

# **A Study of Intertextuality in Peter Ackroyd`s Selected Novels**

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**دراسة التعالق النصي لروايات مختارة للروائي بيتر اوكرايد**

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## Abstract:

The concept of intertextuality is a central notion in postmodern theory and an important model to describe the relation between literary texts. The central purpose of this paper is to scrutinize the idea of intertextuality in postmodern theory and how it is manifested by the British prolific novelist Peter Ackroyd `s selected novels. The English critic and novelist of more than a dozens of novels as well as the Booker Prize for Fiction. Ackroyd is a great example of English novelist who rewrites in his novels English literary history through using the notion of intertextuality. As a result, Ackroyd`s novels are significant of shoot of postmodern novel since they document the literary texts of earlier authors to become the subject of their plots which reflect the postmodern idea in which literary works are viewed to mirror other works. Therefore, Ackroyd`s novels can be regarded as unique versions of this trend of postmodern fiction as well as literary criticism. The concept of intertextuality becomes subject to adaptation and revision in postmodern literary theory.

## ملخص:

يعتبر مفهوم التعلق النصي من المفاهيم الأساسية في نظرية ما بعد الحداثة لكونها تمثل نمودجا هاما في وصف العلاقة بين النصوص الادبية المختلفة. الهدف من هذه الورقة البحثية هو تسليط الضوء على مفهوم التعلق النصي من وجهة نظر نظرية ما بعد الحداثة عبر الكاتب والناقد الانكليزي بيتر اوكراید الذي يعتبر من عمالقة الروائين الانكليز الذين قاموا باعادة كتابة تاريخ الادب الانكليزي من خلال استخدام وتطبيق مفهوم التعلق النصي في اغلب اعماله الادبية. نتيجة لذلك، تعتبر روايات اوكراید بذرة مهمة من روايات ما بعد الحداثة لكونها توثق الاعمال الادبية القديمة التي اصبحت مرآة معكوسة لأعمال اخرى. لذلك تعتبر روايات اوكراید ذات النزعة الفريدة في الادب القصصي وبالتالي فان مفهوم التعلق النصي أصبح موضوعا للتعديل والتتقيح في نظرية ما بعد الحداثة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** نظرية ما بعد الاستعمار، التعلق النصي، النقد الادبي، رواية ما بعد الحداثة

**Key Words:** Postmodern theory, intertextuality, literary criticism, postmodern novel.

### **Introduction**

In European philosophy, the postmodern theory has been described as a new knowledgeable movement that has flourished in the second part of the twentieth century. Generally speaking, the concept of postmodernism seems to be as a reaction to the notion of modernism which is in turn combined with several issues regarding the issues of economics, capitalism, new social classes, Industrial Revolution and its morbid consequences on a large number of different aspects of European life. In other words, there is a kind of relationship between the concepts of modernism and postmodernism. This kind of relation has thrived in a period in which severe political circumstances have taken place concerning the cold war (Heywood, 2012).

As an umbrella notion, an enormous number of literary scholars as well as literary critics differ about which matters or subjects that the postmodern theory focuses on or copes with. That is to say, there is a matter of dispute among the literary scholars about the diversity and multiplicity concepts that the umbrella term "postmodernism" refers to. Therefore, postmodern theory can be defined as

a number of trends or movements in the arts and literature developing in the 1970s in reaction to or rejection of the dogma, principles, or practices of established Modernism, especially a movement in architecture and the decorative arts running counter to the practice and influence of the International Style and encouraging the use of elements from historical vernacular styles and often playful illusion, decoration, and complexity (Carter, 2012).

As direct response to the postmodern theory and its diverse ideas, postmodern literary writers begin to shed in their texts some lights on novel literary technique and concepts concerning meta-fiction, pastiche, intertextuality and the like. Therefore, in the second half of the twentieth century, critical literary theories begin to flourish and focus on studding deeply the literary texts. The result of such readings make the literary texts have more than one reading and open to other readings. Thus, texts of literature become interact with other literary forms and ideas. In the 1960s, the concept of intersexuality has appeared in the writings of Julia Kristeva. In this study, I depend on post-structuralist and post-modern theorists such as Kristeva's notion of 'intertextuality' and Hutcheon's philosophies of parody.

### **1.1 Statement of the problem**

The main problem of this study is concerned with the postmodern use of the concept of intertextuality in Ackroyd`s selected novels. Thus, the study is devoted to investigate the concept of intersexuality, its definitions, its development as well as the postmodern way of using that concept.

### **1.2 Aim of the Study**

The study aims to carry out the research in the field of literature. The research material is selected from the English novelist Ackroyd`s novels and the research topic is the postmodern use of intertextuality in these selected novels. Thus, the researcher tries to analyze Ackroyd`s selected novels in order to discover Ackroyd`s new way of using intertextuality in his literary texts.

### **1.4 Value of the Study**

This study is hoped to be valuable in investigating the concept of intertextuality as a postmodern critical approach. Furthermore, the study also sheds light on Ackroyd illustration of intertextuaity through using the literary techniques of parody and pastiche. It is also hoped to be important to those specialized in teaching and learning English literature such as learners, teachers and textbook writers.

### **1.5 The Limitation of the Study**

The study was limited to the definition of the concept of intertextuality and how to use it in postmodern literary theory. The study is also restricted to Ackroyd `s two novels that each one of them emphasizes different aspects of intertextuality.

### **2.Ackroyd`s Life and Career**

Born in London on the fifth of October in 1949, Peter Ackroyd is an English novelist, critic and biographer. He was the child of Catholic Portents the thing that influenced on him too much to the extent that even his writings had hints of this catholic heritage. Ackroyd graduated from Cambridge, and after that he won Fellowship at Yale university. When he was there, Ackroyd published *Notes for a New Culture: An Essay on Modernism* (1976) and became well-known in educational groups. Later on, he was returning to London, his birth city, and worked there as an editor of literary texts especially for the *Spectator* magazine. In 1981, he devoted himself to the literary career. Furthermore, Ackroyd has never written in one genre, but on the contrary, his writings contain more than one genre. As a prolific writer, Ackroyd has written novels ,poetry, biographies, scholarly works, creative non-fiction, and even books for children (Crespo, 2003).

The majority of Ackroyd`s fictions, the most examples are *Last Testament of Oscar Wilde* (1983), *The Casebook of Victor Frankenstein* (2008), *Chatterton* (1987), *Hawksmoor* (1985) and his later *Milton in America* (1996), involve postmodern structures of "histori-ographic meta-fiction" include "self reflexivity, parody, intertextuality, the preoccupation with language, the issue of representation and, ultimately, the exploration of the relationship between fiction and reality". (Crespo, 2003)On the other hand, a large number of literary awards Ackroyd gained for his writings. The prominent one is the Somerset Maugham Award for his masterpiece *The Last Testament of Oscar Wilde*. The others are Whitbread Biography, the Heinemann Award and Prize in 1984 for *T. S. Eliot*.

Most of Ackroyd`s literary writings shed some lights on the city of his birth, London, and its culture and history as well as its literary canon.

In addition, Ackroyd`s novels usually depict the major literary writers such as John Milton, Thomas More, Oscar Wilde, Thomas Chatterton, T.S. Eliot and many other literary figures as well as the famous artists of London. Thus, Ackroyd, is named as "London writer" since he illustrates in his novels the major English literary figures either as fictional characters or as factual subjects (Charnick,2010).

### **3. The Concept of Intertextuality**

As a significant literary notion, intertextuality can be considered as a noteworthy term in postmodern literary theory. Initially, the notion of intertextuality was first invented by the extensive writings of Julia Kristeva who is the pioneer French linguist scholar. However, it can also be traced back to the Russian formalist Mikhail Bakhtin especially his concept of "the dialogic imagination". Furthermore, Kristeva continues to say that intertextuality is a new notion which "replaces the notion of intersubjectivity". That is to say, Kristeva`s idea of Intertextuality refers to the literal existence and active (word for word) in a text of another text. For Kristeva , intertextuality is a "permutation of texts, an Intertextuality in the space of a given text, in which several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another" (Allen, 2000).

As stated by the French theorist and literary critic Michael (Michel) Riffaterre, the idea of intertextuality, can be described as a literary notion that summaries and sumps up the relationships that take place between different forms, text, of literature or it can be devoted to any alterations in diverse works of literature that triggered as a result of its relations "towards the texts by which they are preceded or followed, revealed on the backgrounds of a reader's perceptions." Further on, Kristeva goes also to talk about "retransformation/transfer of one (or more) sign system to another one" (Hebel, 1989).

On the other hand, the idea of intertextuality involves understanding and recognizing the texts of literature not as "self-contained systems" but as "differential and historical", or as "traces and tracings of otherness" because the literary texts are formed by using duplications and transformations of other stylistic structures. In the light of this vein, the

philosophical point of intertextuality does not content with the modern critical and asserts at the same time the idea that literary texts cannot be occurred as "self-sufficient as whole so that they do not function as a closed system" (Frow, 1990). Therefore, the term of Intertextuality is not only be regarded as usually one of the highest concepts which is used in modern literary theory, but it is also be considered as "a crucial element" in order to realize and understand both literature and culture in broad way. Nevertheless, as a result of the theories of intertextuality, the fictional works of writings are constructed from codes, systems, and traditions that established by former literary works . As Frow, (1990, 50) states that modern literary theory highlights the literary texts that lack self-determining sense and theorists term that as "intertextuality"

Moreover, the concept of Intertextualaty has taken several literary forms that may contain the following terms : calque, quotation, allusion, pastiche, plagiarism, translation, and parody. These forms of intertextuality are used by writers in order to influence their readers and improve certain layers of deepness meaning to their texts depending on a reader`s understanding and prior knowledge Thus, intertextuality can be viewed as a literary device that creates an "interrelationship between texts and generates related understanding in separate works" ( Kaźmierczak, 2019).

### **3.1. *Last Testament of Oscar Wilde* (1983)**

*Last Testament of Oscar Wilde* is the primary text of Peter Ackroyd. It is a worthy starting argument in my analysis since it presents a large number of the issues that Ackroyd focuses on constantly in his fictional writings and he also gives it a special treatment in his advanced novels. Therefore, the analysis of this novel highlights and introduces certain points such as intertextuality, history and nonfiction. Corresponding to most of his literary texts, Ackroyd re-writes the English fictional past in *Last Testament of Oscar Wilde* which is at the same time emphasized and shed some lights on the intertextuality of writing and art. Moreover, the novel is written in a journal form as if it were written by Wilde.

Corresponding to Ackroyd's other biographical texts of Dickens (1990), William Blake (1995), and T. S. Eliot (1984), *The Last Testament*

concentrates on ancient figures and mingles a huge of chronological truths and sources of literature which that both of them integrated into a convincing besides coherent literary form. Thus, *The Last Testament* comprises of a paradox since it can be regarded as fictional work and at the same time it is also be considered as a historical document. Moreover, the novel looks like Ackroyd's other great biographies in the sense that it can be traced the growth and the development of the artist`s career and showed to the readers the connection between the artist`s life and works. In the light of this view, the critic and literary scholar Colber comments on that view and states in book, *World Authors 1980-1985*; "the biographer of an author should possess some critical ability; he should be a man of taste and judgment, appreciative of the man whose biography he undertakes" (Colber, 1991).

Alternatively, *The Last Testament* is shaped by different boundaries in the sense that it does not only blur fantasy with fact or literary writings with critique. However, it mixes the dissimilarity between biographical literary forms and autobiographical ones. That is to say, the novel reflects the postmodern literary characteristics are marked by "eclecticism of genres" ( (Newman, 1985) . Although the novel reflects actually Peter Ackroyd`s certain biographical elements, it can also be considered as an story of an individual`s life or a revelation which is written by Oscar Wilde since it highlights his actual historical facts. For instance, the novel depicts vividly Wilde`s problematic relationship with his father "most untidy and dirty man, given to snorting while holding one finger to his nostrils. While at table he would often pick his nails with an old quill pen which he carried in his jacket, and leave the dirt upon the cloth" (Ackroyd, 1993) . Therefore, the novel seems to be interesting one since it mingles all these sorts of tensions that take place between the diverse potentials or dimensions of the work. Consequently, readers of the text always read it as it were Wilde's novel, although they aware all the time that it is really written by Ackroyd (Krestiva, 1980).

As a postmodern novel, Ackroyd`s *The Last Testament* is a significant one for its affluence of historical details sine it blends fantasy with fact and "plugs the gaps in the historical record". Similar to other



"historiographical meta-fiction" of the 1980s, the novel depicts quite daringly the accurate facts of Wilde's notorious fleshly characteristics life in order to show to the readers numerous other unrecorded actions of Oscar`s life. Furthermore, *The Last Testament* is a fantastic reinterpretation of Wilde's occupation, and at the same time it surpasses the traditional restrictions of biography writings or history. In a similar way to *Hawksmoor* or *Chatterton*, *The Last Testament* itself is doubtful of "historical truth" (Scholes,1979).

The two prolific authors (Ackroyd and Wilde) have in their texts a kind of "dialogic relationship between each other"; and this dialogic produces to some extent intriguing and frequently ambiguous or vague effects since readers ask whose text which is lastly they are reading whether they are reading Ackroyd's text or Wilde's? . In the light of this view, Julia Kristeva, the Bulgarian-French philosopher, semiotician, literary critic, novelist and psychoanalyst in her famous book which is entitled as *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art* (1980) states that the fundamental interpretation of this problem would be to indicate that the novel does not belong to Ackroyd because the style of the novel does not relate to Ackroyd. On the other hand, the text also does not relate to Oscar because it does not created by him. Therefore, Kristeva affirms, the autonomy of language of the novel since

any point of origin is impossible to trace: Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations, any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality replaces that of inter subjectivity, and a poetic language is read as at least double (Krestiva,1980).

On the other hand, *The Last Testament* can primarily be regarded as a work of pastiche which refers to an imitation without devastating change. According to Fowler in his book which is entitled as *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms* (1971) defines the term of pastiche as "an imitation without change [that] it is made up largely of phrases, motifs, images, episodes, etc. borrowed more or less unchanged from the work[s] of other author[s]" (Ackroyd, 1993).

Ackroyd is authentic and accurate to the style of Oscar since the former imitates Wilde's words and sentence structures. By imitating Wilde's way of metaphor and comparison, Ackroyd writes "I have always attempted to express in my own tongue the languor and the eroticism of the French writers. Their sentences are like flowers pressed tightly together: no light can pass them which is not dazed by color and infected by scent" (Ackroyd, 1993). Moreover, Ackroyd also mimics in his writings Wilde's sense of sadness and grief by saying "I had appealed to the world to save my reputation, and it crushed me" (Ackroyd, 1993).

Indeed, Ackroyd integrates imitation with criticism and he focuses on his own literary technique and in a clever way he tries to bring reader's attention to it. In addition to that, Ackroyd examines critically at the same time Wilde's style. In the light of this view, Ackroyd views literature as always about other literature. For Fowler, literature might be "reverential and appreciative", nonetheless it might perhaps be "disrespectful and sometimes deflationary". This view is similar to Hutcheon's theory that highlights the concepts of parody or intertextuality or pastiche, each one of them is "not nostalgic; it is always critical" (Hutcheson, 1981).

Ackroyd has already criticized in *Notes for a New Culture* (1976) the old-fashioned humanism of plentiful English fictional critique that views in a large way the significance of literary works in the ethics or "experience that is mediated by the author". In the above paper, Ackroyd wants to warn critics and literary readers against judging works of literature by their morality or their community use, or their special senses of the writers, rather than he stresses a language's independence and elegance of literature. In a similar way to most Ackroyd's narratives, *The Last Testament* can be viewed to discuss these suggestions, in spite of everything, it was Oscar Wilde, like Ackroyd, who insists on, "art for art's sake", or that "there is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book" (Wild, 1985).

### **3.2. Chatterton (1987)**

Thomas Chatterton's literary writings have been seen by many literary histories as a kind of literary imitation and plagiarism, as well as fake and deceiving. In his masterpiece, *Chatterton* Ackroyd consequently

attempts to criticize such bad and negative observations around the poetry of Chatterton and to inquiry the reality of history about ,Chatterton, the poet. In other words, Ackroyd tries to view the falsifier , Chatterton, from another perspective through the eye of postmodernism. Thus, Ackroyd puts his characterization of the poet and seeks for finding answers to the inquiries of originality and counterfeit and even imitation and parody (Colby, 1991).

As a complex and postmodern novel, *Chatterton* is formed in a fragmented literary structure and with various plots in order to mirror and echo each other. The novel depicts the lives of Thomas Chatterton, George Meredith and Charles Wychwood who is Ackroyd's own creation,. Ackroyd unifies the lines of the novel by highlighting certain historical, factual and literary and artistic issues such as the artistic depictions of death and the inquiries of life and immortality through fine arts. That is to say, *Chatterton* displays how history increases its steadiness over art works and how decease may be overwhelmed by it. However, *Chatterton* examines eventually what kind of art really is unique and original? , or does imitation has its worth too?(Hutcheon, 1989).

The novel sheds light on some questions concerning the followings: what is an imitation, is imitation a kind of plagiarism, or a kind of borrowings or a robbery or a fake? Can mimicry and intertextuality be regarded as properties of all art?. The majority of characters on the novel are dealing with such questions. The main plot of Ackroyd`s novel focuses on the discovery of Charles Wychwood and his several efforts for solving the secret of a manuscript and a painting in order to demonstrate that the great poet Chatterton does not merely fake a medieval holy man, Rowley`s poems, , but he also fabricated his recklessness so that Chatterton produces even more counterfeits include verses by Blake, Gray, Cowper, and many other poets. Finally, all "these documents are revealed by Ackroyd to be fakes and imitations" (Bloom, 1975).

On the other hand, Sarah Tilt, Harriet`s friend "the famous art critic", writes a paper concerning the depictions of demise, resembles Wallis' portrait. Lastly, in addition to all characters , there is the character of Philip Slack who is a librarian and another colleague of Charles's. Slack himself

makes several attempts to write a fiction, but he is ultimately leave it by saying not

only had he written with painful slowness and uncertainty, but even the pages he had managed to complete seemed to him to be filled with images and phrases from the work of other writers whom he admired. It had become a patchwork of other voices and other styles. (Ackroyd,1987).

That is to say, Ackroyd's fictional characters are faced with the concept of intertextuality in one way or another. In this vein, the depiction of Philip's incomplete narrative from resembles to a great extent Kristeva's idea about language as "mosaique de citations" or Roland Barthes' view of texts as "echo chambers" (Krestiva, 1980). Therefore, one can say that Ackroyd is very conscious of contemporary philosophies of intertextuality. The main aim of Ackroyd`s plots in the novel is just to draw readers` considerations to the notion that there are "only a limited number of plots in the world" and that "Everything is copied"(Ackroyd, 1987). Consequently, the crucial point in Ackroyd`s *Chatterton* is evidently to persuade readers of the novel in the idea that actually there is no problem in a novelist / a poet utilizing other authors' materials; whether they acknowledge that point or no. Thus, a great numbers of writers or authors are copycats(Barthes, 1977): "'Well you know these writers. They'll steal any...'(...) 'Anything, that's right.'""(Ackroyd, 1987. "Yes, everyone copies""(Ackroyd, 1987).

As a result, If everything is really unoriginal (copied) as Ackroyd, Plett (1991), Barthes (1977), Kristeva (1969) and other intertextualists highlight, so the lines between genuine and false become blurred as Ackroyd himself assures that point very vividly in the novel by asking that "is the work of Rowley a forgery? (...) Is it not, as the Platonists tell us, an imitation in a world of Imitations?" (Ackroyd,1987) As a deconstructionist, Ackroyd suggests that "a genuine fake is better than a fake genuine", and relates this view to Chatterton: "The Fame of a great Plagiarist?" 'No, the Fame of a great Poet. You prove your Strength by

doing their Work better than ever they could, and then by also doing your own."(Ackroyd, 1987).

As a matter of fact, Ackroyd did not want to discard absolutely the notion of originality or the concept of authorship, but on the contrary of that he wants to save the idea of originality by giving it a postmodern meaning which is different from other postmodernists corresponding to Hutcheon (1988) who insists on the idea that there is no concept of originality within the idea of intertextuality. Unlike Hutcheon and other postmodernists, Ackroyd re-defines the notion of originality in order to be contest with his ideas. According to Ackroyd, "originality consists in forming new and happy combinations, rather than searching after thoughts and ideas which had never occurred before"(Ackroyd, 1987). This means that the words tolerate repeating. For Ackroyd's art philosophy, words are central to Bloom's idea which asserts that "poetic influence need not make poets less original; as often it makes them more original" (Bloom, 1975).

In the light of this view, *Chatterton* is a novel about intertextuality and it is a kind of parody of past writing at the same time. In this case, *Chatterton* resembles *First Light* since the latter is also a spoof of science and archeology. Furthermore, *Chatterton* is carefully complicated with past, but it can be regarded as a historical novel because it is considered by scholars as a literary text which is concerned with the "historicity of history" which deals with the difficulties are elaborate in the process of past writings. According to Linda Hutcheon, this kind of novel is called "historiographic metafiction". She argues that such novels have developed during the last years and became copious progressively to reflect the catastrophe of in the anthropological sciences, carried by deconstruction and postmodernism theory. In her book *The Politics of Postmodernism*, Hutcheon states that, there are other novelists, besides Ackroyd, dealing with historiographic metafiction novel include Julian Barnes, Salman Rushdie, Umberto Eco, D. M. Thomas, and many others.(Hutcheon, 1989)

As it has been said before, Ackroyd wants to criticize the reality of history mainly through the means of parody. Although the first page of the novel depicts the official description of Chatterton's life, Ackroyd

deviates throughout the novel from the biographical (factual) versions and depicts numerous accounts of the identical actions that fake the truth of the chronological record. On the other hand, the biographical fact shows how Chatterton, the poet, is disheartened outwardly via the bad welcome of his verse which was held in the city of London as a result of that action, Chatterton killed himself at the age of seventeen with arsenic on August in 1770.

In *Chatterton*, Ackroyd exposes two different versions. The first version shows that Chatterton falsified his suicide, and lived on ,until fifty as well as composed certain verses of his generations including the famous poems by Gray and Cowper. The second one sheds light on that Chatterton dies at the age of seventeen without committing suicide. In the light of this version, the death of Chatterton was due to an accident instead of committing a suicide. This view highlights the idea that Chatterton was full of energy instead of being hopeless and he was productive and enthusiastic poet. Thus, his death was only a wrong combination of opium and arsenic which was intended to remedy a disease (Huber, 1990).

Both Ackroyd`s versions about Chatterton mock the authorized "historical record and pose certain inquiries around its authority. According to Ackroyd, the propositions concerning the life of Chatterton remain a possibility. In other words, anyone could seemingly interpret Chatterton's insincere demise and his unplanned decease as a recklessness, but these suggestions continue a type of options which will be scarcely acknowledged "by the conventions of history writings". As a consequence, *Chatterton's* use of parody is vividly critical one since history is showing in a way which is no better than fiction (Bloom, 1975).

The second version of Chatterton's unintentional poisoning is essentially a kind of parody because it fakes "the biographical record" as well as Henry Wallis' genuine painting about the death of Chatterton. During the course of the negotiations amid the artist and his model, the artist focuses on the issues of realism and verisimilitude in order to draw the picture of Chatterton`s death . However against such claims, Ackroyd argues that the paintings of Wallis actually lacks many aspects of realism to the extent that Wallis`s 'verisimilitude' is a significantly romanticized

vision. This vision highlights the conventions of the nineteenth century fine art rather than result of poisoning; "the saliva fills Chatterton's mouth, a river overflowing its precious banks"(Huber, 1999).

Thus, Ackroyd mocks Wallis' views of realism by signifying that Chatterton's death by committing suicide is never an attractive picture. Such as Hutcheon suggestions that Ackroyd`s *Chatterton* 's multiple accounts of the same events concerning the death of Chatterton, pay the attention of the readers` text to the representations of history in order to make them realize the idea that history is always a fabricated one and actively created. Therefore, Henry's paintings are representations of past, and Ackroyd's parody is a form of reply to Wallis' paintings, and both of them telling a dissimilar story. (Hutcheon, 1989) On the other hand, the novel recognizes pastiche powers and "how history could be woken up to life through imitation and imagination" by using a unique conflation of fiction and fact (Ackroyd, 1987). By way of Ackroyd's character Meredith who says Chatterton,

did not create an individual simply [the monk Rowley].  
He invented an entire period and made its imagination  
his own: no one had properly understood the medieval  
world until Chatterton summoned it into  
existence.

Alternatively, a number of eighteenth century poets have devoted diverse implications to the life of Chatterton. Such as, William Blake who views Chatterton as a vital poet in stimulating the medieval and feudal realm and folklore. While for the Romantic poets, Chatterton becomes catastrophic poet (Chatterton, 1911) In addition, Oscar Wilde views Chatterton as "an object of identification as well because of his criminal propensities and his artistic power". (Ellmann, 1987). As a postmodern novelist and critic, Peter Ackroyd, re-describes the myths of eighteenth century poet, Chatterton, to make him a motto of his literary fictions. Resembling a postmodernist writer, Ackroyd abolishes the traditional mythologies in order to create a mythology or a form of reality or of his own.



#### **4. Conclusion**

As a noteworthy postmodern novelist, Peter Ackroyd uses his literary talent in order to write fictions that re-write and re-examine the literary past. Thus, Ackroyd`s fictions can be regarded as a kind of literary criticism. Thus, Intertextuality is conceptualized in Peter Ackroyd`s two novel *The Last Testaments and Chatterton* . The former, *The Last Testament* blurs the boundaries between literary criticism, autobiography and biography. In addition to that, the novel also makes a distinction between pastiche and parody. Later on, the text highlights Ackroyd's imitations of Wilde through examining certain aspects of Wilde's literary writings for instance style and seriousness. In *Chatterton*, Ackroyd raises a number of inquiries about the nature of art, as well as certain assumptions about the concepts of plagiarism and fake.

Moreover, *Chatterton* is a novel which shows certain criticism since it contrasts with the idea that highlights the search for totally modern ideas and opinions. Thus, the novelist expresses his personal argument that concentrates on a modern meaning to the idea "of originality" by showing that original texts should be involved in modern forms instead of modern thoughts. Therefore, *Chatterton* highlights a number of literary notions such as the notion of parody, self-reflexively as well as its irony of historical fact. As a result of that , *Chatterton* holds the postmodern textual view of history that focuses on the notion that history should be opened to a number of diverse interpretations particularly through providing many accounts of the identical events .

Through using intertextuality in *Chatterton*, Ackroyd wants to pay the attention of his readers to the representations of history, in Hutcheon`s term (1989) historiographic metafiction. Finally, for Ackroyd, the reputation and significance of Chatterton is not in his catastrophic death, but the reputation of Chatterton lies in writing poetry and how he understands the powers of pastiche which sheds some light on how history should wake up to life by imitation and fancy. Ackroyd suggests a postmodern addition to the literary canon through re-evaluating the prominence of Chatterton. Through the postmodern using of literary techniques such as parody and pateich, Ackroyd shows his concept of



intertextuality. Finally, Ackroyd re-defines the notion of originality in order to be contest with his intertextual view of art.

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