

THE DEATH OF THE METAPHOR IS NOT A METAPHOR

(The Collapse of Language in the Age of Superreality)

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Project: The Absolute Future

Prologue: Postmodernism as Chaos Without a Navigator

Postmodernism was not an era—it was reason’s fever dream, giving birth to monsters without a dreamer. It is over. As if it never was. Its “schizophrenic kaleidoscope” of collaged fragments and cognitive dissonance was like trying to assemble a puzzle in the dark: the pieces screamed, but the picture remained silent. Quantum mechanics, four-dimensional space, seven-dimensional manifolds, seventeen-dimensional geometries, time vaulting across dimensions—these are not metaphors, but symptoms: language, like a knife without a handle, has ceased to slice reality and begun to slash the hand that wields it.

Postmodernism did not die because it was debunked, but because it drained its own emptiness dry—just as its name. And nothing remained.

What was it? A harbinger of a new cultural reality? Or the first glimpse of the absolute future within the digital paradigm?

The Cake, Launched into Space

The postmodern cake, “served at the era’s centennial banquet”, is not a dessert but a symbol of ultimate barrenness. Its transformation into balloons shredded by dark matter is alchemy in reverse: instead of transforming substance, it disintegrates into particles. Postmodernism celebrated a centennial celebration, but the celebration turned out to be fireworks in a vacuum. The balloons, drifting into oblivion, are its phantasmagorical residue: luminous shells hollowed of meaning, scattered by forces beyond comprehension named “dark matter”.

Ghost-Examples: How Metaphors Became Instructions

Metaphors and neologisms, semantic reversals, were the only form of communication—in that reality where time ran backward, leap laterally, or collapsed.

- **“The State is a machine”**: Once an image of bureaucracy. Now the state is an algorithm, where citizens become data points and laws become lines of code. An individual’s fate is computed as an equation.
- **“Time is money”**: In the age of cryptocurrency and bitcoin mining, time is literally converted into energy expenditure. A clock is not a metaphor, but a kilowatt-hour meter.
- **“It’s a small world”**: GPS navigation and satellite maps have erased the romance of travel. The planet is an interface with coordinates, not a metaphor for the unknown.
- **“A Cloud in Trousers”**: Mayakovsky ironized romanticism, but today “the cloud” is a server, physically located in an underground bunker. Poetry has become infrastructure.
- **“Love can’t be bought”**: AI algorithms and neural network compatibility analysis have turned feelings into statistics. Romance is now a 99.8% match.
- **“A dark horse”**: Risk-prediction algorithms calculate event probabilities down to a percentage point. Fate is no longer a fickle jockey but a quantifiable variable.

Each of these metaphors, before dying, petrified into instruction manuals for a non-existent reality.

Postmodernism: A Carnival of Nonsense

Quantum Mechanics as Prophet and “Icing on the Cake”

The “inhuman logic” of quantum mechanics, the proverbial icing, became postmodernism’s own parody. If an electron can be both a wave and a particle, then why can’t “truth” be falsehood, or a metaphor be a fact? But the joke turned on itself: when quantum computing began predicting particle behavior to within billionths, metaphoricity became an anachronism. Postmodernism, like Schrödinger’s cat, was both alive and dead—until the digital era opened the box. But instead of a stench of decay, the world breathed in the disembodied digital ether.

Fantasy, Surrealism, Cyberpunk: A Graveyard of Genres

“Fantasy, surrealism, cyberpunk are no more”. This is not an aesthetic death, but an existential one. Cyberpunk, which predicted dystopian tech-corporations, became documentary realism. Surrealism? Its “persistence of memory” is now an AR filter on social media, where clocks melt in the background of a selfie. The fantasy of “the matrix”? Replaced by VR headsets tracking neural impulses. Genres died because reality outran fiction, leaving metaphors as museum exhibits.

Concrete Jungles: Reality Without Subtext

Architecture as Code and Pure Phenomenology

“Concrete jungles” are no metaphor, but the result of optimization. Cities are built by neural networks calculating traffic flow, sunlight, and social distancing. This is phenomenological purity: word and phenomenon have fused. Parks are not a city’s “lungs”, but recreational zones engineered to lower cortisol levels in office workers. Even graffiti is part of the urban algorithm, boosting tourist appeal.

Seventh Heaven as a Coordinate and a Library of Silence

The phrase “on cloud nine” once meant bliss. Now it is a level in a game-simulator or a floor in the metaverse. We wander through concrete jungles, flinching at every footfall. We see signposts scrawled in a dead language: the letters are there, but the words are gone. “Life is boiling over”? That’s a description of a smart city’s hydraulic system. Metaphors have not vanished—they have been integrated into the technosphere as functional components.

B-bam! The Instantaneous Collapse

The death of the metaphor did not happen gradually, but in a fleeting instant, like the flip of a switch. Why? Because language reached a tipping point of absurdity. When “the electron is inexhaustible” ceased to be a poetic image from quantum physics and became

the firmware of a quantum computer, the metaphor was consumed by its own literality. The digital paradigm, demanding binary exactitude, erased the play of ambiguity.

Epilogue: Language After the End

The death of the metaphor is not a metaphor. It is an evolutionary rupture. Language, stripped of ambiguity, has become a precise instrument but has lost its spell. We no longer speak of a “dark horse”—we speak of a “73% probability of success”, and in that, one can still hear the defiant whinny of a wild mare. Yet, there is a strange freedom in this: if before we feared that metaphors distorted reality, now reality distorts us.

Postmodernism turned out to be a draft penned in vanishing ink. The digital age developed the text, but the page revealed not letters but fissures and inkblots. No pressed flower saved as a keepsake, no whisper of the meadow it came from. “Concrete jungles”—this is no metaphor. It is now our habitat.