

## The Metamodernist Juxtapositions in Don DeLillo's *Zero K*

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Received: February 27, 2019

Accepted: July 6, 2019

### Abstract

Don DeLillo's recent novel, *Zero K* (2016), simultaneously has both modernist and postmodernist characteristics. Therefore, it cannot be considered a completely modernist novel or a very postmodernist one. Due to such outstanding juxtapositions, the present study suggests that *Zero K* is a metamodernist novel. As Metamodernism is an oscillation between modernism and postmodernism, this article aims to utilize Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin Van den Akker's theories on Metamodernism and analyze the metamodern juxtapositions in this novel. In order to apply their theories on the text of this novel, some oppositional modern and postmodern characteristics are chosen to be analyzed. Besides, the point of oscillation between the two poles of modernism and postmodernism is surveyed. Generally, the philosophy of modernism is based on optimism and utopianism. However, the philosophy of postmodernism is entirely focused on skepticism and pessimism. Modernists believe in utopia but postmodernist believe in dystopia. Some of the characters in this novel embody modernism and some of them embody postmodernism. There are moments that they simultaneously become the embodiment of these oppositional states. Furthermore, the language of modernist works is not ironical but the language of postmodernist works is ironical and there is no sign of sincerity in their speeches. Besides, quotidian and routine moments of life are the focus of attention in modernist works but such moments aren't much valuable in postmodernist works. Such oppositional characteristics exist between modernist and postmodernist in *Zero K*. The results of this study show that the metamodern juxtapositions are illuminated in this novel through skeptical and optimistic views toward science and technology, sincerity and irony, engagement in and indifference to present moments, and utopia and dystopia. As *Zero K* oscillates like a swinging pendulum between the above-mentioned juxtapositions, and depicts the *both-neither dynamic*, it can be labeled as a metamodernist novel.

**Keywords:** Metamodernism, DeLillo, *Zero K*, Vermeulen and Akker, Oscillation

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