

The literary Text from the Poetics of Genres to Textual Structures

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Abstract:

This study seeks to search for the problem of the literary text and its relationship to the issue of genre classification through the theory of genres or what is known as poetics according to Aristotle, who researched the subject of poetry and tried to search for its types, characteristics and rules, for the nature of the literary is linked to the extent to which the text respects certain standards; otherwise, the text will not have the right to be recognized as literarily legitimate by the literary institution. Poetics controls these standards and, through them, assesses literary texts, studies them, analyzes them and classifies them into higher models based on their characteristics. However, the literary text rebels against every classification and transcends the limits set by poetics, so poetics must recognize the transformations of the literary text and its dynamism, and must look at the differences rather than focusing on the similarities that unite the texts. Therefore, if poetics wants to achieve its project, it must recognize the specificity and diversity of the literary text, and proceed from it to formulate an effective dynamic conception according to the principle of textual structures.

Keywords: genre classification; genre theory; literary text; poetics; textual structures

Introduction

How can a literary text be considered literature? And how can its literary legitimacy be recognized in a certain culture that is resolved to create an aesthetic perception according to specific literary customs and traditions which give legitimacy to “taste” literary works and categorize them within the field of literature so that they can be received based on certain criteria? Aristotelian poetics attempted to introduce a proposal to study poetry and research its unique rules, specifically as related to tragedy, thereby creating the historical grounding for literary genres. Hence, what is the nature of literary genres? Are they actual organisms or are they theoretical conceptions trying to answer the question of literature and recognize its legitimacy by describing it as an institution? Do they recognize the literary text itself? This study attempts to dive into the field of poetics and the genre of the literary text, starting from Aristotle’s conception, revealing the limits of his poetics which was instilled in the classical conception and the dilemma it reached. We seek to present a proposal to deal with the literary text based on its linguistic background with a structural vision that treats literature as visual structures, making this proposition aligned with the peculiarities of the literary text through its depiction as a language dealing with a language.

The literary text stands upon the rule of language which constitutes the starting point as well as the material within which the text functions through the building of its systems which represent an essential model for building and forming, not as a way to repeat but as a way to surpass. In other words, the literary text creates its own system through language but also by surpassing it in the same time, when it seeks to destroy it and then uniquely rebuild it.

The text can then be independent from language and destroy the authority of the system only to rediscover it again, achieving its legitimate existence as a text. But where would be the position of this new structure inside the bars of linguistic traditions? And what would be the level of its acceptance inside the social establishment, given that it contradicts the fundamental rule of building the communicative act?

The problem is not only limited to the rate of acceptance or rejection of this text, because just by putting it in the context of literature it can be celebrated as a literary text, and the receiving or accepting of literary texts is only possible through literary customs and traditions that set the legitimacy of literature and oversee the acceptance of texts as literature. So what would be the state of the text it gets out of the language system and the familiarity of literature (the institution)? Is it out of the language institution to enter the literature institution? In other words, what is the position of the system that the text builds? Does it have the legitimacy to be a complete model, outlining all potential texts? What do we call this complete model text?

The literary institution provides us with the possibility to deal with those issues through an essential concept, namely “literary genres,” by describing them as complete organisms with complete rules, able to distinguish between the quality of texts and their structure to grant it the “literary” character. The problem or issue is only dealt with inside the field of literary genres or through researching a deeper concept: “poetics” or “poetics of literary genres”.

1- The Text and the Poetics of Genres

Poetics is an ancient / modern term, for it goes back historically to the Greek period with Aristotle, who is considered the first to propose it and provide theories on it, focusing on its relation with literary production. The term Poetics is also modern in that it has acquired its conceptual and theoretical formation in light of the intellectual developments that have accompanied literary theorization on the one hand, and the variety of literary production on the other.

In this regard, poetics has become a term that is historically loaded with the perceptions that have accompanied it, intersecting with most fields of knowledge, especially the humanities, including philosophy, history, anthropology, psychology, rhetoric, stylistics, literature and linguistics. This would make categorizing it in one specific concept almost impossible; any attempt to approach the concept will collide with multiple or even contradictory conceptions, inevitably putting the student in a difficult situation where he is forced to review the important and consecutive historical stages which shaped the general characteristics of the term in order to determine its origins, by referring to historical sources, with the aim of forming a comprehensive vision that takes into account the effective scientific advances which contributed to its building and development.

M. H. Abrams attempted to suggest a model for poetic theories based on the four composing elements of the literary act: the author, the reader, the work and the world. His approach sought to emphasize one of the elements.

Mimesis theories took interest in the relationship between the work and the scholar, while the Pragmatic theories emerged through emphasis on the relationship between the work and the reader. Romanticism stressed the author’s unmatched genius, thereby paving the ground for Expressionism. Afterwards, came the era of objective theories which described the work itself, opening a wide door for symbolism (Ducrot and Todorov, 1972, 109).

It is difficult to put separating boundaries between historical stages, for concepts can concur and coexist in one stage. For instance, we can put Aristotle in the stage of the first theory of “mimesis” as well as in the specific objective theory when the latter approached the literary work itself, which is what Aristotle indeed seeks, as we shall demonstrate later.

Dictionnaire Encyclopédique des Sciences du Langage explains that the concept of “poetics” – as inherited through customs – as first every internal theory of literature, and second as a concept that applies to an author’s choices from a multitude of choices (according to thematic organization, composition, style... etc. Thirdly, it refers to the codes put in place by a school of literature (the group of scientific rules that have to be used). In this sense, poetics proposes the use of a taxonomy that allows for the capture of the unity of literary works and their variations at the same time (Ducrot and Todorov, 1972, 106).

Todorov strongly emphasized that Poetics is every single internal theory of literature; every analysis of a text must be fundamentally conducted by focusing on this essential concept of Poetics. This concept is not new-born, nor is it the product of modern scientific thought. It is rather an old, passed-down concept, formed by the ancient Greek customs and traditions. Here, we are referring to the book *Poetics* by Aristotle, which represents the oldest book reaching us in the field of “literary theory” and the field of “poetry”, where the author sought to identify the essence of poetry and its types, which pushed him to create the first pillars of the theory of literary genres or poetics. But, what is the relationship between this procedure and Todorov’s concept and his statement: “every internal theory of literature”? We attempt to deal with this question by looking into the contents and objectives of the book *Poetics* and the “literary genres” theory.

A- The Poetics of Genres

Aristotle started his book by an introductory statement specifying his objectives. He built a comprehensive project, through which he aimed to deal with poetic art in itself, its types, the impact that each type must have and the method through which stories are to be composed to be in the best form. We will examine the nature of these parts, their number and we will finally talk about all that is related to this poetic art, starting from the principles according to the natural order (Aristot, 1874, 3). With this book opening, he specified the general methodological steps of his project. He considered all arts a form of mimesis – dancing, playing the flute, playing the guitar – including poetry of all its types which he narrowed down to the epic, tragedy and comedy.

To Aristotle, art is “mimesis”; its main aim is completing the imperfection found in nature. To do this, the tool – representing the mimesis material – subjects and method must be present. Arts differ according to the material used, i.e. they may use rhythm, meter or speech; or perhaps include them all. Dancing, for example, simulates not through meter or speech but only through rhythm. Poetry, on the other hand, primarily uses speech in addition to the use of meter and rhythm. On the basis of material, Aristotle separated poetry from other arts and specialized in poetry exclusively following his main project of dealing with poetry, not other arts.

Aristotle then moved to specifying the types of poetry through the subject and method. As for the subject, it could be noble or lowly, depending on the poets’ noble or lowly characters. It is in this sense that the good ones or heroes and villains are portrayed; hence, “tragedy” and “comedy” were created. “Tragedy” simulates a serious and complete act in a sophisticated language in order to invoke feelings of fear and pity (Aristot, 1874, 10), while “comedy” simulates a bad, humble act where the badness denotes the mistake that elicits shame and ridicule through the distortion of the act (Aristot, 1874, 9). The “epic”, on the other hand, is also a mimesis of a complete and serious act in a sophisticated language through narration. It is here that the “epic” and “tragedy” meet in the subject and diverge in the method, where the mimesis of the first is done through the presentation and representation, while the second does its mimesis through narration. In this sense, all that exists in the epic also exists in the tragedy, and all that exists in the tragedy does not exist in the epic (Aristot, 1874, 10). The essence of

poetry is in the mimesis, not in the meter – as initially seems – and the poet is an author of stories and plots primarily, not a versifier of verses; therefore, Aristotle compared the poet to the versifier and distinguished between the two on the basis of mimesis.

Since the poet creates stories, these stories either took place in a certain era, or they never took place at all, making them the author's own creation. Accordingly, the poet may intersect with the historian who tells stories that did happen and deals with the specifics, while the poet deals with facts not in the way that they happened, but in the way that they should have happened. The main difference between the two is not that the poet recites verses while the historian writes prose; rather, the difference lies in the mimesis. While the historian deals with the specifics, the poet deals with the whole; hence, poetry is more philosophical than history.

Aristotle dealt with poetry as a natural being that submits to the laws of natural necessity. He attributed the origins of poetry to two things that nature has put in us: the first being that there is a natural tendency from childhood toward mimesis, and the second being that the human is – inherently – the most mimesis-prone of all creatures, through which he receives his first knowledge, separating him from animals. This natural tendency then progresses through the mimesis instinct to initial improvisations, which gradually turn into serious attempt giving birth eventually to poetry (Aristot, 1874, 7).

This vision becomes stronger when we study the origins of tragedy and its development as a being that submits to the evolutionary considerations of living beings from its birth to what can fit it, to then – after multiple alterations – settle on its currently recognized form: its actual form (Aristot, 1874, 8). Poetry has gone through a natural evolution, as have the types of poetry; what is happening to tragedy also applies to comedy. It is on this basis that the legitimacy of the following question is established: what is the fate of poetry if we are to follow natural necessity? That is, if we acknowledge that tragedy for example – similar to the living being – goes through birth then maturity and then eventually demise, does this characteristic apply to poetry?

Aristotle did not discuss this problem; he limited himself to the description of the phenomenon of poetry, trying to study it through the plan that he previously established which lead him eventually to establish the rules that govern and explain poetry. He put in place strict rules in “tragedy” and forced poets to write this type of poetry and be creative in such writing. He did the same thing with “comedy” although he prioritized the first because of certain considerations which he explained in his chapter regarding the superiority of “tragedy” over the “epic”. For this reason, Aristotle's book is regarded as a book about “tragedy”, not “poetry”.

In this manner, Aristotle set rules for all types of poetry and identified each type's criteria, shaping what came to be known as “genres”, described as natural beings with their own unique rules, except for some qualities that may exist in every genre. From this, we understand why Aristotle talked about both genres as well as species. To him, genre is the basic being while the species represents the possible changes within the frame of the genre. If we take tragedy as an example, we find it to be a “genre”; the specific changes of tragedy, however, are the “species”. Therefore, Aristotle allowed room for the existence of possibilities and did not enclose genres within strict boundaries, for he started from the works of poetry themselves, dealing with them as they were from within. Accordingly, we deduce – in concurrence with Todorov – that Aristotle's poetics is an internal theory of literature. Are we right then to consider it structural? We do not favor the projectional reading of historical matters, so all that we can say is that Aristotle was like the first teacher of the structuralists. Poetry has been dealt with methodologically from three visions or positions – in J. M. Chaeffer's words – which can be specified as:

1- The biological model

- 2- The descriptive-analytical position
- 3- The standard position (Schaeffer, n.d.)

These positions are apparently intersected and are hard to distinguish from one another. The “biological” position considers genres as natural beings that submit to the logic of natural necessity. The “descriptive” position, on the other hand, came about in an attempt to describe poetry as it is with a desire to prescribe it with rules. The standard position is perhaps linked to the instructive tendency, where it manifested in the form of laws that ought to be followed to compose good poetry. Hence, these laws are in a way separating borders between poetic genres, or perhaps they are structural forms that sketch the structure of each genre.

However, is it not possible to look at the “narrative form” as a separating component between “tragedy” and the “epic”? Even further, is it not possible to consider the subject as well as separating component between “comedy” and “tragedy”? Are we facing two directions of dealing with genres of poetry? Or are we facing yet another rush to enact laws where we have the right to go with the crowd and ask about the nature of these laws: do they engage with the form or with the subject?

Aristotle’s system is, according to Gerard Genette et al, a tabular one that assumes – implicitly – a table with two entries where each genre is regarded as “subject” and “form” at the same time. For example, tragedy is known for noble subject as well as the acting of this noble subject on the stage (1986, 149). This also applies to the epic, while accounting for the narrative aspect. This duality did not affect Aristotle’s categorization, if we take into consideration that the work of poetry is based on the act and the acting primarily, which of course results in isolating lyric poetry, though Aristotle was attempting to study poetry in all its types.

This categorizing system held strong for multiple centuries in spite of the nature of revisions and criticism, and tragedy along with the epic remained as immortal genres despite the passing of time. The history of the “theory” was linked to such immortal works of poetry. This makes it possible for us to say that the history of the “theory of genres” is the history of the Aristotelian categorization in all its developments and its enduring stances, of course without ignoring the changes that poetry witnessed throughout history and their level of influence in creating an artistic concept that parallels development.

New types have emerged that differ from the historical genres, presenting consequently the problem of categorizing and processing them. We can say that the standard position was dominant until the end of the 18th century and then faded with the arrival of the essential “evolutionary” position which had the supremacy until the end of the 19th century. The latter gave way to the analytical “structural” project, following the emergence of the Russian formalists (Schaeffer n.d., 24). Aristotle’s three positions (the standard, the evolutionary and the descriptive) which have been adopted in different eras become very clear to us. Classicism was founded on the backdrop of reviving Greek heritage – both literary and intellectual – which is why it was necessary to strictly hold on to the Aristotelian model and to the historical genres of tragedy and the epic. The result of this is the adoption of the standard position which conforms with the principle of strict adherence to genre rules – as defined by Aristotle – without deviating from them. Therefore, genre concepts used to be considered as mainly concepts that help in judging the compatibility of a work with its rule or rather set of rules (Schaeffer, n.d., 30), allowing for the categorization of literary texts within codified boundaries, that summarize differences and variations in groups that represent genres. Hence, any stepping outside those boundaries would expel the texts from the literary circle.

In this manner, the literary genre becomes an “all-around” text with its own unique criteria which must be respected in the context of writing as well as the context of judging the value of the literary work that is determined based on the immortal works in the history of humanity, as

we cannot separate between genres and great works, in that we cannot separate the theory of genre, then, from the problematic of imitating great texts, or put more precisely, the settled rules extracted from these texts (Schaeffer, n.d., 24). It is true that the history of literature attests to the fact that a lot of literary works are an imitation of previous literary texts such as Homer's epics and Sophocles's tragedies and the Greek literature in general; Virgil's Aeneid is but an extension of Homer's Iliad just like all world literature that were inspired from the eternal spirit of Greek literature. It is also true that the rules of literary genres were manifested clearly in these immortal works, making them a standard by which all literary works are measured or a standard by which the works are assigned to their proper genre. However, to what extent can we establish a relationship between immortal works and literary genres? What is the real measuring standard in this relationship: the immortal works or the literary genres?

If we – for the sake of argument – accept the existence of this relationship, then how strong is it? Furthermore, what is the fate of the works that are not considered immortal or that do not operate under the specified rules of genres? Finally, what is the position of literary texts that are not in the category of immortal works? Are they not regarded as literary texts? Is the measuring standard of their literariness the extent of their imitation of immortal works? Are we not being selective?

Critical questions keep arising to the point where they intertwine, making answering them a difficult task. Therefore, we have to engage the matter in the following points:

1- M. Chaeffer starts from the assumption of the strong relationship between great works and the rules of genres, which is an assumption that complies with the historical logic drawn by literary works which formed themselves on the standard of genres that shaped its essence through literary works which were considered – by historians of literature – as great works according to Greek literature standards – the Greek literature being regarded as an elegant and complete model. Does this principle apply to all literary works?

We can respond to this assumption through the historical logic that M. Chaeffer himself adopted which is that, on the one hand, many great works are a breach and transgression of their genres' rules. On the other hand, the logic of historical evolution shows the emergence of literary texts that have no relation to the rules of specific genres, creating the problem of how to categorize them and deal with them. Thus, we might fall into the dilemma of ascribing them to a specific genre, which, in turn, requires the extension of the genre's boundaries for it to be able to encompass all the necessary changes so that it may survive.

Some genres have receded and others were created through the dialectical movement of genre and text which is based on the effective dynamism of texts and the resistance of the genre with its standards. The logic of great works with their rules inevitably leads to the rejection of other literary works; that is the unavoidable result of the standard logic.

The literary text has a distinctive essence that does not bind it to specific rules imposed by one genre so that it can realize its essence, and perhaps even be livelier. For when a text breaches the genre's boundaries, it proves its miraculous ability to demolish the structure of the whole genre and bypass it, forcing its presence to the point of creating a new genre through the two laws of breach and transformation. When we cannot identify a clearly set standard for a genre, we are obliged to extract a structure from the study of different texts with a constant presupposition of the existence of a possible whole or a governing system of the group of texts (Jauss, 1986, 57). Hence, any textual production, provided it shares some sort of a property with other texts, may establish a system or structure that could lead to the creation of a new genre.

In his book *The Notion of Literature*, Todorov dedicated a chapter to discuss the origins of genres, trying to research how the literary genre is created. He concluded that genres simply have their origins in human discourse (1987, p. 46). Accordingly, any act of speaking can create

a genre, provided that this act is an encrypted expression of a society's ideology whose origins are traced back to a unique experience. This explains why some genres appear in certain societies but are absent in others (Todorov, 1987, 35).

2- Great works emerged in a historical period to express the human's view of reality and the universe; hence, it was the product of the human experience. Here, we recognize a strong relationship between literary genres and the human experience in its understanding of reality and its knowledge of the world.

Karl Vietor links different human experiences to forms of poetry where each human experience corresponds to a form of poetry or an aspect of humans. Drama, for instance, is the human as a being of desire and action, while the epic is the human as a being of knowledge and contemplation. Lyric poetry, on the other hand, is the human as being of emotions and expressions (1986, 12).

If we accept this relationship, how can great works be a standard for all human experiences across all eras? A critic may say that the standards of genres are abstract in that they are not restricted to one work; they are in fact comprehensive.

A response to the above critique would refer to the historical logic of the evolution of genres themselves. Are the rules of tragedy for the Greeks the same as those of Shakespeare, for example – Shakespeare being the writer of works of tragedy? Shakespeare's experience is different from that of Sophocles, so the former's works of tragedy – which represented a key stage in the history of tragedy – are naturally different. Tragedy and comedy have overlapped so much in the works of Shakespeare that the separating boundaries which Aristotle insisted upon completely collapsed.

Let us take another example that is perhaps more clear: Dante's *Divine Comedy*. This work – having a problem in terms of its name and genre – is described as an epic. This creates a dilemma regarding its name due to the word "comedy", for comedy, after it had been confined to the Aristotelian conception, is due to evolution used to refer to any work with a happy ending.

This is because historical progression forces an evolution of experiences and a change in genres. 3- The course of transformations requires us not to limit our perspective to the relationship of genre / text, as reflected in the standard position, but rather to give credence to the text, because we seek to classify it within a certain category, and therefore, it is natural to review genres themselves, starting from the texts, and following the example of Aristotle without calling for their abolition, as R. Barthes did who tried to include all textual output within the writing whole. Since genres are based on a taxonomic principle, can this principle not be changed, in accordance with the requirements of "textual dynamics", so the question is as follows: is the issue about theoretical expressions linked to clear definitions invented by critics – or theorists – in order to introduce the principles of the system of mass formless literary documents, or also in order to extract abstract templates from the art of literature, which are manifested through individual texts (Schaeffer, n.d., 53)? We cannot abolish "genres" as a categorical act, because the problem is complex and twofold since genres are part of the history of texts, but we can adopt another position, starting mainly from texts, in order to search for a structure or system that governs texts – as we have shown with Jauss – and also to attempt a theoretical reformulation of "genre theory", starting from the distinction between historical genres and theoretical genres, as seen by Todorov, so that the former is based on the observation of the literary fact, while the second is based on a theoretical basis (Todorov, 1970, 19).

We should not get into the details of the depths of genre theory as this requires its own independent research, but by raising this point, we attempt to get to the point of reference to the text as a starting point on the one hand, and as a direct representative of the literary fact on the

other. Thus, the path of text/genre is inevitable and necessary for any categorical attempt, which had to proceed from textual specificity.

B- The Text and the Principle of Genre Classification

Why do we need classification when dealing with literary texts? Can't we perceive them, and interact with them without classification? There are at least two considerations in this matter:

- A consideration that has to do with the nature of the literary phenomenon whose literariness is not recognized unless a set of specific elements are involved which form the "horizon of its expectation".
- A consideration that deals with the process whose aim is to try to explain the literary phenomenon, by searching for common features between a set of texts, provided that they form a system, and are reduced to a classification principle that is used as a shared general rule, where the individuality of the texts is not dismissed.

However, on what basis are common features defined? Are they determined on the basis of "content", "subject", or "form"?

The basis must be related to what achieves the literary characteristic of the texts, based on previous knowledge of what the literary text is, and the totality of its transformations, and then based on analytical tools, which help to identify the common internal characteristics of a group of texts, so that they can be classified in one section or what we can call the "total model" that includes the characteristics of the texts listed in this section. For any taxonomic work, far from reaching the hypothesis of internal self-organization of literature, is nothing but a waste of time, a supra-textual structure, that finds its legitimacy in the knowledge strategy of the theorist of poetry, and not in the shared internal differentiation of literature (Schaeffer, n.d., P. 59). This, however, does not negate the necessity of the taxonomic act.

In his book *Introduction à la Littérature Fantastique*, Todorov tries to establish a conception of the literary genre as an act of reading, arising by starting from the text itself and knowing its peculiarities to eventually be able to construct a special literary genre, namely fantasy literature. Therefore, it is imperative to identify the peculiarities on which the analysis will be based, which Todorov limits to three aspects:

- **A verbal aspect:** dealing with sentences that make up the structure of the text
- **A Compositional aspect:** characterized by the reciprocal relations between the parts of a literary work, which can manifest themselves in three forms: logical, temporal, spatial (related to space)
- **A - Semantic appearance:** characterized by the general semantic subjects, specific to literature (1970, 24)

The three aspects interplay and interact, allowing the formulation of the overall model of a layer of texts, which can be called "fantasy genre", which Todorov tries to elaborate on throughout his book, as it is clearly shown, through the book's table of contents.

From the determination of the genre, to the search for the characteristics of this discourse, to the identification of the semantic world, through the subjects of the "I", and the subjects of the "you", which ultimately formulate the fantasy world, Todorov tries to show that genres can be constructed through a textual base, to prove his theory that is based on this principle. Every theory of genres is based on a representation of a literary work (1970, 24). M. Schaeffer questions this procedure, based on the following points:

Firstly, this procedure confines the debate on the problem of literary genres to a limited duality (genre/text); thus, we find ourselves slipping into forming an "ontological" discourse of what genres are, considering that the text is a physical component, while genre is an external datum that transcends the text, resulting in a debate that is limited to going back and forth between the

text and the genre and vice versa in a never-ending cycle (Genette et al, 1986, 184). As a result, the debate moves away from the realm of “literary theory” to the “ontological” datum related to the philosophical meanings of phenomena.

Secondly, textual, formal and thematic similarities make the phenomenon of genre classification only a textual component, and therefore do not solve the problem of genre classification, but go beyond it. In fact, as we have shown, we cannot transcend genres, as they are an essential component of the existence of the literary text and an effective format that contributes to the process of the literary phenomenon and guarantees the legitimacy of its existence. This does not mean that we are circling in a closed loop that takes us back to the beginning. The importance of genres must be acknowledged as they are a phenomenon of literary history, besides being a textual factor particularly (Schaffer, 155). Therefore, proposing a new genre model is not necessary; dealing flexibly with the problem is.

Thirdly, to overcome the problem, M. Chaeffer proposes distinguishing between genre, as a model of reading, and genre classification, as an active factor in the textual production of the text (Genette et al, 1986, 199). Hence, the link between the text and genre classification is made as a textual phenomenon that has a close relationship with textual production, and that interacts with the text, so that it represents the totality of the open possibilities of literary production.

The researcher must observe these possible changes to study the genre classification process, starting from the search for similarities that currently exist in all texts at the modal, formal, and thematic levels (Genette et al, 1986, 203).

M. Schaeffer agrees with Todorov in this conception and procedure; the difference lies in the aims and perspectives, as Todorov starts from the text to reach the genre, through the “total” text that contains all the particularities, while M. Schaeffer examines genre as a textual activity through his search for textual features. On this basis, he specified his project, starting from the text itself as a discursive achievement within the scope of a communicative process that takes into account the circumstances of achievement and the conditions of reception. And if we want to say something else about the work, then the work is not only a “text”, that is, it is not only a linguistic and semantic series, but above all, a communicative act between human beings, whose message emanates from a specific person, under certain circumstances and for a specific goal, and is received by another person, who has his own circumstances and goals (Schaeffer, n.d., 62).

The work is not limited to being a material “text” or “spoken product” only, but also as an achievement that is involved in the communicative act conditioned by non-textual data, specifically, cultural data. The conditions of production and reception are linked to a specific cultural context, which frames how literary texts are produced, and the way of dealing with them as an aesthetic product with its own rules. From this perspective, M. Chaeffer tries to deal with genres’ names, based on the act of achievement and the communicative process.

The communicative process is based on five components, which can be clarified according to the following determinants: Who says? What is he saying? And through which channel? And to whom is it aimed? And what effect does this have on the receiver (Schaeffer, n.d., 63)? It is on the basis of these five basic determinants that textual specificities can be determined which then turn into taxonomic data for genres’ names. They are:

1- The Expression Level: It relates to the possible forms of expression of the act of expression, and the essence of expression, i.e. the status of the phrase, the status of the expressive act, and the methods of expression.

2- The Destination Level: It is represented in the being to which the discursive act is directed; the addressee can be one, specific or undefined, and it can be real or imaginary.

3- The Function Level: Every linguistic act has a specific function, as long as it is teleological; the function can be serious, it can be playful.

4- The Semantic Level: It is represented in the contents or general subjects.

5- The Structural Level: It is related to the formal aspect, and is concerned with the grammatical necessities of the names of the genres, whether they are phonetic (rhythmic, prosodic, etc.) or stylistic features (Schaeffer, n.d., 64-85).

All levels relate directly to the texts, and attempt to formulate overall similarities that can be considered the basis for a particular genre. It is true that we did not go into the details of each level to see how it can determine the genre, nor did we mention the problems that relate to some levels, especially the semantic level, because it requires us to elaborate more deeply, so we only raise some observations and some questions about the procedures of M. Chaeffer without going into the details of the discussion of his project.

The scholar has realized the need to refer to the text in the formation of the theory of genres, and to start from a clear perception in which each genre theory assumes a theory of the identity of the literary work, and more broadly, the written work because the literary work as a whole is a discursive act, and a complex, multidimensional semantic fact; and for this reason, the question of its identity will not have one single answer, because identity – on the contrary – is always relative according to the dimension through which we look at it (Schaeffer, n.d., 62). This definition acknowledges that a literary work is a complex semantic phenomenon, which makes it difficult to identify it since it is multidimensional. Furthermore, the identity of this work is relative and changing based on the observation angle and the mechanisms from which we proceed which allow us to deal with it, in addition to the textual dynamic of the principle of genre classification, which may have posed a fundamental problem to the principle of classification. Neither the perception of the text will appear clear, nor will the genre classification appear stable. So can the textual dynamic, with its changing data and context, conflict with the search for textual similarities? Can we identify textual similarities within the flowing textual activity?

Even if these similarities exist, do texts have the same functions and purposes if they are in different circumstances and contexts? Are they received in the same way, with different people and different temporal circumstances of reception? Then to what extent can we trust textual dynamics so that we can construct genre names? How do we deal with modernist texts that do not recognize borders, overlapping with all forms of expression, linguistic and non-linguistic, including writing that does not recognize the institution, destroying all agreements? Are genres not institutions that textual practice work to destroy, even if genre classification is a textual dynamic?

The aim of the scholar – as we have seen – was not to propose a new system for the classification of genres, but rather to preserve historical genres and, at the same time, to present a new vision for the classification of genre names through the literary text. The questions remain, as long as the genre problem persists. This means that the genre problem, as a phenomenon of literary history and also as a textual factor particularly persists (Schaeffer, n.d., 55). G. Genette, in his work “Introduction à l’Architexte”, almost adopts the same premises, with some differences that we see as essential, as the text is an essential starting point in the genre classification process, by referring to the possible similarities according to which the genre classification system is built. They are represented in the following constants: thematic, formulaic, and formal (1986, 154).

Genette takes a completely different approach from that of his predecessors. After discussing the various visions of genres and their problem, from Aristotle’s misunderstanding to the romantic era – which was compatible with literary development throughout history, he came

up with an alternative based on his definitive departure from the idea of genres, leaving it to literary historians. Adopting the physical existence of the literary work as a rule of transcendence, he says in search of the “universal text”, or “*L'architexte*”, “Let us pay attention to what exists, i.e. individual works” (1986, 156), i.e. the text.

What concerns Genette, however, is not the text, as an independent unit, but what puts it in relation to other texts, whether this relationship is apparent or subtle, so as to establish what is known as “textual transcendence”, which includes the various possible typical textual forms. These textual transcendentalities are limited to:

- **Intertextuality**: It concerns the presence of one text in another, whether this presence is total or partial.
- **Metatextuality**: It is the text that is linked to another text through commentary, i.e. the “explanatory text”.
- **Paratextuality**: It is the text that converts other texts on the basis of mimesis or conversion. Examples are the parodies or the “*mu'āraḍa*” (in Arabic literature).
- **Architextuality**: It includes the relationship of each text to the various models of discourse. Here is where genres fall into, with their previously presented determinants: the subjective, the formulaic, and the formal (Genette, 1986, 157). This term is not intended to be an alternative to genres as long as it includes the “model” from which any text is generated, but it is located above, below, and around the text which can only be woven by being hung – here – in the universal textile web (Genette, 1986, 158). In this way, the comprehensive text is the “total model” for the production of literary texts, where texts are formed according to a fabric based on formal, formulaic and thematic data, which qualifies it – in the end – to be the direct subject of poetics, which is not interested in texts in themselves as much as it is interested in possible macro-models.

We pause to ask the following question: what poetics is G. Genette talking about? Are they the poetics of Aristotle, which started from texts to get to the point of establishing the rules of genres? Or are they the standard classical poetics, based on Horace’s rules instead of Aristotle’s? It appears that Genette starts from texts to search for the textual models and not genres. From here, he tried to establish new poetics, transcending literary genres to all textual practices in the field of literature. At this point, Todorov’s conceptions and those of M. Chaeffer intersect – of course, with differences that we have already demonstrated.

Poetics will take a new path that goes beyond the problems of genres to get closer to texts, in an attempt to understand the mechanisms of their operation and how they are formed, based on tangible material components that are observable and describable on a scientific basis, so that the parameters of the subject and the method used in practice and analysis are determined, so that the possibility of explanatory theoretical formulation is achieved through the general formulation of the laws that govern the literary phenomenon. Poetics, then, tries to be more scientific to gain legitimacy for its existence. This is clearly shown in the project of the Russian formalists, as we will demonstrate.

2- Textual Structures and Genre Classification

The interest of poetics focused on texts mainly in their approach as linguistic entities primarily, which made it come into contact with other fields of knowledge, especially linguistics, which specializes in the study of human language scientifically. This is because poetics is a field of knowledge that approaches linguistic texts, which makes it more in contact with the methodology of linguistics, making the methodology of the latter more effective, in dealing with poetics (Nadem, 1994, 66). Linguistics, and in particular “structural linguistics”, with its concepts and procedural tools, formed a solid scientific ground, which allowed the revision of many concepts of the literary work and even the concept of literature itself, and questioning it

again. This was evident in the work of the Russian formalists, who tried - on grounds of linguistics - to re-ask questions related to the literary phenomenon as a primarily linguistic textual product that works from language and works within language.

Therefore, the direction of the research had to be changed, starting with a reconsideration of the relationship between poetry and literary genres – as established in the classical tradition of genre theory. For if the course changes – which we have shown in the previous element – the subject will inevitably change.

Roman Jakobson defines the subject by limiting the problem within the scope of language so that the subject of poetics is first and foremost to answer the question: what makes a verbal message an artistic effect (1963, 210)? Poetics raises issues related to linguistic structures primarily and their artistic uses, and since linguistics is a science of general linguistic structures, poetry becomes a “branch” of this science. Linguistics clearly examines the human language system, specifically the mechanisms of language and the structures that control it. But what does poetics research? Does it research verbal messages or texts as literary outputs? On what structures is it settled? Is it settled on linguistic structures – which is the subject of linguistics fundamentally – or on the linguistic structures within literature?

Russian formalism has been associated with linguistics; it has raised a number of issues related primarily to literature and literary texts, which are scientific issues that can be clarified in three axes:

- 1- The possibility of the scientific study of literature: Literary study has always been subject to taste and subjective impressions, far from any scientific logic (so as not to say objective).
- 2- Attempting to build a concept of literature: It is based on the scientific approach of studying, not on philosophical reflections.
- 3- Searching for the literariness of literature: This is the question put by Jakobson. What makes a linguistic expression – any expression – have an artistic or literary effect? How can we distinguish between the ordinary uses of language and the artistic (literary) uses of it, in order to capture the particularity of literature?

The three axes overlap in that one cannot be addressed without discussing the other. In other words, the second and third axes can only be addressed by addressing the first basic axis, which tries to start from a scientific vision. Put more specifically, the concept of literature is formulated only through the first axis, and the particularity of literary is determined only through the second and third axes.

Formalism focused on the first axis mainly, which is the axis of establishing a scientific study of literature; that would not be possible unless the subject of the science of literature is identified, which is ‘the literariness’; i.e. what makes any given impact a specifically literary impact (Jakobson, 1977, 16). According to the quote above, the close interdependence between the first and the third axes emerges, and through them, the actual subject of literary science emerges represented in the “literariness”, that is, the conditions that make any linguistic practice a literary product; literature is then reduced to its distinctive features, i.e. what is purely literary. This was the original inclination that equates literature with literariness, which reduces literature to its distinctive features (Erlich, 2001, 50). However, “literariness” should not be understood as restricting or narrowing the field of literature. To remove confusion, two basic points must be clarified:

First, the issue is literary study as scientific subject, not literature itself.

Second, literariness is not the only component of literature, but it is the strategic characteristic that shapes the literary impact from which it feeds (Erlich, 2001, 51). This strategy is not pre-given as a preconceived concept, from which the researcher proceeds to reveal within the texts,

but it is a project, which is searched for through the direct approach of texts. If we want to formulate this into a crucial question, we ask, how is the defining characteristic of literature (i.e. its literariness) determined?

This question preoccupied most Russian formalists, as evidenced by the fact that most of their concerns were related to approaches to individual literary works, whether poetry or prose, although poetry was more present in their works. Todorov provides us with their most important investigations and interests on this issue in the following points:

- The relationship between emotional language and poetic language
- The phonetic composition of verses
- Toning as a component in the construction of the verse
- Meter and the metrics standard (rhythm in poetry and prose)
- The relationship between rhythm and signification in poetry
- The methodology of literary studies
- The constraints of reality imposed on the text and its overlapping with the requirements of the text's own structure
- The structure of the wondrous tale
- Modeling narrative forms (Todorov, 2001, 15-16)

These axes summarize a well-defined path for the formalists, starting from poetic language to textual modeling by raising methodological problems related to literary studies, which shows that the movement's project went through two crucial stages. In the early stage, they tended to express the problem of poetic language in terms of the duality of guide and reference. In the last stage (i.e. the structuralist stage), they apparently tried, though not explicitly, to make poetics part of semiotics. More importantly, formalist theorization has made strides towards extending a Gestalt sketch of literary creation, and in particular, poetic production. Suffice it to refer to the concepts of 'format' and 'dominance' of the OPOYAZ, in its final stage and to the concept of Prague structure (Erlach, 2001, 168).

In the early stage, issues specifically related to the language used in literary texts were raised to distinguish between the literary and the non-literary; therefore, the linguistic duality of poetic and ordinary language was raised, considering that ordinary language is framed within the communicative process with specific goals, while poetic language penetrates teleological confines to build new relationships outside the familiar use of everyday language. Hence, everyday language is "referable", linked to the reference to which it is referred, while poetic language refers to itself as a language independent of the reference, its reference is in itself and within itself.

Tynianov, in his study "La Notion de Construction", saw that the necessities of the study require raising two basic inseparable problems:

- First is the problem of the literature material – usually called speech or word.
- The second is principles of building this artistic impact (literature) (2001, 116). These rules may be linguistic or non-linguistic, and are due to methodological considerations required by the subject under study.

For Tynianov, language constitutes the basic material of literature, as it is a raw material, formed within a certain system and according to a special form which determines what literature is. Language overlaps in homogeneous relationships to employ a system different from the original system and the primary use of language. There is no apparent difference in usage between literature and everyday language since they are formed from one lexicon and use the same components (linguistic, grammatical, and lexical) as well as common structures (rules – formats...). The main difference, however, lies in the formalization of this raw material in an innovative way, in order to transform it into an artistic literary production.

Therefore, the essence of literature is reflected in its new acquired form, according to a special system of relations within the fabric of the impact itself, so the artistic effect is a complete thing that we gain as an invented form, not only as an artistic edition, but one that is artificial – in every sense of this word (Eichenbaum, 2001a, 232). The idea of construction and the effectiveness of form converge to establish the artificial side of the literary effect that gives the real value of the dynamism of the aesthetic act in a special form that we choose to frame the inherent creativity, not by complete breakaway at all levels, but only at the level of form, by inserting language into a fabric of unfamiliar relationships that make us see the familiar as supernatural and distinct to the point of violating the horizon of the recipient's expectations.

Literature achieves what it is only within this form of formalization, but here it is necessary to point out a fundamental point about the nature of form, and what it is. Is the form just an outer cover containing the content? And therefore, do we use it to establish separation between the two (form and content), as was prevalent in the customs of criticism and under the standards of rhetoric?

Inevitably, changing the vision and transferring attention from external data about the internal structure of literature pushes to the modification or changing of the concept of form to suit these theoretical perceptions. The concept of form has acquired a new meaning; it is no longer a template, but a tangible dynamic totality that carries its own meaning (Eichenbaum, 2001b, 42). Thus, in Eichenbaum's view, it transforms from an external concept to an internal dynamic level; it structures all the elements of a literary work according to a system of interconnections by which the nature of the effect is established. On this basis of it, the form becomes that internal structure that absorbs the effect and creates its own content from within the interactions established by language and becomes a datum that refers to itself only.

Hence, the literary production is a purely linguistic entity, which believes only in the existence of language, starting from the autonomy of the word to the autonomy of the artistic literary impact vis-à-vis reality, whether it is the subjective reality (the author) or the subject (the social environment) (Erlich, 2001, 60).

Therefore, the poetic language declares its independence from the external reality, whether it is the author who produces the text, or the social and historical conditions that surround the text, and frames the external reality. This, consequently, is an effective factor in its formation and interpretation.

Formalism established the grounds for the independence of literature and considered it self-sufficient, framing its own format in a dialectical relationship with language; it explains itself by itself based on its distinct active linguistic structure. Hence, every approach to literature must firstly include this linguistic construction, and then secondly the way this construction is organized in some form.

The focus on the importance of form in weaving a literary text has directed the efforts of Russian formalists primarily towards poetry as a textual product. The aim was to know how to build the verse of poetry in order to reach the identification of phonetic and versification aspects, their distributions, and their role in forming the structural system of sentences, where they are distributed according to a rhythmic system, which has an effective role in generating the semantic world of the text.

The verse is built, as the whole poem is built, on the basis of the phonetic structure that controls the typesetting of the fabric of the text, and the formation of its relationships. The verse consists of the succession of sound units, manifested as if they were distributed independently from each other, and at the same time [also consists] of the succession of words that manifest as coherent units, composed by bringing together those sound units. However, these two forms of

succession do not exist except in a unit – that is, being two sides of the same reality (the verse) and also being a successive structural dualism (Lotman, 1995, 134).

Meter alone is not an active component in determining what a poetic text is. Prose can be poetic due to the formation of a special rhythm that builds the sentence. Grammatical relations, which for us constitute abstract sites or deep structures, are transformed into rhyme or inlay, by the same process by which abstract meter is transformed into verses (Al-Omari, 1991, 147). Poetry can also fall into vulgarity if it is based on meter alone. Meter is not a separating boundary between poetry and prose. A poetic text is primarily a phonetic structure. In Jakobson's words, poetry is based on similarity and repetition, while prose is based on adjacency (1977, 64).

Based on these data, the poetic language achieves its existence through the dominance of the phonetic structure and its multiple organizations that can form stand-alone formats which explain literary production in general and the poetic language in particular. This appears only in the second stage of the scientific production of the formalists, when it was manifested in the attempt to search for a theoretical formulation of the results reached so as to determine the transition from poetic language to literary language that includes the literary impact and goes beyond it to search for general laws that achieve the "literariness" of any linguistic product. Research into the literary work of Eichenbaum, as stated in a study of Gogol's *Overcoat*, has become a composition and a play; and for Tynianov, a system of interrelated factors; Chklovsky was associated with the establishment of narrative systems, based on their rhetorical forms; V.

V. Propp was interested in the laws that govern the structure of popular myth, based on the theory of functions (Othmani, 1990, 11-12).

The research turned, therefore, in the second stage of the text from an independent linguistic product to the search for the general format of literature (format) or, in the words of the school of Prague, to structure as a result of the adoption of the structural linguistic methodology, as if the gist of the scientific study of formalism crystallized and matured in the structural theory that moved from linguistics to literary studies. The previous statement is not to be understood to mean that the formalist theory is the structural theory. For while structuralism believes in the form model and isolates literary production from its social and cultural environment, viewing it as an independent system that contradicts the historical vision, formalism opens up other problems beyond the closed format, to investigate the reciprocal relationship between the literary form and other cultural forms that interact with social reality.

Formalism was not concerned with the internal laws of poetic art, but rather raised complex issues related to the relationship between this art, various other fields of culture and social reality (Jakobson, 2001, 8). Formalism, thus, did not isolate "reality"; it focused its attention solely on literary strategy, as it was aware that literature is a complex system in which a number of intertwined relationships overlap in a transparent artistic fabric, in which language absorbs all the mental, cultural and cosmic components related to Man, as a social being, established in a system governed by laws and systems that structure his existence. He integrates with others when his self-presence is formed with the language in which he participates in the speech of the other.

Hence, language represents the common heritage between members of the same society and frames connections, strongly manifesting the grammatical and semantic system in the cultural lexicon, thanks to which the relationship between words and things is established, because the cultural system is nothing but a structure of mutual norms in the channel of human communication; communication works to inform and confirm them according to the system of reporting, where the literary language retains the norms of society to establish the relationship

between the reader and the writer, and then form a parallel structure, scooping from its aesthetics.

The relationship between the system of society on the one hand, and the format of literature on the other hand is based on the level of mutual relations, for when literature retains its independence, it can enter into a relationship with any field of knowledge or art. Conscious study can then distinguish between the peculiarity of the system of literature and the peculiarity of other formats.

The independence which formalism focused on is rooted primarily in the scientific perspective, that is, the independence of the science which specializes in the study of literature, which was called “literariness” in the first stage, and then was replaced by another term: “poetics”, for considerations seen by Hassan Nadem as being exclusively related to the prevalence of one at the expense of the other. Literariness and poetics are similar in that they have one goal, and in that they are both scientific, but the term literariness did not enjoy enough popularity to spread and be adopted, for poetics quickly spread and overwhelmed it (Nadem, 1994, 36). We are not interested in the reasons behind this replacement, but we do not believe that it is simply limited to the prevalence of one term over the other. What the scholar did not pay attention to is that the term “poetics” has deep historical roots in human thought; therefore, the formalists, by using the term “poetics”, were trying to establish bridges of association between Aristotle and the new poetic project – the poetics that is based on scientific foundations, and which sets the determination of its subject and field of work as one of its main tasks.

Hence, Todorov believes that it is necessary to distinguish between two positions: a position that sees in the literary text itself a sufficient object of knowledge, and a position that holds that each individual text is a manifestation of an abstract structure (Todorov, 1968, 15). The first position is concerned with the interpretation, study, and interpretation of texts, and from it, the text constitutes a subject that can be observed and described, by determining its linguistic levels. The task of the first position is limited to dealing with individual texts because to investigate their specificity and innovative meaning. While the second position goes beyond the limits of the text to search for the general laws that govern this single text. Thanks to this procedure, poetics are rooted within the scientific field that specializes in the search for general laws that explain phenomena, for science is not concerned with isolated phenomena, but rather looks for universal laws.

The two positions seem to be complementary, since individual texts do not achieve the legitimacy of their existence as literary texts except through a holistic system that combines their common specificities at the formal and formative levels. There are fixed formal models that govern and summarize texts, as Propp showed when he studied the Russian folk myth” and came up with the functional model. Accordingly, each story is individually understood. On this basis, the circle of research is determined from the text to the overall structure, and vice versa, provided that the text is not understood to be an automatic application of the format, because “the relationship between text and order in the work of art is not merely in the fact that the former is an automatic realization of an abstract structure embodied in a particular material, but is - always - a relationship of conflict, tension, and controversy (Lotman, 1995, 173). Literary laws are not always fixed, as they are subject to the “dynamics of the text”, which, having established its format, can penetrate and transcend them. By this transcendence, it also establishes new laws. The relationship, thus, is dialectical, not mechanical.

The project of poetics is limited to the search for the formal structures of literature starting from the search for the specificity of the text, that is, from microstructures to model macro structures. When this end is achieved, the presence of the text decreases.

Poetics was built on the ground of formal structuralism as is clearly seen, and was based on the premise that the text is a structure that is closed to itself within the linguistic system, and closed within possible macro models – what Todorov calls potential literature (Todorov, 1968, 19-20). Poetics attempts to derive a general format that forms a model for a set of literary texts from the texts themselves as independent and distinct linguistic entities that can be interpreted and understood based on the background of the format. But how can this be achieved? How can we derive a general format, which can be a model for the largest number of texts and, at the same time, believe in the peculiarity of each text (Youcef, 2002, 134)? Perhaps this dilemma was one of the direct causes of the failures of “structural poetics” and the collapse of the dream of “scientific literature”, without this necessarily meaning the collapse of the process of scientific study. The problem is mainly due to the point of view: structural poetics initially assumed that the text is a closed linguistic structure that is self-sufficient, in order for it to start searching for general structures.

What was not achieved in the theory of genres was not achieved in poetics. Because once we ask the question about whether the text has a closed and isolated structure, we would create a big problem for poetics; it would have to support its scientific project, support the text or give up its project.

The Russian formalists were more flexible in recognizing “textual dynamics” when they considered “literariness” a textual strategy, which should be focused on to understand it and understand its relationship with other strategies that overlap with literature and interact with it, which means that the reality of the text is contrary to what “structural poetics” claims. It is rather a scientific illusion, produced by “structural linguistics” with its conceptual apparatus based on the authority of structure. Hence, it abolished the text as a living entity, meaning that the text was not really the subject of poetry.

In the face of this dilemma, it has become necessary to consider many perceptions and results and to revise them again, by referring to the text and trying to approach and understand it as it is, not in the form of a physical entity, but in the form of a dynamic living entity, interacting, growing and interplaying with various human products, both literary and non-literary. The novel, for example, highlights this flexible juxtaposition between what is literary and what is non-literary in a continuous process of dialogue which makes the essence of literature. On this basis, we try to view the literary text as an open entity capable of absorbing all linguistic and non-linguistic forms of expression, from a linguistic perspective.

In fact, every expressive system can be called a “language”; therefore, the literary system may not be considered the only possible system in human life. Poetics must take into account these transformations in order to formulate new concepts that free the text from the captivity of the illusory closed perception that exists only in the perspective of the structuralists.

Conclusion

- Classical poetics did not provide effective solutions to the problem of the literary text because at one point it focused its attention on standards more than on the peculiarity of the literary text, and it was, therefore, unable to provide practical data based on texts, and was, also, unable to resolve the debate between the text and the principle of genre classification.

- Even though Aristotelian poetics tried to start from texts (poetry) and reveal what they are, it focused on the general laws that make similarities and cancel the different. Therefore classical poetics took the path of the similar and the common, looking for standards that control the literary text, albeit not the actual text, but rather what it should be if it wants to be “literary” as recognized by the literary institution.

In this manner, poetics reached a dilemma in that it was unable to face textual transformations and embrace literary diversity, which opened the door for the need of revision according to new reference backgrounds adopted by Russian formalism and a group of poets such as Tzvetan Todorov Gerard Genette, proposing new conceptions with a structural flavor that recognizes the peculiarity of the literary text and tries to search for data from the text that can be conditions for genre classification.

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