Student

Course

Instructor

Date

Science Fiction

The evolution of literature and film industry has specifically focused on science fiction and highlighted several social and political issues. The science fiction literature has produced marvelous stories based on the subjects of dystopia, dreams, future and finding alternatives to the current issues among humankind. However, the origin of this kind of literature dates back to centuries where the ancient writers tried to give words to their thoughts and ideas. They used the fictional forms by implementing their knowledge in the subject matter. Since then, science fiction literature has been evolving but the main idea remained the same; representation of beliefs, hopes, and ideas. They talked about the things that were not possible or at least did not seem possible at the time. They tried to give solutions and alternatives to different issues of real life through fiction stories (Edward). Thus, the genre of science fiction evolved rapidly and provided a baseline for the modern-day writers, philosophers, and filmmakers. There are various novels, comic books, and movies that have the theme of warning mankind about several risks that came along with the development and progression of contemporary civilization.

The film Blade Runner (1982) is a bleak dystopian realization of the mankind where the science and technology and the human imaginative thinking has brought a catastrophic turn of events. Humans cannot predict the future, rather they dream about it and most often, those dreams turn into nightmares. Similarly, this film is an example of how human dreams and their struggle for bringing them into reality turn them into nightmares. Blade Runner is based on a 1968 science fiction novel by Philip L. Dick “Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?” In this novel, he has mentioned the wakening up to a day in the future in 2021 where the world has been destroyed by a nuclear war. Humans have taken the role of protecting the animals and the prevention of mass extinction. Androids have been shown as the colonial slaves who attempt to kill about their masters and escape to take cover on Earth. However, in Blade Runner, the setting is the post-apocalyptic right after a nuclear war and the main emphasis is on the dystopian urban environment.

The term dystopia is the basis of many science fiction novels and it was first used by John Stewart Mill. It means the imperfect societies that have extreme surveillance, social regulation, propaganda, and paranoia. However, after World War II, the word ‘dystopia’ became common in the literature and primarily focused on the political and cultural issues. The most paranoid idea of dystopias is that they are so much pertinent to the current global affairs and highlight the risks that might occur in the way of development. Dystopian science fictions are the portrayal of cultural and political subjects such as totalitarianism, awareness about environmental damage, technological advances, surveillance, human and genetic engineering, space odyssey and anything that can affect mankind in any way (Dick). Blade runner is a cyberpunk that represents the environmental collapse and evolution of the technology that has brought the world to this claustrophobic end.

The setting of the film is dark, gloomy and rainy, the streets are filled with multicultural people mainly dominated by the Asians and the depiction of the culture shows a scene of the underclass and their underprivileged lives. However, the rich and privileged have gone to settle far off the world leaving behind the miserable and economically weak people to survive on the leftovers. Even the poor are not entitled to keep themselves a pet as majority of the animals have gone extinct due to radiation from the nuclear war, while only the rich can afford to keep them. A corporate company was involved in making the androids, replicates that are similar to humans and six of them have gone loose and a protagonist is a bounty hunter who has been given the task of eliminating them. The film has depicted the future of Los Angeles which is its decay and decline, and humanity has come to an end with synthetic people. It also represents several aspects of urbanization, globalization, and advances in genetic engineering. The film has a futuristic and dystopian effect and wants the audience to believe that it is set in the future.

The film leaves the audience with a critical question that how they perceive the meaning of humanity in this postmodern age as the distinction among humans and machines has become unclear. It also invokes the viewers to think about the programming of emotions and humanity in robots and even is it possible to manufacture these traits. This film has compared a city with a postmodern where people with money have fled off to live better lives while the rest remain in the chaotic world left after the nuclear war. Postmodernism is considered as a significant period in cultural history. It was the modern culture of the twentieth century which was one of the most powerful movements. Before the world war, it was believed that technology is a blessing and can bring the world towards a better future, however, after the war, these views changes. Science and technology is considered a curse for it enabled people to make weapons of destruction and specifically after the holocaust. Postmodern culture held the notion that technology was not the best solution to the world’s problems. The technological advances especially, in the fields of genetics, nuclear science and information technology brought questionable apprehensions for ordinary people.

There are several emotions that have been associated with the postmodern literature, cinema, and art while the most recurrent sentiment is paranoia. There are feelings of disorientation, alienation, and disconnection of being in outer space. The characters in these science fictions are mainly emotional cripples, without any authentic feelings. The exploited postmodernism reconnoiters thoughts such as artificial human engineering, cloning and human robots are more desirable as compared to the real natural beings. Blade Runner is the story that takes place through the time traveling back and forward along with the memory distortion. Another main idea that can be found in the film is post humanism that humans can be subject to technologically enhanced and improved characteristics. However, one of the crucial moments of postmodernism is the failure of hope for a better future. It alters the sense of utopia with dystopia and leaves human beings in the pessimism, disorientation and uncertainty. Blade Runner also highlights the idea of a hopeless future. It is the depiction of a dystopian end while the sense of postmodernism runs throughout the film. It shows the extremely advanced technology yet it appears outdated as the time passes. It also delivers the message that when people reject the modernism in the current era and the importance of technological advances to counter the previous chaotic human actions, humanity lures into further darkness and destruction. It has interconnected the dismal of the past with the need of creating a post industrialism era that can stand against the ambiguities of postmodernism.

**Works Cited**

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