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ON THREE TYPES OF DEDUCTIVE MODELS IN GENRE THEORY

The term "genre" is commonly employed in literary scholarship in two, partly overlapping and partly divergent senses. In both senses it refers not to one isolated aspect of the work of literature, but rather to a configuration, Gestalt (Guillen), kind of whole (Crane) or type of discourse which is embodied to a significant degree in several works. However, the two senses differ considerably as regards the specific nature of this configuration. In the first sense, the term refers to a particular pattern of selection and arrangement (interrelations) of features drawn from the various levels—stylistic, representational, and compositional—of the work of literature, which is embodied in a number of works written within one time section, school or period, such as the realistic novel, Romantic narrative poem or Elizabethan sonnet. "Genre" is evidently used here to designate a non-repeatable or unique historical formation or regularity. In the second sense, the term refers to a more minimal or abstract skeleton, underlying works written in different periods and schools, such as the novel as a whole, a love poem, tragedy, and of course the celebrated triad of the epic, lyric, and dramatic radicals of presentation. In this second usage, the formations referred to are essentially some fundamental, distinct types of discourse or broad spheres of artistic possibilities.

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A crucial question any student of genres is bound to ask himself sooner or later obviously concerns the logical and systematic nature of the relations between the two types of formations—the historical and the ahistorical—designated by this one common term "genre".

Initial clues for a possible answer to this question are provided by the following two facts: first, the number of fundamental ahistorical types

is much smaller than that of historical genres, which runs into hundreds, and second, these ahistorical types are much less specific or rich in their content than any of the historical configurations. These observations immediately lead us to a more precise formulation of our initial question, namely, can all historical literary genres be generated or derived or deduced from a small set of fundamental ahistorical types of discourse as their different specifications? Can we, furthermore, construct a sufficiently powerful deductive genre model such that all possible, as well as all actual, historical genres could be generated in it from a base consisting of a small number of basic invariants or ahistorical types of discourse? And if so, what should the precise nature of such a base be and what kind of rules or grammar of literary forms will enable us to undertake such a derivation? This cluster of questions forms the common nucleus of all attempts to construct a complete deductive genre theory, and each such theory in its turn will seek to answer them in its own way ¹.

Several properties shared by all such deductive endeavours are apparent *prima facie*. First of all, the base of any deductive genre theory, regardless of its specific nature, should serve as an adequate substratum for the derivation of all *possible* historical formations, and not only of all actual ones, that is, those which have already occurred in the course of literary history. Such a base serves, in addition, as the only formal way of distinguishing between a cross-generic period style and a historical genre, since the former is defined entirely on the basis of non-repeatable configurations as such, while the latter is defined by relating time-bound historical features to underlying ahistorical types of discourse. Secondly, one should realize that neither ahistorical types nor historical genres have any independent ontological status. Both are abstractions or hypothetical constructs of different degrees of generality. What "really" exists and what we encounter in our actual literary experience are individual works only, from which we abstract generic patterns. Consequently, any element, function or relation occurring either in our base or in any historical genre is taken from the individual work of literature. It is also for this reason that genre studies of either variety presuppose theoretical poetics, which provides us with information about the basic components of the work of literature as such. Thirdly, any deductive genre theory, and especially its

¹ The foregoing distinction has been advanced most convincingly by the Polish scholar S. Skwarczyńska, who says that a work of literature has invariant, ahistorical features and conventional, historically changing features which constitute the specification or concretisation of the ahistorical ones. This division, according to her, is the basis for logical systematics of literary kinds. See for example her treatise *Wstęp do nauki o literaturze*, Part III (Warsaw 1965).

base and grammar of forms, is a hypothetico-deductive model which seeks to derive historical regularities, i.e. historical literary genres, from an underlying abstract base. There is a general agreement among philosophers of science that the same domain of phenomena can be accounted for by an unlimited number of different theoretical premises or bases. Moreover, no deductive model as such is true or false, rather, it is an attempt to systematize and explain in a cogent manner a wide range of phenomena. The choice between competing deductive models for the same domain is thus made on the basis of purely formal criteria, such as simplicity, economy, coherence, scope, and compatibility with other theories in the same field. All this fully applies to genre theories as well. Another point, relevant in this context, is the following. As we have already stated, all deductive genre theories seek to be complete, in the sense of being able to derive all possible future historical genres. This endows them with a predictive capacity, and provides us with a good test for such theories, namely, their ability to account for future developments of historical genres as they occur. Fourthly and last, one can detect a striking analogy between deductive genre models and transformational or generative grammar and semantics. In both cases we are concerned with attempts to account for a large number of "surface" regularities in terms of simpler underlying "deep structures". Both here and there we are looking for a grammar of competence, capable of generating or deriving all actual and possible surface structures. Consequently, both types of theories are in a way calculi of possibilities. In both cases, a crucial role is played by rules of derivation or transformation, which logically relate and actually derive in a finite number of steps surface structures from deep ones according to certain well defined procedures. Moreover, both attempts stay entirely within the world of words, or of literary forms, respectively, seeking to derive actual historical utterances "from above", with the exclusion of any situational factors. The extremely ahistorical bias of all such attempts is evident from the fact that the time factor does not enter them at all. They cannot, and do not wish to take into account the particular point in time at which any surface structure occurs, the chronological order in which the various utterances or historical genres are generated, and any historical interrelations among them. The far-reaching implications of this position will become apparent in what follows.

Let us now examine in greater detail the formal requirements any adequate deductive genre theory has to fulfil. In its base it should include, first of all, an exhaustive list or inventory of the basic categories of components or constituent elements of the work of literature as such. The heterogeneous nature of the work of literature, as defined in theoretical

poetics², dictates that our list of categories should be stratified or hierarchical, that is, should include components of several radically different kinds or levels³. The fact that we are dealing with types of discourse and their overall features indicates, in addition, that these components should preferably be macro units, transcending in their size or scope the limits of the minimal linguistic units (phoneme, morpheme, lexeme, phrase). General considerations which fall outside the scope of the present paper lead me to believe that there are at least three distinct categories of components any deductive genre theory should include and that these categories belong to the following levels of the work of Literature: linguistic, representational (mimetic and thematic), and tectonic (formal design, composition, *Aufbauformen*). Each category is obviously subject to further subcategorisation into several subsets. The linguistic level for example, will include prosodic features, syntactic ones, and stylistic features, such as tropes, images, rhetorical figures, and distinct levels of diction or registers. The representational level will include *inter alia* characters, situations, motifs, actions, units ideas, symbols, and topics. The tectonic level will include purely formal designs, such as parallelism, repetition, triple gradation, and circular movement of any size, as well as stanzaic and narrative patterns and the so called radicals of presentation or *Darbietungsformen*, namely, monologue, dialogue, and dialogues intercalated within a monologic report. Each of the subsets is capable of at least one further subdivision, such as for example prosody into the basic different metrical patterns, or diction into the traditional three levels of style, or action into the basic actants or plot functions.

The inventory of basic components should be complemented by a parallel list of basic functions of various kinds. These are the functions which an element can fulfil either in a given configuration as a whole (simultaneous function, such as expression or arousal of emotion or conveying of information), or in its sequential unfolding (sequential function, such as flash back and anticipation, unification, transition, reenforcement). But elements and functions alone do not yet constitute a configuration or type of discourse. The third indispensable aspect of our base consists accordingly of a list of relations in which elements and/or functions can stand to one another, either in a configuration as a whole or in its se-

² I am relying here primarily on R. Ingarden's studies *Das literarische Kunstwerk* (Tübingen 1931) and *Szkice z filozofii literatury* (Łódź 1947).

³ "A structural text theory has to account for all levels of text organisation. Therefore, stratificational models seem to be the most promising for a complete text theory", L. Doležel, *From Motifeme to Motif*, "Poetics" 1972, No. 4, p. 58.

quential unfolding. These relations naturally have a logic and abstract character, such as subordination or dominance, co-ordination, implication, inversion, etc. It is these relations or operations which link elements and functions to one another so as form configurations or types of discourse. They can hence be termed *Vertexungsweisen*⁴.

As we have repeatedly stressed, both ahistorical types and historical genres are configurations or kinds of wholes. The base of a deductive genre theory cannot consequently make do with a simple enumeration of components, functions and relations. Its basic task is, rather, to establish as a first essential step a small number of kernel configurations (elementary structures) such that all actual and possible historical genres can be generated from them by the processes of period-specification, expansion or increasing complication. Our next question is, therefore, how can this goal be attained? For each component or function in isolation one can presumably establish a deductive calculus of its possible variants, such as kinds of plot, points of view, symbolism, etc. On the other hand, the heterogeneous nature of the various categories of components occurring in our base, together with the difference in ontological status between elements and functions, makes it impossible to deduce any one level from another or to deduce elements from functions or vice versa. The various levels and functions are therefore irreducible to one another and none of them is more fundamental than any of the others. As a result, each kernel configuration should contain a particular selection of elements from all three basic categories, a particular selection of functions, a specific matching of the elements and functions occurring in this configuration and the pattern of interrelations (both intra-level and inter-level) among these elements and functions. As we have just stated, it is impossible to deduce from the nature of any one element, say, compositional pattern, which other elements, say, character, will occur conjointly with it. In the same way, it is impossible to derive from the existence of a certain function, e.g. expression of feeling, in a work what particular element, e.g., nature description or symbol or monologue, will embody it in this work. Finally, given any two elements, such as plot and characters, it is impossible to derive from the nature of either or both the precise pattern of interrelations between them, such as subordination of one to the other or equal weight. There is thus no monistic determinism in the work of literature as such, and hence not in any kernel configuration or literary genre

⁴ For this term and for an interesting discussion of text theory in general see S. J. Schmidt, *Allgemeine Textwissenschaft*, "Linguistische Berichte" 1971, No. 12, pp. 10—21.

either. The reductionist way of arriving at our desired kernel configurations is therefore blocked in principle.

In view of the foregoing conclusions, we should try a different, weaker approach. Rather than look for reductionist equations, we ought to find for each element and function a set of *inherent minimal constraints or selectional restrictions*, limiting its valency or combinatory potential in such a way that some of the mathematically possible patterns of selection, conjoint occurrence, matching, and arrangement (interrelations) of elements and functions are rendered mandatory, while others become either impossible (excluded, forbidden) or optional. To put it in metaphorical terms, we should be looking here for certain inexorable affinities, as well as aversions and tolerances, among our base components which will drastically reduce the immense number of all mathematically possible configurations into a small set of kernel configurations. These selectional restrictions could then be formalized in terms of a manageable set of rules of formation for kernel configurations. Our quest for such rules is further motivated by the observational fact that some combinations of elements have not occurred so far while some of those which have occurred show great tenacity or perseverance over long periods of time.

But can we indeed formulate such selectional restrictions, and where do we take our information about them from? Our lists of basic components and functions came from aesthetics, linguistics, and theoretical poetics. Within each of these disciplines, one can adduce very good reasons for justifying the particular constriction of our lists as including the most fundamental elements of all literary texts. In order to be universally valid, our selectional restrictions, too, should stem from the very nature of these basic components. Vast labours have been spent by many scholars, especially in Germany, on attempts to find the necessary and invariable relations between elements belonging to the same level, such as sound and sense, between elements belonging to different levels, such as style and ideas, and between elements and functions, such as the inherent expressive or emotive values of rhetorical figures. However, it seems to me that none of these studies has ever revealed any theoretical necessities, i.e., inexorable regularities of combination, stemming from the very nature of these components or functions as such. This failure to uncover universal laws of co-occurrence and interrelation may be rooted in the radically heterogeneous nature of the diverse factors involved, or in their highly complex nature or in the insufficiency of our present conceptual apparatus. But be that as it may, the net result in either case is that the combinatory potential of each element and function is left practically unlimited. This applies equally, as we can see, to the very conjoint occurrence of elements and to the patterns of their interrelation, both

simultaneous and sequential. Consequently, no mathematically possible kernel configuration can be shown to be either necessary or impossible. All such configurations remain therefore as mere options or possibilities. In other words, we can not formulate in our generative base, at least for the time being, any rules of formation which would have universal scope. All mathematically possible kernel configurations or elementary complexes are thus equally justified or unmotivated from the point of view of a deductive theory of genres, and none of them has any privileged status. Since we cannot provide the desired set of kernel configurations and rules of formation, it follows that we can neither formulate any rules of transformation, generating historical types of discourse from this base, nor present these historical configurations as specifications of the kernel complexes. Any mathematically possible kernel configuration is left open to an unrestricted number of divergent or even contradictory historical specifications. The foregoing considerations lead us to the final inevitable conclusion that the construction of a deductive theory of all actual and possible historical literary genres is a highly unfeasible project, at least for the time being. It is possible that recent attempts to construct text grammars with a semantic base may lead us out of this impasse, but it is too early to predict their possible effectiveness.

If we were to limit ourselves to those historical types of discourse which have already occurred, then we may conceivably be able to construct a limited set of kernel configurations and rules of formation, from which one could generate all of these surface regularities and them only. Northrop Frye's *Anatomy of Criticism* is a recent attempt at such deductive systematization. Frye further tries to make his base and set of derived genres alike exhaustive and applicable to all future cases too by postulating the cyclical nature of the course of literary history. Other such attempts are contained in earlier works by Veselovskij, Shklovskij and André Jolles, among others, where the authors tried to arrange all historical literary genres along an increasing scale of complexity, such that the more complex genres, e.g., the eighteenth century novel, are presented as an expansion or combination or specification of underlying *einfache Formen* or short forms, such as the fable and the anecdote. But the basic difficulty which we have pointed out earlier is not overcome in any of these attempts. They can probably establish an adequate deductive base of all actual historical literary genres, but it will remain of necessity an *ad hoc* construction, since it is not founded on any theoretical basis. Such a deductive base is therefore not explanatory in any significant sense, but rather a systematic description of a range of phenomena, formalized in terms of a quasi-deductive model. It cannot, however, answer the basic question of any explanatory attempt: "Why is it so and

not otherwise" or, in other words, it cannot provide a mechanism according to which the base itself is established and endowed with the status of a literary necessity.

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Our failure to construct, at least for the time being, a universal deductive theory is not limited to the field of genre studies alone, nor is it a cause for despair and for a lapse into pure descriptive taxonomy. This failure is analogous to the inadequacy of our knowledge about the universals of language as such and its underlying "natural logic" and to our inability to give an adequate general definition of "poeticalness" or "literariness". As for the possibilities of systematic genre theorising left open to us at the present, two procedures may be singled out. The first, which has already been discussed, consists in the formulation of a unified literary grammar for actual genres alone. The second alternative consists in the construction of "regional grammars" of formation and transformation for individual historical genres or genre systems within the confines of one period or school. Such regional grammars or codes present the specific surface regularities of given classes of works in a deductive or quasi-deductive way, by deriving them from an underlying set of components and selectional restrictions, which are applied hierarchically. These restrictions—which at the very least state in a negative-contrastive way which combinations of elements are inadmissible for the given period or school—are obviously a formalized version of the "internal logic" or poetics of the given historical genre or genres. The advantages in terms of clarity, simplicity, and coherence of such regional grammars over a mere enumeration of surface features are evident, and, in fact, it seems that the establishment of such grammars is the most promising avenue of approach in our present state of knowledge⁵. Such special grammars can be likened to generative models for specific languages at specific points in time.

⁵ "The theorist of literature... can go on even without the precise formulation of the 'normal' rules governing the construction of texts. Instead of studying the properties of all possible literary texts, the investigation might profit from a limitation to certain TYPES of literary texts: modern poetry, psychological novel, classical dramas etc. The different literary grammars constructed to account for the texts that belong to these types can perhaps in a later stage of our knowledge be integrated into an 'ideal' universal theory of literary texts". T. A. van Dijk, *Some Problems of Generative Poetics*, "Poetics" 1972, No. 2, p. 31.

The rationale behind the construction of these grammars which still preserve — albeit on a more modest scale — the generative ideal has been put forth most eloquently by the late Jiřy Levy, who argues that such grammars stem from our conviction that the observational regularities encountered in our literary experience can be presented in terms of “a system of instructions responsible for their occurrence”, or in other words that “it is possible to reconstruct a theoretical pattern of their genesis, i.e. their generative model”⁶. What is more, this generative model can be presented as a “series of consecutive decisions, with ever more specific selectional instructions”⁷. Any such generic grammar will include mandatory selections of elements, functions and the patterns of their interrelations, a list of forbidden selections and arrangements, and of course, a list of options. These lists of forbidden, but especially of compulsory, configurations obviously constitute a radical narrowing down of the range of artistic possibilities as compared with the very few and minimal exigencies which stem from the very nature of the linguistics medium as such. The rules of all such generic grammars can, I believe, be presented as hierarchically ordered sets, leading from the dominant generic traits to the subordinate or derivative ones, from the more abstract to the more concrete, from obligatory to optional features and from the overall plan to the individual micro-units. Generic subgroups, as well as individual variants on the underlying pattern, will be described in such a framework as optional transformations, while the pattern shared by all the works belonging to a given genre will be treated as its underlying obligatory base, produced from the components by a set of definitional instructions.

In spite of their great intrinsic interest, all such models suffer nevertheless from one and the same basic deficiency, namely, their inability to explain the phenomena studied with their aid. They are ultimately formalized descriptions of changing historical conventions, and the various sets of rules of formation proposed by them remain unmotivated and devoid of any firm theoretical foundation. Each of these grammars thus remains an *ad hoc* hypothesis with a limited domain of applicability. This is admitted by Jiřy Levy, too, who states explicitly that such generative models do not have the status of causal explanations. Such explanations or subsumptions of the specific grammars under a general covering law can in principle be provided only by a universal theory of genres which, as we have earlier endeavoured to show, is not available to us.

⁶ J. Levy, *Generative Poetics*, [in:] *Sign, Language, Culture*, eds. A. J. Greimas et al. (The Hague 1970), p. 549.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 550.

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But this is not all. Neither universal deductive genre theories nor regional grammars can answer within their confines the following questions: Why did only certain generic configurations, out of all the theoretically possible ones, actually occur so far in literary history; why did they occur in a particular culture and period; why did they have certain overall aesthetic and cultural roles attached to them; why did they change in a particular direction or disappear altogether and why did this happen in a particular time; and, finally, why did some of these patterns persist much longer than others. All of these questions can be answered only by going beyond the confines of the world of words, by linking particular types of discourse causally with cultural situations, or in other words by establishing grammars of performance which provide the *ratio suffiendi* for the occurrence and change of any historical genre⁸. This step necessitates a radical reorientation of our thinking. The procedures outlined in sections I and II involved the formulation of grammars of competence of various degrees of generality, and treated historical literary genres as closed aesthetic constructs, or semantic systems existing in a separate, autonomous sphere with its internal laws. All grammars of performance, on the other hand, regard the various types of discourse as acts of communication, as classes of utterances taking place in a particular historical situation, or as unique historical events. The semantic dimension of texts is expanded in them to encompass non-literary factors belonging to the field of semiotics as a whole, or to the situational context. While one could hypothetically derive the same surface regularity from an unlimited number of different deductive models, there is precisely one set of historical factors which were actually responsible for its emergence and specific nature. In this kind of study we are thus interested not in *possible* grammars of genres, but in the *actual* generic code which was in effect in a given historical and cultural situation.

The quest for such generic codes of the past requires, as a result, an adequate reconstruction of the factors operative in the particular historical situation in which any given genre came into being or existed, and hence makes literary history both a necessary and a justifiable discipline. On the other hand, it is obviously impossible for us to reconstruct fully the multitude of factors, psychological, social, religious, and ideological active in any period and the extremely complicated network of their dynamic

⁸ "Next we need a theory of performance, which makes explicit the psychological and social factors determining the actual use of the rules of genre grammar in concrete socio-cultural situations", T. A. van Dijk, "Poetics" 1972, No. 3, p. 126.

interrelations. This is impossible, *inter alia*, due to the lack of a unified theoretical language or framework into which all these heterogeneous sub-systems could be fitted and then linked causally to the literary system. What we need accordingly is a simplified model with fewer factors which will still be able to give an account of the causal links between text and context without however doing an injustice to the complexity of the context of each historical genre. It seems to me that those situational factors which actually gave rise to any particular historical genre are best accessible to us through the aesthetic and literary conventions embraced by the writers and/or critics and/or the original public of this genre. These conventions form the focal point at which the various complicated cultural sub-systems intersect and are brought to bear on the literary system directly and immediately. As a result, these conventions form a bridge or intermediary link between word and world, and serve as the proximate cause of literary genres. As opposed to hypothetical theoretical endeavours, such systems of conventions usually have a normative or prescriptive status for their adherents and are best described as a set of instructions telling an author what he must, may, and should not do. Each such set of conventions includes a general view of the nature of literature, its underlying rules and overall role, such as expression, decorum, unity of effect, *neue Sachlichkeit*, *slovo kak takovoe*, or "literature should delight and instruct" or "literature is its own aim". These general postulates are followed by assumptions stemming from them about the different proper ways of selecting and arranging literary elements to form distinct kinds of discourse, and about the special effect and role proper to each resultant kind of whole. As already said, these assumptions — which are purely conventional and time-bound — are raised by their proponents to the status of essentialist doctrines or universal laws, providing "the" true insight about the nature of literature and its various species. These overall leading ideas are next transferred to the literary system proper and specified in terms of pre-existent historical types of discourse, thus leading to their preservation, modification, suppression or revival. As a second step, new types of discourse are created if necessary in order to best embody some of the general aesthetic and literary norms held by a given period or group. Such general aesthetic tenets or postulates held by each age, together with the more specific stipulations on the part of their adherents that certain generic forms are best suited for the embodiment of these ideals, can thus explain the make up of the generic system of a given period, the dominant or subordinate position (rank order) of a given genre in it, and the rise, specification, modification, and disappearance of some generic patterns in every age.

Several essential caveats should be entered at this point. First, the

views held by writers, critics, and readers at a given age may be widely divergent, so that only some of them, or in extreme cases the views of one isolated innovative writer, are relevant for our reconstructionist-explanatory effort in each individual case. Second, one can often detect a discrepancy or *non sequitur* between a set of conventions or beliefs, its logical implications, and the actual literary practice of its advocates, a practice which was considered by them to follow from these beliefs. This does not detract, however, from the historical fact that it were these assumptions and beliefs that actually gave rise to the specific regularities detected by us, even though through a misinterpretation of these beliefs on part of their proponents, through lack of self-understanding or through plain logical inconsistency. Third, the amount of information available to us for the reconstruction of the poetics of a given age varies considerably from one period to the other, ranging from abundance for the contemporary scene through gradual diminution as we go back in time to total absence for many societies and time sections, especially ancient and medieval. A reconstructionist effort of the kind envisaged here is possible, though, if and only if we have both the literary texts of an age and separate, independent evidence about the poetic and generic views prevalent in its cultural milieu. If we try to reconstruct or infer these views from the regularities of the literary texts themselves, we end up of necessity with our own hypothetical grammars or regional codes of the kind described in section II, since any regularity can be explained by many different sets of underlying assumptions. It is hence a circular and inadmissible mode of reasoning to try and infer the historical antecedent determinants of a group of literary texts from these texts themselves and then claim for the inferred results the status of objective, independent evidence.

We have already noted that each set of conventions about the different ways of selecting and arranging the elements of literature so as to form distinct genres does not exist *in vacuo*. Quite often such conventions are derived, or at least considered by their adherents to follow, from a wider set of beliefs, conventions, or general truths, such as linguistic and aesthetic doctrines, or religious, political and psychological systems of thought. These non-literary domains are usually accepted as axiomatic *vis-à-vis* the literary system by the writers, readers, and normative critics of the time, since these domains are considered by them to be more fundamental than the field of literary doctrines by itself, and to afford some profound knowledge about man and the world in general, language and reality, etc. Consequently, it is obvious that the insights or beliefs entertained in these more "fundamental" domains are supposed to lend normative or prescriptive status to the literary codes derived or pseudo-derived from them, and hence to be decisive for the actual literary practice

of the adherents of these general views. In fact, each such prescriptive view implies that out of all the mathematically possible configurations or types of discourse, some are the most "natural", right and proper, and that they are the only ones which should be practised, since they can be derived from a broader theory. In this way, the conventions and practices underlying some of the actual literary genres of a given period, as well as a selection of genres belonging to past periods, are motivated (given a *ratio essendi*) and justified as the best possible ones or at least as "optimal solutions" (C. Guillen). The two-step derivation of actual generic practice outlined here provides the necessary and sufficient reasons for the occurrence and the specific nature of genres practised at any period. This does not mean of course that the possibilities selected by one period are more fundamental than those selected by any other. With the change in the surrounding climate of opinion, the axiomatic basis of genre poetics changes drastically, and with it the genre doctrines themselves, so that previous necessities are now regarded as options or even abnormalities, and vice versa. This incessant shift, in its turn, explains to a large extent the constant transition from one type of generic system to another in the course of literary history.

One can distinguish two kinds of relations between generic doctrines and broader systems of thought according to the different temporal sequence in each case. In the first case, it is the prevalent general views which lead first to literary doctrines and then to actual generic practices. In the second case the order is reversed: the dominant literary practice already exists and it is the philosophers and aestheticians of the time who come later and canonise it first by establishing rules of procedure which give rise to this practice and secondly by pointing to some general philosophical system which can justify these rules themselves. In this way, a mere historical conjecture or time-bound set of conventions is again turned into a real necessity. Aristotle's procedure in the *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* alike can be described in these terms. Aristotle first provides an explicit formulation of generic practices current in his time and then goes on to derive them in a quasi-deductive manner from an axiomatic set concerned with the psychology of the spectator or listener, our modes of reasoning, and our ways of perceiving reality and reacting to it. Basic to his procedures are thus generalisations about the underlying drives and dispositions of the human psyche, such as imitation, the need for verisimilitude and probability, and the emotions of pity and fear. Each specific *telos*, such as to convince, or to sway people's emotions and attitudes, or to arouse and purge emotions in them, thus dictates the type of discourse best fit for it, its diverse components, and their pattern of arrangement, both sequential and hierarchical. But this correlation between

generic roles and intended effects on the one hand and particular generic surface regularities on the other is endowed with the status of a logical necessity only through Aristotle's philosophical system as a whole. It is also this system which endows Sophocles' dramatic work with its privileged status, since it best agrees with the assumptions of this system. The exhaustive character of many of the subdivisions or sets of choices, e.g., tragic vs. comic, set forth by Aristotle again stems from the fact that they are grounded in a wider framework, from which they follow as necessary corollaries. Another fruitful area of study in the theory of genres is indeed provided by an approach which reviews some of the great aesthetic systems of the past, such as Hegel's or Croce's, as attempts to justify and canonise one particular kind of artistic endeavour by indicating how its poetics follows "necessarily" from a more general and powerful set of assumptions belonging to the fields of epistemology or ontology.

O TRZECH TYPACH MODELI DEDUKCYJNYCH W TEORII RODZAJU LITERACKIEGO

STRESZCZENIE

Termin *genre* używany jest aktualnie w teorii literatury dla oznaczenia albo specyficznego układu historycznego, którego pojawienie się ograniczone jest do jednego okresu, szkoły lub prądu (np. romantyczna opowieść poetycka), albo do bardziej abstrakcyjnego, ahistorycznego typu literatury (np. poemat miłosny, tragedia). Każda teoria dedukcyjna wszystkich istniejących lub wszystkich możliwych gatunków literackich stara się wyprowadzić je do niewielkiej liczby podstawowych typów ahistorycznych, wywodząc jednocześnie zasady dla różnych możliwych sposobów konkretyzacji tych podstawowych typów. Każda taka konkretyzacja będzie odpowiadać jakiemuś rzeczywistemu lub ewentualnemu historycznemu gatunkowi literackiemu. Każdy podstawowy typ literatury musi zawierać wybór elementów językowych, kompozycyjnych i przedstawieniowych (tematycznych) oraz wybór funkcji (np. ekspresyjna, opisowa, symboliczna); musi zawierać model wzajemnych zależności tych elementów oraz zharmonizowanie elementów i funkcji. Podstawowe elementy, funkcje i zależności są zdeterminowane przez estetykę, językoznawstwo i teorię literatury. Nie możemy jednak sporządzić listy najbardziej zasadniczych typów literatury, ponieważ elementy podstawowe, funkcje i zależności, które składają się na te typy, są zmiennymi niezależnymi. Nie znamy żadnych ograniczeń ani odwiecznych praw rządzących ich układami. W rezultacie każda logicznie możliwa kombinacja tych składników jest jednakowo przekonująca i w ten sposób mamy wielką ilość ewentualnych typów zasadniczych literatury. Wskutek tego nie możemy opracować uniwersalnej teorii dedukcyjnej dla wszystkich możliwych gatunków literackich.

Bardziej ograniczony w swym zasięgu, lecz i bardziej możliwy do przyjęcia rodzaj teorii dedukcyjnej rozważa oddzielnie każdy specyficzny gatunek literacki i stara się przedstawić regularności, jakimi odznacza się ten gatunek, za pomocą

„gramatyki rodzaju” („gramatyki gatunku”). Takie regularności będą od tej pory przedstawione w kategoriach „systemów instrukcji, które ponoszą odpowiedzialność za ich pojawienie się” (J. Levý). Ograniczenia co do selekcji i układu elementów i funkcji (tzn. co pisarz może, musi i czego nie powinien robić w danym wypadku), które są sformułowane przez każdą taką gramatykę, są w rzeczywistości sformalizowaną wersją wewnętrznej logiki lub poetyki charakterystycznej dla danego gatunku historycznego. Te ograniczenia mogą często przybierać formę hierarchicznej serii kolejnych decyzji, charakteryzujących się jeszcze bardziej specyficznymi ograniczeniami typu selekcyjnego. Takie gramatyki rodzaju (gatunku) są jasnym, oszczędnym i wydajnym sposobem opisania specyficznych konwencji, które kryją się za każdym gatunkiem historycznym. Te gramatyki nie mogą jednakże wyjaśnić, dlaczego z olbrzymiej liczby różnych, teoretycznie możliwych, konwencji w danym okresie i danej kulturze powstały właśnie takie, a nie inne konwencje.

Wyjaśnić co do powstania i specyficznego charakteru jakiegokolwiek systemu gatunkowego można oczekiwać dopiero wtedy, gdy przejdzie się od tekstów do kontekstów. Dla każdego z takich systemów musimy skonstruować aktualny zespół czynników kulturowych, które przyczyniły się do powstania gatunku, umotywowwały jego powstanie i stanowiły jego przyczynę i rację bytu. Te czynniki są dla nas dostępne najłatwiej poprzez doktrynę estetyczną i literacką wyznawaną przez pisarzy, krytyków i czytelników w danym okresie lub prądzie literackim. Każda z takich doktryn zawiera postulaty ogólne, dotyczące charakteru literatury i jej ogólnej roli (np. imitacja, ekspresja, *prodesse et delectare*), i wynikające z nich twierdzenia o różnych właściwych sposobach selekcji i rozmieszczenia elementów literackich, tak by tworzyły odrębne układy, z których każdy odznacza się własną specyficzną rolą i własnym celem. Historia literatury i historia myśli krytycznej są więc niezbędne przy wyjaśnianiu konwencji gatunkowych i ich zmian. Doktryny estetyczne i literackie, które warunkują sytuację w dziedzinie rodzaju literackiego w każdym okresie lub prądzie literackim, tkwią zwykle w szerszym systemie koncepcji i pojęć, takim jak specyficzna filozofia, religia lub psychologia. Pisarze, krytycy i czytelnicy danego okresu lub szkoły uważają, że system ten jest bardziej zasadniczy niż same doktryny literackie i że posiada status normatywny *vis-à-vis* systemu literackiego. Dzięki temu badacz gatunków literackich może połączyć zjawiska dotyczące gatunków z szerszym systemem ideologicznym rozpowszechnionym w danym okresie lub prądzie literackim.

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