Postmodernism and the Manifestation of Deride an Deconstruction in Barthelme's ''the Glass Mountain''

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Abstract

The present article aims at critical study of Barthelme`s ''The Glass mountain''. The story under study is considered as one of the foundation of American postmodern fiction. Philosophically speaking, the paper argues that Barthelme`s ''The Glass mountain is the manifestation, vindication and declaration of Deride deconstruction. To take the argument further, at the center of deconstruction is the belief that 'truth' or 'reality' is provisional or relative; thus, the story is aimed at establishing the basic principles of deconstruction. It is also obvious that absurdity, fragmentation, illogical narration found in the story is clearly to vindicate deconstruction's notion that flux, instability, inconsistency are inevitable in any given structure. The paper, however, does not concern with the content of the text, rather, the focus is on the philosophical angle, with emphasis on showing the relationship between the text's view of reality and deconstruction's notion of 'deference'. While engaging in this critical study, deconstruction as a literary theory will be employed.

Keywords: postmodernism, Derrida, deconstruction, Barthelme and ''The Glass mountain''

Introduction

The present article is an attempt to study Barthelme's ''The Glass mountain from deconstructive perspective. In particular, it aims at highlighting the relationship between postmodernism and deconstruction, by showing how Deride deconstruction influences postmodernism as a literary cultural movement. Thus, the paper argues that Barthelme's ''The Glass mountain'' as postmodern fiction is greatly influenced by postmodern fiction; the present article is an attempt to study Barthelme's ''The Glass mountain'' from deconstructive perspective. Technically, it serves as the commentary or explanation on Deride and deconstruction. Literary critics have conducted a lot of researches on Barthelme's fiction, particularly in relation to post structuralism. For instance, Mccaffery (1979), in an article entitled: '' Meaning and Non-meaning in Barthelme's Fictions'', the author proposes two ways of approaching Barthelme's fictions.

The first one is ''Theory of meaning'' which suggests that Barthelme's fictions unlike popular belief, could stand to reflect social reality or to mean something; the second one is '' Theory of Non-meaning or Art as object'', this, suggests that Barthelme's fictions, like deconstruction, stand for nothing, ''decentering'' or ''deference'' is the major concern. Also, Lord (1987), dedicated a chapter in his dissertation entitled: ''Barthelme's metafiction as commentary on post structuralism'', in this piece, the author has extensively discussed the relationship between Barthelme's fiction and deconstruction, by showing how the former serves as commentary on the later. Mohammadi (2013), also attempts a deconstructive study of Barthelme's ''Snow white'', the author has demonstrated the unreliable nature of language, as the characters engage in searching of their identity by relying on language, what they achieve at the end is '' the world of nothing'' or '' absurd world''.

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In the light of the above situated literatures, the present article makes an attempt to engage in practical deconstructive study of Barthelme's ''The Glass mountain'' in order to add in the existing literature. In the present study then, after reviewing the concept of postmodernism, deconstruction, deconstructive analysis of '' The Glass mountain'' will be highlighted.

Postmodernism

There is a persistent disagreement among literary historians on what is to be conceived as ''postmodernism''. In view of this, Thomas Docherty upholds the view that '' although the term 'postmodern' has become one of the insistently used with a great deal of imprecision'' (Docherty 1993: Xiii). (Choudhury: 2013, p. 303) Considering the fluid nature of the term postmodernism; and the range of areas its covers, it has no any concrete or stable structure which denotes its presence. Thus, its contextual application is important. From intellectual perspective, the term is linked with the popular critical theory of the twentieth century in France; this movement in the 1960s attempted to question most of the assumptions that people ordinarily cherished and taken for granted. There was serious concern among thinkers with regard to the how people view reality; ultimate reality or definable structure has been put in to serious questioning. Thinkers like Nietzsche with his philosophical writings helped in criticizing what before, has been taken for granted or accepted as ''truth''. Also important in this intellectual journey were the works of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault which seriously changed people's perception of reality. On this, Choudhury (2013), opines that

Intellectually, postmodernism has been associated With French critical theory of the twentieth century Which in the 1960s sought to revise many of the Assumptions that were commonly accepted and Taken for granted. The first aspect in this intellectual Interrogation relates to the challenging of the 'Foundational' (assumptions based on solid foundations) Nature of many belief systems. These anti-foundational – -perspectives of viewing 'reality' destabilized the concrete Ideas that had been unquestioningly accepted. The theoretical Framework of the French intellectuals in the 1960s, however, was informed by the philosophical heritage of some thinkers like Nietzsche, Who has commented on the impossibility of certainty in the nineteenth Century.

Having seen how philosophic writings of the above mentioned thinkers, and their influence on the emergence of postmodern philosophy, we are bound to relate this to the sudden change in'' narratology '', especially in postmodern fiction. This means that foundations of traditional assumptions were questioned; new way of seeing reality has been adopted. Thus, authors seized in using what Choudhurty termed '' grand narrative'' (a narrative that totalized everything within its purview) was challenged and postmodernists claimed that the fragments are more important than the whole and also that it is never possible to view the whole as such'' (ibid). In the light of this, language is unreliable, in conceiving reality; reality itself could only be provisional or relative. Meaning is then constantly suspended. Postmodernism in this sense, is related to post structuralism. The idea of whole is no longer obtainable in the postmodern world. Any attempt to fix meaning in any given structure, leads only to instability, flux and inconsistency. This implies that both postmodernism and deconstruction provide people with freedom to view things from different perspectives. On this, Choudhury (2013), opines that:

It is one of the common places of postmodernism To valorize the variety of perspectives instead of Privileging just the dominant, in this sense, postmodern-ism is democratizing process and is related to the deconstruction of the dominant central principle governing any Structure. The movement away from a foundational or Central thesis as the only organizing principle of reality Is closely associated with deconstruction. The term 'deconstruction' was used by Jacques Derrida to show That inconsistencies persist in any given structure, Irrespective of whether they are immediately perceived Or not (ibid) (p. 304).

To further describe the nature of postmodernism, Baldick (2000), opines that postmodernism is '' a disputed term that has occupied much recent debate about contemporary culture since the early 1980s. In its simplest and least satisfactory sense it refers generally to the phase of 20th-century western culture that succeeded the reign of high modernism, thus indicating the products of the ' space age' after some time in the 1950s. On the other hand, the term is notoriously ambiguous, implying either that modernism has been superseded or that it has continued into a new phase'' (Baldick: 2000), This means that postmodernism could be termed as the highest stage of modernism, or viewed as simply continuation of modernism. Similarly, there is no distinctive area of departure, or demarcation between modernism and postmodernism. Thus, postmodernism emerged at a time when modernism reached its peak.

Many postulations emerged on the exact date for the emergence of postmodernism, especially in the United States. Some are of the view that postmodernism emerged on the day John Kennedy died; the day has psychological impact on the American people. Their view of the world has drastically changed; American people turned pessimist. Mc Caffery (1986), opines that '' November, 22, 1963 (the day John Kennedy died) as the day postmodernism was officially ushered in- at least in the United states- since that was the day that symbolically signaled the end of certain verities and assurances that had helped shape our notion of fiction should be''.

Moreover, postmodernism as Khu called it, ''counter-culture'' or 'Cultural Revolution that appeared in the 60s. At its start, the term covers architecture, dance, music, that beyond or different from modern arts, architecture, music etc. On the other hand, McHale (1987), has opined that '' postmodernism? The term does not even make sense. For it, 'modern' means 'pertaining to the present', then, post-modern' can only mean 'pertaining to the future and in that case what could postmodernist fiction be except fiction that has not yet been written''. Let us look at how critics differ in conceptualizing the meaning of the term: John Garddiner says '' postmodernism in fact means new! Improved! Ghnitine Rook-Rose says '' it merely means moderner (most-modernism), Frank Kernode (post-modernism) new modernists'' (ibid). The above definitions given by different critics reflect in one way or the other the context through which the term is applied. Ilhab Hassan tries to explain the term from morphological angle. For this, he spells the word as POST moder NISM, the implication of both prefix and suffix is explained. Mc Hale (1987), opines:

This ISM does double duty. It announces that the referent here is not merely a Chronological division but an organized system- a poetics, in fact, while at the same time properly identifying what exactly it is that postmodernism is post. Postmodernism is not post modern, whatever that might mean, but postmodernism; It does not come after the present (a solecism), but after the modernist movement. Thus, the term postmodernism if we take it literally enough, a letter, signifies a Poetics, which is the successor or possibly a reaction against, the poetics of early Twentieth century modernism, and not some hypothetical writing of the future. McHale goes on: AS for the prefix POST, here I want to emphasize the element of logical and historical Consequence rather than sheer temporal posteriori. Postmodernism follows from Modernism in some sense, more than it follows after modernism (ibid)

Going by the above postulations by different critics, It is safe to say that postmodernism is not only continuation of modernism but also reaction against it. It may also mean after, beyond or even successor of modernism. There is persistent disagreement on the factors which influenced postmodernism. Khu(2003), opines that '' it is not exaggerated to say that postmodernism is the result of the influences from modern philosophy, modern linguistics, modern science, modern technology, modern psychology, modern aesthetics, the counter culture in the 1980s. In a sense, Husserl, Heidegger, Gadamer, Satre, Wittgenstein, Saussure, Lacan, Einsten, Godel, Plank, Heisenberg, Borges and Robbe- Grillet- all play a part in the breeding of postmodernism'' We acknowledge the contribution of science and technology before the 1960s, on the postmodernist writers, particularly with the emergence of cinema and television.

McCaffery (1986), opines that '' it is probably not accident that postmodern experimentalists were the first generation of writers who grew up immersed in television, or that many of these writers were as saturated with the cinema as the forefathers had been with literature. The specific influences of television and the movies on postmodern fiction are diffuse, generalized, difficult to pinpoint, but obviously an awareness of the process through which a movie is presented in its cutting, its use of montage and juxtaposition, its reliance on close-ups, tracking shots, and other technical devices is like to create some deeply rooted efforts on writers when they sit down at their collective typewriters'' Some critics uphold the view that modernism is the backbone of postmodernism; in other words, the highest stage of modernism is considered as the starting point of postmodernism.

This poses the following questions:

Who is modernist writer?
Who is postmodernist writer?
What are the areas of divergence between modern and postmodern hero?

Though the above questions seem superficial, providing critical answers to the questions will unveil some information that will help in understanding of the two terms. Renowned critic McCaffery(1986), offers his opinion as follows:

Much of the groundwork of the so-called postmodern aesthetic revolution Had already been established earlier in this century in such areas as the Theoretical work being done in philosophy and science: the innovations Made in painting (the rejection of nemesis and fixed point perspective, the Emphasis on collage, self-exploration, abstract expressionism, and so on in Theater in the works of Pirandello, Brecht, Beckett, Genet, even Thorton Wilder; the increasing prominence of photography, the cinema and Eventually television, which cooped certain alternatives for writers While opening of other areas of emphasis. In addition, if one looks carefully Enough, there were many modernist literary figures who had called For a complete overhaul of the notion of representation in fiction.

It is a commonplace to note that '' Tristram shandy'' is a thorough   Postmodern work in every respect but the period in which it is written, And there are dozens of other examples of authors who explored many Of the same avenues of experimentalism those postmodern writers were To take: for instance, the surreal, mechanically produced constructions of Raymond Roussel: the work of Alfred Jerry, with its black humor, its Obscenity, its confounding of fact, fiction, and autobiography, its general Sense of play and formal outrageousness; Andre Gide's '' The Counter feiters'', With its self-reflexiveness and self-commentary; Franz Kafka's matter of fact Surrealistic presentation of the self and its relationship to society, (significantly, Kafka's impact on American writing was not strong until the 1950s);

William Faulkner, with his multiple narrators and competing truths, and whose voice is so Insistently foregrounding throughout his fiction as to obliterate any real sense that That he is transcribing anything but his own consciousness; and, looming over the entire, Literary landscape, is the figure of James of Joyce,, the Dead Father of postmodern fiction Who must be dealt with, slain, the pieces of his genius ritually eaten and digested (ibid p.xv.)

M. H. Abrams (2010), also postulates that '' postmodernism involves not only a continuation, sometimes carried to an extreme, of the counter traditional experiments of modernism, but also diverse attempt to break away from modernist forms which had inevitably, become in their turn conventional, as well as to overthrow elitism of modernist '' high art'' by recourse for models to the '' mass culture'' in film, television, news paper cartoons, and popular music''

From foregoing, it is safe to claim, that postmodernism is more democratic in nature than modernism. It gives people free hand to choose their sense of being, without any limitation. On this, Alexander (2013), opines that '' the claims is sometimes heard that postmodernism is more democratic than modernism. It is certainly less ambitious and more liberal: choose your ending, choose your sense''.

Deride Deconstruction

Textual analysis does not try to find out what is it that determines the text (gathers it together as the end term Of a causal sequence), but rather how The text explodes and disperses (Roland Barthes. '' Textual Analysis of ' Valdemar' D. Lodge and N. Wood (eds.) Modern criticism and Theory: A Reader. London: Macmillan, 2001, p.151.)

The sense of being is not to be thought At one go (Derrida: 1976, p. 23 Of Grammatology (Quoted in Bello-Kano 2012). .It is obvious that Derrida lunched his attack on '' the so-called logo centrism of Western thought – its unwarranted trust in language as the vehicle of truth- in the mid-1960s, it was not until the early 1970s that , he really began to catch the attention of the English speaking world. In the next ten years he found a large- and outspoken-following in American department of English, beginning at Yale university, where Paul de man (1919-1983) became an important advocate of Derrida's poststructuralist'' Bartens (2002, p.131). This implies that deconstruction at its inception, challenged what was taken for granted, or common sense, that language is an important vehicle for conveying the truth.

In view of this, fixed meaning or absolute truth is no longer obtainable; deconstruction tries to dismantle texts so as to discover its contradictions. It also postulates that flux, inconsistency, crisis and tension are at the heart of any use of language. Bartens (2002), opines that:

Deconstruction takes its name from Derider's practice: his strategy of analyzing And dismantling texts or, mere usually, parts of texts in order to reveal their Inconsistencies and inner contradictions. At the heart of deconstruction is the Effort to dismantle the cover-ups that texts use to create the semblance of stable Meaning: their attempt to create 'privileged' centers- implicit or explicit binary Oppositions- with the help of all sorts of rhetorical means'' (ibid)

In the light of the above therefore, reality is not viewed at one go; this brings us to another important concept in Deride principles that is ''deferral''. Meaning according to this principle is in constant deferral, or more technically deferred. For Derrida, arriving at a final signification is not possible, this is due to the belief that meaning, or reality is relative or provisional rather than fixed. According to Mohammadi (2013), '' this marks the moment of radical scepticism in western culture that Jacques Derrida points when language itself is '' invaded by the universal problematic; that moment in which, in absence of center or origin, everything became discourse…. When everything became a system outside a system of differences. The absence of the transcendental signified extends the domain and interplay of signification and infinitum'' (Lodge 91). This means that meaning is always suspended or provisional. According to Derrida, text or any use of language is open-ended or lacks closure; it may begin but never ends because of its open-endedness. Here is a practical example of deconstruction's approach to literature. It is Derrida's reading of Kafka's short story ''before the law'', Bartens (2002), opines that:

Derrida's own reading of the very short story 'Before the law' by Franz Kafka (1883-1924) emphasizes the same lack of closure. In Kafka's story, a man arrives at the door that gives access to the law. He is not allowed to enter but hears from the door keeper that he may perhaps enter later and had better not use force because there are many more doors, and many doorkeepers that are even more powerful than this first one. He waits all his life and finally just before he dies, asks the doorkeeper whether he is the only one who has sought admittance. Answering that this particular was meant for him only, the doorkeeper shuts the door on the Dying man. Derrida sees the story as exemplifying difference.

 After the first guardian there are incalculably others, perhaps without limit, and progressively more powerful and therefore prohibitive, endowed with the power of delay. Their potency is difference, an interminable difference, since it lasts for days and 'years', and indeed, to the end of (the) man. Difference till death, and for death, without end because ended finite. As the doorkeeper represents it, the discourse of the law does not say 'no' but 'not yet', indefinitely. (Derrida [1985] 1987:141). The above example presents not only theoretical angle of deconstruction, but also a practical application of it as literary theory in the arena of literary analysis. We have seen this in Derrida's reading of Kafka's short story '' before the law''. This also suggests that in any given structure or text, meaning is constantly deferred. The journey to find for a definite meaning will never end; deconstruction is always aimed at the impossibility of final meanings. Abdullahi (2012), opines that…'' that there could be no stable conceptions of meaning, subjectivity, and identity because human cognition is always subject to temporal decent ring and rupture, so that, for example, meaning, subjectivity, and identity are de-stabilizing both to human thought and even to themselves. This is sometimes called, following Nietzshe and Heidegger, '' double de-centering'' ''the doubling critique'', or simply, ''destructive analysis'' (see on this, Davis and Scleifer 1990: 1-20; Berlsey2002).

From the above, we can say that deconstruction holds the view that language is arbitrary; there is no one to one correlation between the word and what it stands for, or between signifier and signified. Thus, meaning is always provisional. Bello-Kano (2012), opines that '' the border- line between subject and object, system and the subject of the system, author and text, form and meaning, sign and symbol is neither here nor there, neither inside nor outside, but is rather contingent, that is without an interested stopping-place''… deconstruction is engaged with the fascinating paradox that an author can say more or less, something other than, she intended, something , ''other than what [she] would mean'' (Derrida 1976: 158; original emphasis). For Derrida, the reader cannot simply repeat what the text says, and cannot simply record the intentional praxis of the author either: The writer [author] writes in a language and in a logic whose proper system, laws, and life his discourse by definition cannot dominate absolutely. He uses them only by letting himself, after a Passion up to appoint, be governed by the system. In addition, the reading must always aim at certain relationship, unperceived by the writer, between the commands and what he does not command of the patterns of the Language that he uses. This relationship is not a certain quantitative distribution of shadow and light, of weakness or of force, but a signifying structure that critical Reading should produce…

To produce this signifying structure obviously cannot consist of Reproducing, the effaced and respectful doubling commentary, the conscious, voluntary, Intentional relationship that the writer institutes in his exchanges with history to which he belongs thanks to the element of language… Yet if reading must not be content with doubling The text, it cannot legitimately transgress the text towards something other than it, toward a Referent (a reality that is metaphysical, historical, psycosiographical etc) or toward a signified Outside the text whose content could take place, could have taken place outside of language, That is to say, in the sense that we give here to that word, outside of writing in general…There is nothing outside of the text (Derrida 1976: 288; original italicts.)

From the above, we are made to infer that any writer or an author may write in a syntactic system called language, thus, he cannot control or dictate the outcome of his writing, he may mean something, (the so-called authorial intention), but the text may attract different interpretations from different critics. For this, neither does the reader produce what the author means, nor does he deny the existence of the authorial intention. Thus, as Bello-Kano(2012), puts it, '' critical reading should produce, rather, a signifying structure, one that does not abolish the authorial intentions, and does not simply reproduce them, although again, it cannot simply record the '' conscious, voluntary, intentional'' features of the text. This, then, suggests that deconstruction does not in any way de-personalize the author, it does not however, vindicate authorial intention; rather it is in between the two, neither for authorial intention nor for the text.

 Moreover, deconstruction ensures freedom of thought; it allows free flow of thoughts and ideas. The borderline is open-ended, is opened to infinity. Deconstruction looks for the other of language in any given structure or in searching for an absolute reality. Deconstruction, as Bello-Kano, opines '' is always on the lookout for instability, crisis, cracks, slips, fault lines, aporias, because no author can ever fully control the ways in which her text might mean or be read, and also because, according to Royle, there are '' differences, tensions, paradoxes between what a text says--- or what an author wants to say, or thinks she is saying--- and what a text does'' (2003:27)

Manifestation of Deride Deconstruction in Barthelme's '' The Glass Mountain''

'' Signs are signs, and some of them lies''
('' ME AND MISS MANDIBLE'' BARTHELME)

Lord (1987), opines that … the parallels that link postmodernism to this type of contemporary criticism and philosophy are, among others, its playfulness of language and its rhetorical word games; its emphasis on the work and the words within the work as object in their own right which cannot and are not intended to mirror or refer to external reality or to external objects, but are instead themselves a newly constructed reality; its "intertextuality"—an abundance of references to previous works and previous fictions—demonstrating that the only reality its acknowledge is the reality of the text; and its affirmation of its fictional status, rejecting any met narrative or ultimate signified within itself which could possibly stand as a claim of absolute or universal truth. This shows the nature of postmodern fiction and its direct link with deconstruction. Now let us consider in the first place the title of the he story "The Glass mountain.''

The contradiction between 'glass' and' mountain' found in the title is very obvious. While bearing in mind that '' mountain'' is a natural thing, while ''glass'' is a man-made or artificial. Unusual merging of two different things by the author poses the following questions: Does Natural Mountain appears to be glass? Is there any glass mountain? Where will it be found? How does it look like? Right from the beginning of the story, the reader is made to believe that subversion of reality is likely the center of this story. Similarly, it is common in most of Barthelme's fictions to find the first person narrator ''I'', in stories such as ''Rebecca'', '' The Dolt'', ''The Balloon'' and the fiction under study '' The Glass mountain''. Not only the ''I'' is unknown, it is also nameless; its appearance in most of these fictions poses the following questions: Is the 'I' character or an implied author? Does 'I' in ''The Glass mountain'' represents the author? The appearance of "I'' climber in the story raises the question about authorial intention. The story opens with "I'' narrator thus:

1.   I was trying to climb the glass mountain
2.   The glass mountain stands at the corner of thirteenth street and Eighth Avenue
3.   I had attained the lower slope

4. People were looking up at me
5. I was new in the neighborhood
6. Nevertheless I had acquaintances
7. I had strapped climbing irons to my feet and each hand grasp sturdy plumber's feet
8. I was 200 feet up (Barthelme's ''The glass mountain'' 1-8)

From the above narration from ''I'', it's obvious that Barthelme had wanted to connect fiction with reality. This is because it is obvious that one climbs a mountain, but it is however, mockery for one to claim climbing of ''glass mountain''. It is not an illusion that glass mountain exists in the Thirteenth street and Eighth Avenue of New York? Is it not self-deceiving that we can get sense or meaning from two conflicting ideas? If '' The Glass mountain'' does not exist in the real sense, how then, can one climbs something that does not exist? This is why Abdullahi (2012), opines that '' deconstruction is grounded in the argument that uncertainty is grounded in the activity of making meaning through signs (language), be they written, oral, graphic, or otherwise,'' Abbott also argues that '' any process of narrative negotiation will never shake the differences that subvert it'' (2002:172), (Abdullahi: 2012).

Moreover, looking at the structure of the story, arranged in hundred paragraphs, with each paragraph having one or more sentences. One going by the physical structure of the story will expect highly structured chain of narration which leads to a reliable definite meaning. However, there exists a constant tension and crisis between the content and the form of the story. While the story is physically well structured, its content is in fragmentation. There is a lack of logic and reason in the chain of narration. Though the reader may locate the beginning of the story; its center as well as the ending, are displaced, nowhere to be found.

1. I was trying to climb the glass mountain
2. My acquaintances moved among the fallen knights, collecting rings, wallets, pocket watches, ladies' favors.
3. I threw the beautiful princess headfirst down the mountain to my acquaintances.
4. Who could be relied upon to deal with her.
5. Nor are eagles plausible, not at all, not for a moment.

From the above set of sentences, quoted from the beginning, middle and the end of the story, the reader can find it difficult to grasp reliable meaning following the story's chain of narration. In fact, the last three sentences subvert the reality expected in this story. Lord (1987), contends that '' postmodern fiction's elusive and ambiguous qualities often allows it to resist interpretation and normalization. In many cases, this type of fiction, as John Gardner contends in The Art of Fiction, deconstruct itself, continually deferring meaning by undercutting any information which may lead to a single clear-cut interpretations'' Also important is Lois Gordon view that '' Barthelmer's technique is to intentionally expand and dissolve meaning by contradictions, retractions, and any number of other means'' (23), information is often revealed which serves as a vehicle to '' undermine'', or contradict, or logically dissolve the proceeding material'' (24) (Lord: 1987).

Barthelme's frequent use of fragmentation and the story's elusive and contradictory nature makes it to resist any attempt to fix a meaning to it.

56. A weakening of the libidinous interest in reality has recently come to a close (Anton Ehrenzweig)
66. Calm reigns in the country, thanks to the confident wisdom of everyone. (M. Pompidom)
87. In some centuries, his [man's] imagination has made life an intense Practice of all the lovelier energies (John Masefield) etc

The above lines and many examples in the story are abruptly inserted in the story to distract or puzzle the reader to lose focus or direction of the storyline. As the reader focuses on the climber's adventure, his attention has been diverted to historical figures or things invented by the author to further achieve inconsistencies. According to Bello-Kano (2012), '' deconstruction is always on the lookout for instability, crisis, cracks, slips, fault lines, aparias because no author can ever fully control the ways in which her text might mean or be read, and also because, according to Royle, there are '' differences, tensions, paradoxes between what a text says—or what an author wants to say, or thinks s/he is saying—and what a text does'' (2003:27). This then, means that Barthelme's '' The glass mountain'' as many readers contend that is a parody of a traditional fairy tale.

This paper debunks this view and suggests that the above cited historical names inserted by the author cannot be found in the original text. Thus, the story is just vindication of Derridean deconstruction. Foucault (1984), contends that '' in writing, the point is not to manifest or exalt the act of writing, nor is it to pin a subject within language; it is, rather, a question of creating a space into which the writing subject constantly disappears'' Based on this, Barthelme's ''The glass mountain'' is not talking about the climber's adventure as many readers postulate. Deconstructivly, Bartyhelme's climber lacks the qualities to be considered as hero. This is because; the climber is engulfed with fear and terror as he approaches the mountain. He reviews the traditional way of climbing the mountain.

79. I reviewed the conventional way of attaining the castle

80. The conventional means of attaining the castle are as follows: '' the eagle dug its sharp claws into the tender flesh of the youth, But he bore the pain without sound, and seized the bird's two feet With his hands. The creature in terror lifted hip high up into the air and began to circle the castle. The youth held on bravely. He saw the Glittering palace, which by the pale rays of the moon looked like a dim Lamp; and he saw the windows and balconies of the castle tower. Drawing A small knife from his belt, he cut off both the eagle's feet. The bind rose Up in the air with a yelp, and the youth dropped lightly into a broad balcony, And he saw a courtyard filled with flowers and trees, and there the beautiful Enchanted princess, (The Yellow fairy book).

81. I was afraid.
82. I had forgotten the Band-Aids.
83. When the eagle dug its sharp claws into my tender flesh
84. Should I go back for the Ban aids?

The above lines, quoted from the story denote a clear testimony that the story's elusive and ambiguous nature really allows it resist a definite meaning. McCaffery (1979), in an essay entitled '' Meaning and Non meaning in Barthelme's fictions'' opines that '' There is also a sense in which we can say that the ambiguous, fragmented, discontinuous structure of his fiction mirrors a condition which exists in society at large, and within many of its individual members''. Also, Wen (2013), opines that '' '' The glass mountain'' is symbolic of the highly-developed industry and the narrator was to trying to climb the mountain to disenchant a certain convention because of his dissatisfaction with the present social situation''. Similarly, Zhang (2008), opines that '' the whole fiction can be interpreted as the writer's struggling in the real world''. what the above readings try to establish is that Barthelme's ''The glass mountain'' with its absurdity and fragmentation, depicts the social disorder of the modern world. Deconstructively, this paper debunks any attempt to fix a definite meaning to the story. The last three sentences of the story vindicate the assertion that '' The glass mountain'' is a commentary of Derridean deconstruction.

98. I threw the beautiful princess headfirst down the Mountain to my acquaintances
99. Who could be relied upon to deal with her
100. Nor are eagles plausible, not at all, not for a moment.

It is pertinent to cite Barthelme's essay '' Not-Knowing'', '' Writing is a process of dealing with not-knowing a forcing of what and how… The not-knowing is crucial to art, is what permits art to be made. Without the scanning process engendered by not-knowing, without the possibility of having the mind in unanticipated directions, there would be no invention… The not-knowing is not simple, because it's hedged about with provisions, roads that may not be taken. The more serious the artist, the more problems he takes into account and more considerations limit his possible initiatives'' (cited in Zhang:2008)

Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion, it is made clear that Barthelme's fiction, in this context, ''The glass mountain'', is a commentary on Derridean deconstruction. However, some critics upheld the view that fragmentation and discontinuity found in the text, depicts the lawlessness and social disorder of the modern world. However, this opinion has been challenged by the present study. Thus, Barthelme's '' The glass mountain'' with its flux and inconsistencies resulted in what I term'' the world of absurdity'', this then, vindicates deconstruction and its notion that undecidebility, lack of closure, is at the center of any given structure, be is written, spoken or graphic.

As been highlighted above, postmodernism characterizes the aftermath of the 2nd world war, such as lost of identity, lost of faith, psychological trauma, social crisis, tension, and new way of viewing reality. Similarly, postmodern fiction with its elusive nature and fragmentation, with its inability to make concrete meaning rather, commenting on its process of narration, allows it to resist any fixed or stable interpretation. As a result, as argued by this paper, Barthelme's ''the glass mountain'' is a manifestation of Deride deconstruction.

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