

## Ideological Disruptions and the Fragmentation of Identity in Postmodern Narratives

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### Abstract:

Postmodernity imposed a new mode of writing and philosophy over literature. There are no longer the simple psychological or social dilemmas that the characters face. Readers are expected to read novels that present new, challenging ideas that appeal to the human intellect. Postmodern literature tends to deconstruct traditional notions about identity, race, history, and power. It deals with them as fluid, socially constructed concepts rather than fixed fundamental truths. Such a deconstructing challenge is best exemplified in works like *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, *Lost in the Funhouse* by John Barth, "The Mark on the Wall" by Virginia Woolf, and *Disgrace* by J. M. Coetzee. Each of these works proposes new questions through fragmentation, ideological disorientation, unreliability of voices, and dispersion of unified narratives. For example, in *Beloved*, the collapse of borders between the past and present is evident through the haunting presence of Beloved herself, who represents both a childhood and the weight of ancestral trauma. This leads both the characters and readers to confront the trauma of slavery in the present as a lived and unresolved experience rather than a closed historical event. The voice becomes unreliable in "*Lost in the Funhouse*," making it difficult for the reader to establish a stable and singular self. Coetzee in *Disgrace* presents postmodern attitudes towards race, ethical responsibility, and power. Time and space become unstable in Woolf's *The Mark on the Wall*. These postmodern literary works threaten the stable narrative and philosophical lines of traditional works, replacing them with a loss of coherent identities and histories.

**Keywords:** Postmodernism, Ideological Critique, Fragmentation, Identity, Historical Deconstruction, Destabilization.

## الاضطرابات الأيديولوجية وتفتت الهوية في السرديات ما بعد الحداثة

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### الملخص:

فرضت ما بعد الحداثة نمطاً جديداً من الكتابة والفلسفة في الأدب، فلم تعد هناك تلك الإشكالات النفسية أو الاجتماعية البسيطة التي تواجهها الشخصيات. صار القراء اليوم يتعاملون مع روايات تحمل أفكاراً جديدة وتحديات فكرية تستثير العقل الإنساني. يميل الأدب ما بعد الحداثة إلى كسر البنى التقليدية لمفاهيم مثل الهوية والعرق والتاريخ والسلطة، ويسعى إلى تفكيكها وإعادة تشكيلها ضمن أنماط جديدة من التفكير. ويُعد هذا التحدي التفكيكي جلياً في أعمال مثل *محبوبة لتوني موريسون*، و*ضائع في بيت المرح لجون بارث*، و*العلامة على الجدار* لفرجينيا وولف، و*عازر لج. م. كوتسي*. تطرح كل واحدة من هذه الأعمال أسئلة جديدة عبر التفكيك، والاضطراب الأيديولوجي، وعدم موثوقية الأصوات، وتفكك السرديات الموحدة.

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مجلة آداب الكوفة - جامعة الكوفة مرخصة بموجب ترخيص المشاع الإبداعي 4.0 الدولي.



فعلی سبیل المثال، تظلمس رواية محبوبة الحدود بين الماضي والحاضر من خلال تصوير الصدمة العرقية والتفكك التاريخي. وتصبح الأصوات غير موثوقة في ضائع في بيت المرح، مما يصعب على القارئ تحديد الذات المستقرة والموحدة. ويقدم كوتسي في عار مواقف ما بعد الحداثة تجاه العرق والمسؤولية الأخلاقية والسلطة. أما في العلامة على الجدار لولوف، فيغدو الزمان والمكان غير مستقرين. تهدد هذه الأعمال ما بعد الحداثة استقرار السرد والخط الفلسفي التقليدي، ويُستعاض عنها بفقدان للهويات المتماسكة والتواريخ المنسجمة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ما بعد الحداثة، النقد الأيديولوجي، التفكيك، الهوية، التفكيك التاريخي، زعزعة الاستقرار.

## Introduction

Postmodernism chose to tread on a radically different path. It no longer respects the traditional rules of ideological manipulation or the grand narratives of the past. It proposes a fundamental shift in dealing with social and individual identities, race, power, history, characters, voices, and a stable narrative line. The four literary works examined in this paper – *Beloved* by Toni Morrison, *Lost in the Funhouse* by John Barth, "The Mark on the Wall" by Virginia Woolf, and *Disgrace* by J. M. Coetzee - present new readings of traditional themes and ideas through the lenses of ideological critique and postmodern theory. They destabilize linear narrative techniques and critique the conventional ideological framework of the pre-postmodern world.

Toni Morrison, in her *Beloved*, deals with the heavy heritage of slavery that caused traumatized generations due to racial discrimination. It portrays the fragmented identity of African Americans and the dark history they experienced. John Barth delves deeply into the fluidity of identity and voice, reflecting the subjective, unstable nature of postmodern literature. *Lost in the Funhouse* examines the fragmentation caused by postmodern philosophy and how this fragmentation shapes literary works. This is also clearly observed in Woolf's "The Mark on the Wall," which shows the uncertainty of this world and the skepticism that controls the minds. In *Disgrace*, J. M. Coetzee intensifies the postcolonial critique through various methods, primarily by questioning the authority of grand narratives proposed by colonialists. He also explores the disillusionment with post-apartheid political identity. In this novel, the characters struggle to reflect the ideological uncertainties of

the postmodern world, a path already initiated by early theorists, mainly Edward Said.

These literary works share common challenges with traditional literary modes. They pose several critiques to the stable identity and history, challenging the grand narratives that people used to adopt without skepticism. They represent a shift in culture and societal norms. Using various theoretical perspectives, this paper presents a comparative analysis of themes related to identity, race, history, and power.

### **The Death of Character Within the Text: An Eagletonian Analysis of *Beloved***

Having been the second priority for Aristotle, the character is one of the most conflicting elements in literature. Characterization is perceived differently among writers and critics, but what unifies this element is its relatively 'real-life' trait. Bennet and Royle believe that some readers have unrealistic expectations towards the nature of characters in fictional works. They expect to find a realistic life in the characters, and they must be like real people: the character has to have "a plausible name and to say and do things that seem convincingly like the kinds of things people say and do in so-called 'real-life.'" However, Bennet and Royle emphasize that literary characters can be artificial, fragmented, or inconsistent, which poses a real challenge to the conventional notions of realism. They also believe a character must enjoy certain complexities (Bennet & Royle, 2014, p. 65). These characters are often seen as possessing unique qualities and identities. However, we should recognize that their behaviors and motivations are deeply influenced by the ideological and material pressures of the world in which they live. To win sympathy and empathy, the character must also have a pivotal dualism of inside and outside selves, referring to the character's internal conflict and external shape and identity in a literary text (Ibid., p. 70). *Beloved* by Toni Morrison may offer a richer interpretation when analyzed through Terry Eagleton's theoretical framework, which complements Bennett and Royle's insight by emphasizing how



characters acquire new traits shaped not only by narrative expectations but also by cultural, social, and ideological factors.

There have been several speculations about the vague history of the characters in *Beloved*, such as that of Sethe, or the characters' future after the novel closes, including that of *Beloved*. This could be labeled as 'overinterpretation' according to Umberto Eco, because "there are somewhere criteria for limiting interpretation. Otherwise we risk facing a merely linguistic paradox" (Collini, 1992, p. 40). Specific criteria must be established to permit a legitimate analysis of *Beloved* and avoid forced speculation regarding the history and future of its characters. Thus, Eagleton believes that "literary figures have no pre-history... . A text is a pattern of meaning, and patterns of meaning do not lead lives of their own, like snakes or sofas" (Eagleton, 2013, p. 46). It is impossible to speculate a history other than that found in the novel and impose a future upon *Beloved* because a text is not an organic entity that lives beyond its words. It is an illegitimate process to relate any irrelevant event to the lives of the characters beyond the text, in case they have any beyond the text in the first place, because in any literary text, "its characters and events vanish into thin air, since, being fictions, there is nowhere else for them to go" (Ibid, p. 48).

Deliberately or unconsciously, Toni Morrison set the novel's context in 1873. At that time, the modern and postmodern impositions on characterization had not yet become a genuine concern. As Eagleton puts it, "the shift from character as the peculiar mark of an individual to character as the individual himself is bound up with a whole social history. In a word, it belongs to the rise of modern individualism" (Ibid, 49). To rephrase, the pre-modern characterization of literary texts often reflects the collective identity of a whole society. Literary characters, despite having certain peculiar traits, reflected the community and people of the time. The characters in *Beloved*, set in 1873, exhibit pre-modern characteristics of collective identity, serving a more effective purpose in portraying racial discrimination. Eagleton pushes this pre-modern norm to cover contemporary literary texts. He thinks that "there are no qualities

that are peculiar to one person alone... this is because human beings are not fundamentally all that different from each other" (Ibid, 54), defying Bennet and Royle and their concept of 'real-life' mentioned earlier.

Another unique characterization method of Morrison's novel is her reluctance to provide too much information about her characters. There is a sense of ambiguity that surrounds the characters. For example, Denver describes the house as a living presence that haunts the residences' life: "Shivering, Denver approached the house regarding it, as she always did, as a person rather than a structure. A person that wept, sighed, trembled and fell into fits..." (Morrison, 2004, p. 29). There is a reflection of individual psychology. Moreover, it also reveals the cultural and familial ideologies that dominate the present history of the characters. According to Eagleton, "the more information he [writer] provides, the more room he creates for divergent interpretations on the reader's part" (Eagleton, 2013, p. 56). He proposes that literary characters, as real individuals, are not autonomous psychological entities; they are shaped by the material conditions and ideological systems that hegemonize their lives. Therefore, Denver's attachment to Beloved may be perceived and analyzed through a cultural lens. It is not a simple fear or trauma, but a reconstruction of ancestral protection, which is similar in part to a Domovoy figure from Slavic mythology.

However, the reader must be cautious not to feel empathy for the characters but sympathy. Unlike Bennet and Royle, Eagleton believes that empathy deprives a reader of projecting a relatively objective judgment, though it is permissible to feel sympathy for the characters (Ibid., p. 76). Interestingly, the monotonous life of the characters in the novel prevents the readers from feeling empathy, enabling them to deal with them objectively.

Providing a circumstance loaded with supernatural elements, Morrison averted a Marxist pitfall. Marxist critics adhere to 'reflectionism,' a theory that posits the necessity of reflecting reality in literary works. However, Eagleton opposes this theory by describing it as 'inadequate.' "It suggests a passive, mechanistic relationship between

literature and society as though the work... never inherently registered what was happening 'out there' " (Eagleton, 2002, p. 46). In other words, a text must avoid passive, dull reflections of reality and include specific, creative, imaginative intellectual processes, a procedure successfully applied through supernatural elements in the novel.

Thus, in the light of Terry Eagleton, the characterization of Beloved overcomes the pitfalls of modern realism in novels.

### **The Deafening Disbelief: Postmodern Voice in *Lost in the Funhouse***

The less complex a literary idea seems to be, the more difficult it becomes to undergo any theorization. One of these dilemmas is the concept of voice in literature. Bennet and Royle believe that, despite the human voice being one of the most familiar aspects of our daily lives, it also carries some unfamiliarity and uncanniness. As they put it, "Nothing is stranger, or more familiar, than the idea of a voice" (Bennet and Royle, 71). The voice integrates within itself a sense of intimate identity, as when a child speaks to their mother. Yet, this familiarity masks its complexity. Below the surface, the voice reveals far deeper interpretations, defying any stable and singular reading. In other words, it may sometimes become impossible to associate a character's voice with a single, stable interpretation. Though Bennet and Royle are reluctant to admit, this impossibility could be ascribed to ideological processes that the voice undergoes before its final manifestation in the text. In other words, voice is the creation of the ideologies of the writer's historical context: each social phenomenon cooperating with others to produce voice. This point will be encountered in more detail later in this article. To narrow down the article, among several theoreticians in this field, I would plead allegiance to Ronald Barthes, who proposes a unique theoretical framework that fits *Lost in the Funhouse* well.

In *S/Z*, Barthes establishes his comprehensive view of the voice from the outset. He proposes that in "writing...., the five Voices intersect: the Voice of Empirics, the Voice of the Person, the Voice of Science, the



Voice of Truth, the Voice of Symbol" (Barthes, 1974, p. 21), each includes sufficient details to cover all the varieties of voices in literature.

In his *Lost in the Funhouse*, Barth mentions that "Ambroso was "at that awkward age." His voice was high-pitched as a child, as if he had let himself be carried away." The above classification would accurately be applied to this quote. As for the Voice of Empirics, there is a direct analysis of the character's voice, although the narrator portrays it. The person's voice is also apparent when considering Ambroso's high-pitched tone. The Voice of Science is also evident in the narrator's reference to the higher-pitched voice of the character socially, the Voice of Truth in the association of the character's voice with "that awkward age," and the Voice of Symbol in the symbolic significance of this type of high-pitched voice with that awkward age.

Barthes proceeds to argue that sometimes the speaker entirely vanishes, and the reader can no longer recognize them. He believes the Voice dissolves: "Here it is impossible to attribute an origin, a point of view, to the statement." Barthes continues: "In modern texts, the Voices are so treated that any reference is impossible... the language speaks: nothing more" (Barthes, 1974, p. 41). Going hand in hand with Bennet and Royle, Barthes attributes the impossibility of designating one peculiar identity to a character to the nature of modern and postmodern texts, as in the following quote from *Lost in the Funhouse*: "It is as if the author felt it necessary to delete the names for reasons of tact or legal liability" (Barth, 1967, p. 3). Here, the writer intentionally omits some crucial names from the story. Following this strategy, Barthes gives voice to language alone, as places and characters are deprived of stable identity, opposing the expected peculiar identity claimed in the story's inception. The writer here creates a plurality of voices, dissolving individual voices, identities, and borders among the characters — a postmodern feature the writer had already admitted to following.

Barthes offers a distinctive perspective on the reader's voice. He claims that "what we hear, therefore, is the displaced voice which the reader lends, by proxy, to the discourse: the discourse is speaking

according to the reader's interests" (Barthes, 1967, p. 151). According to Barthes, any reader may be the real author of the great classics. The author has broken down the reader's disbelief, inviting him to be a direct and crucial cooperater in penning the story. He has exposed the underlying structure of the story, which is a taboo or forbidden area for readers to explore, yet disclosed by the author as a postmodern feature of story writing.

Voice is purely a product of the author's ideologies. Nothing may ever escape the domination of its time's cultural and political beliefs, either opposing or advocating specific ideas. Voices reflect the social status of the people of the time, as they are a layered mirror of society. As Eagleton proposes, literary attitudes are shaped by the historical, social, and ideological pressures of their time. In other words, literature does not emerge in isolation but evolves in response to the historical and ideological contexts that give birth to the text. Eagleton reflects the broader Marxist school, which views literature as a product of its socio-political context. A related line in the story is that part when the author of the short story entirely detaches himself from the story and eradicates the required traditional suspension of disbelief: "So far, there's been no real dialogue, very little sensory detail, and nothing in the way of them," (Ibid) the story commenting on itself. This detachment and awareness of the writing process became the audience's demand when writing the short story. This trend became predominant after Samuel Beckett exposed his discontinuous, loose, disorderly literature, upon which Barthes claimed to build his own.

Then, the concept of voice has undergone heated debates in the history of modern and postmodern literary criticism, among which Ronald Bathes seems to be more satisfactory, despite his juxtaposing perspectives. This contradiction could be justified according to the chaotic nature of voice, as Bennet and Royle put it: "Literature encourages us to think about the idea that there may be no such thing as a voice, a single unified voice" (Bennet and Royle: 78).



## Evolution of Hatred: Postmodern Racism in *Disgrace*

In *Civilization and Its Discontents*, Freud believes Christ's teaching of the neighbor is unrealistic. "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). This denotes the devastation of theology and the death of god on the cross. It is proof of nature's victory over all other ideologies. The selfish gene and xenophobic nature have always been prevalent throughout history. This hatred of foreigners is more apparent in the case of people of color. As Bennet and Royle argue, "questions of race, slavery, and racial violence are everywhere and that they pervade even the most apparently 'innocent' literary works" (Bennet and Royle, 2014: 234). This racial difference is explored through a politically correct lens in *Disgrace* by J. M. Coetzee.

In *Disgrace*, Coetzee has transcended the traditional way of discussing racism. Being a white male, he has adopted a postmodern reading of that ideology to escape any direct accusation of xenophobic discourse. Postmodernist discussion of racial differences "had been stripped of the artifices of modernist certainty" (Sandhu: 210). This discussion remains slippery without being naïve in a traditional sense to fall into the accusation trap. There is always an excuse and alternative interpretations in the novel. In the novel, despite David Lurie's problematic sexual activities, he is finally depicted as a victim of the barbarian black Africans who raped his daughter and destroyed his farm. On the surface, he is displayed as an arrogant, sexually aggressive, and mentally unstable person, yet beyond the exterior layers, he is perceived as a victim of African savagery.

In her postmodern reading of racism, Sandhu argues that authors like Coetzee, in *Disgrace*, often reflect their ethical positions through narrative. She proposes that postmodernism reshapes how morality and moral issues are addressed through emphasizing individual responsibility and social and historical ideologies. Sandhu notes that "all that postmodernism has done is to make each of us individually responsible for our actions (Sandhu, p. 210). In the novel, the main character, the white Lurie, is "battling against the confusing array of choices and

dilemmas that a globalized world brings” Lurie is torn between choices, including his daughter, farm, profession, pride, and life. He is the victim of his indecisiveness. However, upon closer examination of the context, one may discover the compelling circumstances that compel him to fall into such tragedies. The regressive, savage black society is always to blame for the fall of the white male. Though his postmodern condition gives him no certainty, he remains the prey of the life of the ‘survival of the fittest,’ and his whiteness is doomed to perish in the black environment.

Moreover, for feminist commentators, postmodernism “calls gender... into question” (Sandhu: 211). There is no place for certainty when it comes to females. Most obviously, in the novel, Lurie’s lesbian daughter, Lucy, is confusingly unsure about her identity. Despite her homosexual orientation, she insists on keeping the fetus after being raped on the farm by an anonymous black male. Traditionally, homosexual females tend to abandon any memory of similar situations. However, this postmodern trait has transgressed all identity borders.

Another disturbing limitation of the postmodern reading of ethnicities is that of a postmodern individual who, like Lurie, is not a victim of “economic or material deprivation but is a psychic alienation” (Sandhu: 212). Lurie is mentally alienated, and this detachment is the final result of the oppressive black surroundings. He is twice divorced, fired from his job, attacked by a group of blacks, and finally, waiting for his demise, alienated in that black continent. The borders of certainty have been stepped upon to stabilize an all-direction accusation instead.

In *Disgrace*, Coetzee delves deep into the problematic themes of race, power, and postcolonial anxiety in post-apartheid Africa. Some critics believe that specific elements of the narrative may pose undesired hierarchical structures of colonial discourse. Yet, it remains a site of debate whether this constitutes a form of traditional Orientalism. As a white South African writer and despite the overwhelming sensitivity towards his identity, Coetzee can also be read as a self-reflexive critique of white liberalism and its hegemonic limitations. Coetzee no longer

adopts the traditional Orientalism, which “is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident’” (Said, p. 2). The writer portrays the main character in a corrupt manner, moving the reader away from the traditional perception of a chaste, civilized white male. Later, he manipulates the plot so that the reader tends to blame the black society for Lurie’s misfortunes.

Thus, the issue of racial difference and xenophobia is a narcissistic matter. It is more about loving oneself. The hierarchy of hatred starts with the people of color, and if none are found around, this hatred moves to the people of another country, then to another city, block, neighbor, and finally to his brother. If one is alone, they begin to hate their past self. It is more about human nature to hate rather than falling into the trap of racial difference.

### **The Game of Illegitimization: New-Historical Conflicts of *The Lagoon***

Almost all historical phases deny the favor of the preceding stage of history in the latter's production. In other words, history often hides behind a layer of denial, striving to appear autonomous. This, of course, has resulted in an unlimited set of complexities to understand history. Thus, a group of unrelated critics has proposed a new field of inquiry labeled as 'new-historicism' for a better understanding of history, particularly literature, by Stephen Greenblatt. Literary texts are intertwined with other discourses and rhetorical structures; they are part of a history that is still being (re)written (Bennett and Royle, 117). Literature cannot be understood in any way without its historical context and the way the audience interprets it. The complexity also lies in the fact that this historical context is constantly being rewritten, concluding that there is no fixed version of history or literary interpretation. I will apply it to *The Lagoon* by Joseph Conrad for a better understanding of the theory.



*The Lagoon* does not surrender to interpretation without undergoing heated debates concerning its publication in 1897 and the way English readers perceived it. First, we should notice that the text was written for the English audience, disregarding any Eastern reader, depending on certain clues: first, Conrad presupposes that elopement is a predominant cultural aspect in the Orient, while one hardly finds any similar case in reality; second, Eastern chivalry does not allow one to betray his brother for the sake of a female, since a woman is always considered an inferior creature in the patriarchal East. Besides other clues, one may observe Conrad's target in his short story. Once admitted, this consequently leads to other contextual presumptions.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the time of the story's publication, it was considered the peak of Oriental studies. One of the for-granted assumptions among Western intellectuals and writers, such as Conrad, was the Hegelian master-slave relationship. Franz Fanon rephrases it as follows: an enslaved person strives to break free from the master's domination, but ultimately, the enslaved person returns to their enslaver, as they cannot form an independent identity (Gandhi: 20-1). Conrad probably unconsciously takes this relationship for granted here, and the slave (Arsat) is obliged to return to his white master (Tuan, equivalent of Lord or Sir) to recount his story. In other words, Arsat seeks legitimacy from his master to gain a stable identity by sharing his story. This is no strange fact to Conrad's white readers.

While reading the short story, one senses a kind of superiority hovering above Tuan. As a white man, he travels to the East and leaves without making a real contribution to solving the condition of Arsat. Typically, the narrators exercise power over the listeners, but here, when the orientalist Tuan leaves Arsat, Conrad reverses this perception. Antonio Gramsci, thus, believes that "political society or the state, which corresponds to the function of 'hegemony' which the ruling class exercises over the whole society..." (Gramsci: 124). Here, Tuan represents the state that exercises hegemony over the marginalized Arsat

or the Orient. Historically, reading was part of the cultural features of Conrad's readers.

Another Orientalist ideology that underlies the narratological structure of the short story is that we read the story from Tuan's perspective. In this respect, Michel Foucault argues that "truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power... . Each society has its regime of truth... the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true" (Foucault: 132). Having been represented as the state, Tuan carries a set of political beliefs, which shape his understanding of truth and influence his interpretation of the story. Since we read the story from the perspective of the white Tuan, we then observe the Western contextual and cultural perspectives reflected in the short story.

Furthermore, Francesco Gabrieli pushes this observation to its extreme, arguing frankly that the above "Orientalism has been respectively an aspect of Enlightenment and Romanticism... going through the entire evolution of Western culture" (Gabrieli: 128). To rephrase, the methodology of the short story represents Western culture, opening a new gate in the historical interpretation of the short story, as it encompasses the entire cultural heritage of the West. The superiority of Tuan is a cultural norm in Conrad's time. It is part of the identity of Conrad's audience.

Contextually speaking, Tuan's trip to Indonesia was part of his civilizing mission to the Orient, as seen in the West. David Kopf convincingly claims that "without orientalist cultural policy, we would not have had the significant contributions to the fields of Indian philology, archeology, and history" (Kopf: 500). Tuan's intrusion is seen as a favor to be grateful for. Conrad's readers expect Arsat to kneel before Tuan as a sign of respect for the salvation he brought.

However, as a counter-narrative, there is a Western minority that defies this bright image of Orientalism. Edward Said believes that the ideology of Orientalism, as in *The Lagoon*, is only a matter of essentialization. It is, moreover, used as a tool for imperialism. Said has

put the ideology adopted by Conrad as a dehumanization mission of the Easterners.

Here, one may become lost in the new historical dilemma amid various contextual reflections of the time of *The Lagoon*. The most appropriate historical method in such cases might be 'hermeneutics.' Hermeneutically speaking, *The Lagoon* offers specific interpretations tailored to the reader's time and context, thereby detaching the short story from its original production period.

## **Conclusion**

Postmodern literature questioned the traditional narratives, including religion, morality, Marxism, and all the for-granted discourses. It sought to defy any certainty. This skeptical method incorporated various philosophical, social, and literary concepts. Narrative, identity, history, and ideology fell victim to this reaping machine of stable thoughts. It sought to deconstruct stable literary and philosophical conventions and to engage readers with a more complex, fragmented, and disorienting narrative. They resist simple understanding and interpretation. This paper analyzes postmodern skepticism through an examination of *Beloved*, *Lost in the Funhouse*, *The Mark on the Wall*, and *Disgrace*. These literary works blur psychological, historical, and identity borders. They are no longer reliable in their writers' claims since thoughts and ideas are fluid. This postmodern ambiguity is successfully portrayed in these works.

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