



The Literature of Reconstruction: Authentic Fiction in the New Millennium

Wolfgang Funk

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The Literature of Reconstruction argues for the term and concept of 'postmillennial reconstruction' to fill the gap left by the decline of postmodernism and deconstruction as useful cultural and literary categories. Wolfgang Funk shows how this notion emerges from the theoretical and philosophical development that led to the demise of postmodernism by relating it to the idea of 'authenticity': immediate experience that eludes direct representation. In addition, he provides a clear formal framework with which to identify and classify the features of 'reconstructive literature' by updating the narratological category of 'metafiction', originally established in the 1980s. Based on Werner Wolf's observation of a 'metareferential turn' in contemporary arts and media, he illustrates how the specific use of metareference results in a renegotiation of the specific patterns of literary communication and claims that this renegotiation can be profitably described with the concept of 'reconstruction'.

To substantiate this claim, in the second half of the book Funk discusses narrative texts that illustrate this transition from postmodern deconstruction to postmillennial reconstruction. The analyses take in distinguished and prize-winning writers such as Dave Eggers, Julian Barnes, Jennifer Egan and Jasper Fforde. The broad scope of authors, featuring writers from the US as well as the UK, underlines the fact that the reconstructive tendencies and strategies Funk diagnoses are of universal significance for the intellectual and cultural self-image of the global North.

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