Name

Lecturer

Course

Date

History of the supernatural Literature

Literature is a form of art that captures the human aspects of the human life through beautiful and articulate expressions. It characterized by its permanence, the tendency to outlive the authors. There are numerous genres of literature; however focus is emphasized on supernatural literature. The style entails utilization of extraordinary situations to explain the inner fears and emotions of the world. According to Cavalier, the genre explores the physiological aspects of the human life (Cavalier, 1995npg). The sentiments echoed by Aristotle, who stated that: “Literature is more serious in explaining philosophy than history” (Cavalier, 1995npg) Supernatural literature as a genre receives the most praises in its ability to stir imagination among individuals.

Exploration of literature requires an understanding of the distinct characteristics it poses as compared to other genres. Understanding the traits of the writing allows more enjoyment of the artistic work, a fact emphasized by one of the greatest writers of supernatural literature, Regor Ascham. He stated that to achieve a child’s interest in learning one should not begin with what the child dislikes (Cavalier, 1995npg). Therefore, a study of the history of literature and particular the weird genre elevates our understanding of the beautiful artistic work.

The document thus explores the development of supernatural literature from the prehistoric times to the present day. It evaluates the changes that have occurred to the genre with the passage of time and how the ancient writers have influenced the current forms of supernatural literature. Additionally, the document reveals the most influential authors who contributed to the growth of the genre. It briefly evaluates the works that have played a critical factor in the evolution of supernatural literature.

Characteristics of history

The inherent nature of all literary work is their expressive language. All the genres of literature can capture elements of the human life that a contemporary individual may not be able to identify. The supernatural genre also possesses this trait a fact evidenced by the oldest poem of all times, “Beowulf”. However, it captures the extraordinary and imaginative situations which can stir the inherent emotion of fear that exists in all human beings.

Correspondingly, literature is known to have a very long lifespan. Evidenced by works that belong to the prehistoric times and whose influence still felt today. Literature is also highly suggestive; there is always an underlying message that the author aims at putting across to the clients. In this case, supernatural literature was developed to address the human fear of the mystic. It addressed issues such as cults, devil worship and other philosophical aspects of the human life. It was thus popularly known as the weird genre.

The vivid description of horrendous situations instills fear of the unknown in the readers. The question of how darksome works gained popularity among the scholar crowds still ranks in the mind of many people. Answering this question offers essential benefits to the readers and inherently guarantees an increased audience for this kind of work. It is important to note that supernatural genre has experienced an exceptional situation of misunderstanding among many people which has led to fewer publications of works in the recent times (Lovecraft, 1945 pg 75). Achievement of understanding thus necessitates a rigorous trace of the genres origin through the ancient times, Anglo-Saxon period, Victorian times to the present day.

Development of Supernatural Literature

The mainstream literature developed in the ancient times through propagations of folks and sagas by immigrants to Europe. An evaluation of the prehistoric times reveals that the sagas involved in this period were more focused on wars. They emphasized more the need for remembrance of the dead and bestowed praises on the living (Cavalier, 1945 npg). It is important to note that poetry formed the primary foundation of establishing literature to the ancient periods. A union between the Scots and other immigrants led to the development of the Anglo-Saxon period. The Anglo-Saxon period saw the initiation of out of the ordinary elements of the prose form of narrations that were popular in this times (Joshi & Sunand, 2006 npg). The occurrence probably occurred due to the introduction of Christianity into the ways people’s ways of life.

The earliest prose work to express supernatural elements was the English poem “Beowulf’ which was classified as belonging to the pagan division of literature since an immigrant penned it. Christianity research included poems such as ‘The widsmith’. The Anglo-Saxon period gave way to the Elizabethan era. In this period, an increase of the rare elements was more pronounced. The works of renowned artists encompassed spiritual aspects such as magic and horrendous description of the environment (Ascari, 2007npg). They comprise works found in Shakespeare’s epics such as “Hamlet” and magic in the play “Macbeth.” The rest of the western world also included traces of mystery in their works; an example is the renowned Italian writer Dante, who gave a horrendous description of a journey to hell in his epic, ‘The Inferno’. During the prehistoric times and the Elizabethan error supernatural literature adopted a subtle message, this changed in the eighteenth century.

The eighteenth century witnessed more pronounced balladry horror in literature. It was the period that experienced growth of the gothic school of literature. It was characterized by vivid descriptions of terror and mystery in novels, thus also referred to as gothic novel era. Horace Walpole’s ‘Castle of Otranto’ provided the cosmic terror that influenced the growth of mystic stories among the writers. The rise of writers was due to the remarkable success of Walpole’s book despite its subtlety in describing nerve chilling error. Numerous authors capitalized on the demand for supernatural works, and there was a significant publication of chapbooks which were common among the ignorant class of people (Lovecraft, 1945). Iconic writers in this period include Americas Poe, the most influential gothic writer in America. Others in the list include Charles Brockden, Mrs. Ann Radcliffe. However, these writers were accused of damaging the horrific touch of their stories by offering numerous natural explanation (Lovecraft, 1945). The period declined with the publications of Charles Roberts work ‘The fatal revenge’ in 1807. The Gothic era was the most significant period of the supernatural literature. It gave way to inclusion of celestial sighting stories and zombies into the world of fantasy.

Supernatural Literature in modern times

‘Frankenstein’ by Francis Barnette daughter forms the basis in which the nineteenth-century horror stories were created. The early 1900s had a noticeable lack of fabulous work. End of the cold war gave rise to supernatural stories that entailed to celestial sightings. The literature in this period fueled by the constant fear of spying among nations that had locked horns during the World War I, II, and the cold war. There was also a constant fear and believe of alien lives; beliefs led to an unusual flight that instigated the science fiction nature of supernatural literature (Joshi & Sunand, 2006 pg 76).

In the 1970’s adoptions of zombies and vampires in the storyline took the educated population by storm. The stories are set to reflect actual situations occurring in the real society Notable works include the ‘Walking Dead,' ‘Zombie Apocalypse ‘among other notable supernatural literature works. The zombie movies have received a broad endorsement in the big screen movie through the adoption of books for films (Joshi &Sunand, 2006pg 57). These have led to the popularity of the zombie culture evidenced by the success of the movie series “The walking dead” in the twentieth century. The book walking dead have been adopted to encompass movies and computer games.

The current popularity of supernatural literature, reveals how the genre has influenced the modern society by offering a mirror through which people can learn about consequences of their actions. An example is the ‘Walking Dead’ whose theme teach the adverse effects of environmental degradation.

References

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