

The Struggle and Coexistence of Genres for Survival

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Abstract

The study of genres is one of the significant subjects in the field of literary criticism and theory, which regained importance in contemporary literature following the upswing of criticism. The advancement of discussions related to literary genres also faced challenges. Genres come into existence for different reasons. For example, they sometimes form sub-genres of the same type inside themselves or form them independently; they may also live inside the dominant genre as a recessive genre, associate with other genres, or form kinship relationships. After coming into existence, sub-genres also move in a similar direction. The mixture of genres and sub-genres sometimes generates new genres and micro-genres in different manners. Micro-genres also make the same effort for survival. In such a situation, some sub-genres and micro-genres fade and sometimes they may revive or resurrect in other situations. These relationships and the progress of genres from the beginning to the end – which can be called the struggle for survival in genres – can solve problems like the ingenuousness of genres, the impossibility of including sub-genres under a specific genre, and the mixture of genres, subgenres and micro-genres.

Keywords: Struggle for Survival, Coexistence of Genres, Generation of Genres, Sub-genres

Extended Abstract

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1. Introduction

It seems that no clear-cut boundary can be drawn between different literary genres. It is undeniable that literary genres are intertwined as they are influenced by their different historical, social, psychological as well as aesthetic backgrounds. What is yet of greater importance is to examine the conditions and reasons that can result in their interconnectedness. To study these reasons, the lives of different genres and the ways in which they can coexist should be analyzed. This process includes the life, death and at times rebirth of different genres, which is of vital significance for their survival. The conflicts between these genres, their struggle for survival, and their coexistence can explain their interconnectedness.

2. Theoretical Framework

Literary genres emerge in the context of social, cultural, historical and psychological factors, which are dynamic and ever-changing conditions. Therefore, different literary genres both struggle with each other and coexist peacefully almost in the same way that human beings and animals do. Thus, literary genres are, similarly, affected by external factors, such as historical, social and cultural ones.

3. Methodology

In the present study first library resources on literary genres were analyzed. Then, some Western theoretical concepts were studied so that the life of different literary genres could be analyzed. Finally, using some classical Persian literary texts the lives of different literary genres were examined.

4. Findings

Literary genres are affected by social, cultural and historical variables in their creation. These variables are constantly changing, leading to changes in these genres. In order to survive, literary genres give birth to sub-genres, some of which gain an independent identity. New genres and sub-genres are born when different genres or sub-genres combine. For example, in Western literature the ballad was born when lyrical and epic poetry combined. In Persian literature when the epic started to

decline, it tried to combine with historical and religious genres, resulting in the birth of religious and historical epics. Some genres are more powerful in certain eras and influence other genres. The mystical genre, for example, was very popular from the 12th to the 15th century, resulting in the birth of mystical epics such *Mantiq al-Tayr* and *Masnavi*.

5. Conclusion

The survival or death of genres is the result of a process that dominates the world of genres. In this process, different genres try to survive. In order to do so, literary genres give birth to sub-genres. Sometimes completely new genres are born and at times they are born through the intermingling of two or more genres. These genres can later develop their own independent identities. Some genres seem to be fitter for survival and more powerful in influencing other genres. As they are influenced by factors dominating the world of creatures, some genres cannot escape death, while others, for social, historical and cultural reasons, resurrect.

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