpretation, inquiry, and creative participation. For the postmodern writer, the text is complex, multifaceted, and interactive both as a medium and as an end in itself.

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