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(DE)TRENDING CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH IN ENGLISH LITERATURE IN PAKISTAN

Abstract:

Human response to literature is an ages old phenomenon. This response may be aimed at examining a work from just one angle or holistically. Over time, several approaches have been introduced and developed by different schools of literary criticism, e.g., formalist criticism, historical/biographical criticism, gender criticism, psychological criticism, Marxist criticism, postcolonial criticism, and deconstruction. They not only help readers make a better sense of the factual and fictional worlds, but also foreground the issues faced by humans of a time and space. In this paper, studying titles of last ten years of academic research in literature, I try to gauge the trendy approaches in Pakistan's major universities. I would also look at the implications of these trends. Why is a particular approach more popular than the others? What are the basic research needs of the contemporary Pakistani society? How are our humanities departments dealing with it? My presentation will deal with these and other such questions.

Keywords:

Literary criticism, English literature, Humanities research, Literary critical studies in Pakistan