

A NEW PERSPECTIVE ON THE GENRE TRANSFORMATION THEORY

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Abstract: *This article analyzes the pre-existing, but not yet fully developed, theory of genre transformation. In this, the work of English literature professor and writer Ralph Cohen on genre transformation is taken as a basis and the book is analyzed. Through this work, Cohen clearly and thoroughly reveals a new perspective and understanding of genre transformation. In order to further analyze the transformation of the genre, Cohen discovers new meanings by comparing the Barnwell ballad with what he believes to be a contemporary, Delonoy's "The Rich Merchant man".*

Keywords: *genre transformation, generic mixture, Barnwell ballad, narratives, new generic method.*

НОВИЙ ВЗГЛЯД НА ТЕОРІЮ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ ЖАНРА

Анотація: *В даній статті аналізується уже существовавшая, но еще не до конца разработанная теория жанровой трансформации. При этом за основу берется работа профессора английской литературы и писателя Ральфа Коэна по трансформации жанра и анализируется книга. Благодаря этой работе Коэн ясно и подробно раскрывает новую перспективу и понимание трансформации жанра. Чтобы дополнительно проанализировать трансформацию жанра, Коэн обнаруживает новые значения, сравнивая балладу Барнуэлла с тем, что он считает современником, «Богатым торговцем» Делоноя.*

Ключевые слова: *жанровая трансформация, жанровая смесь, баллада Барнуэлла, нарративы, новый жанровый метод.*

JANR TRANSFORMATSIYASI NAZARYASIGA YANGI NUQTAI NAZAR BILAN QARASH

***Annotatsiya:** Ushbu maqolada oldindan mavjud bo'lgan ammo, unchalik ham yuzaga chiqmagan janr transformatsiya nazaryasi tahlil qilinadi. Bunda ingliz adabiyoti professori va yozuvchi Ralf Koening janr transformatsiyasiga doir asari asos qilib olinadi va kitobi tahlil qilinadi. Koen bu asari orqali janr transformatsiyasiga yangicha qarash va tushunchalarni yaqqol va batafsil ochib beradi. Janr transformatsiyasini yanada chuqurroq tahlil qilish uchun Barnwell balladasini va uning fikricha zamondosh bo'lgan Deloniyning "Badavlat savdogar" asari bilan solishtirib yangi ma'nolarni kashf qiladi.*

***Kalit so'zlar:** janr o'zgarishi, aralash janrlar, Barnwell balladasi, hikoyalar, yangi janr metodi.*

The issue of genre transformation of literary works has never come up to the face in the way Ralph Cohen shows. Ralph Cohen, a professor of Virginia University, USA, arises unanticipated question that resulted in a kind of personal boundry crossing in his work "Transformations of a Genre". In his book, he deals with the arguments of critics who deny the usefulness of genre theory and shows that generic mixtures are characteristic of all texts. The reason for advocating the generic theory as he says is to create the consciousness necessary to explore the implications of generic mixtures. He tries to show his understandings on the processes of transformation which he confronts the issue of genre as an open system. As he spells out his understandings of combinatory texts, narratives, analysis of genre and its kinds, his generic thinking is gradually become historical, clarified and elaborated.

Cohen suspects the earliest possible date for the Barnwell ballad, yet he notes that it was paired with Deloney's tune "A Rich Merchant Man," which dates back to 1590s. The Barnwell ballad's relation to Deloney's tune—a parody, a confession, a criminal ballad, or all three—presupposes a theory of genre in which texts provide the

possibility of multigeneric type. He discusses the varied parts of the ballad to clarify its affiliations, conducting an analysis that demonstrates his method of generic criticism. The inferences he draws from the ballad to the antithetical nature of the same terms and phrases. As a historical document, the ballad seemed destined to disappear from all historical account. Treating a common narrative in two different genres takes place in 1700, when the first prose narrative of the Barnwell story, the chapbook “The ‘Prentice’s Tragedy,” includes a version of the earliest ballad.

He discusses the various functions genre systems have had beginning with Aristotle, and he notes some of the important reasons for rethinking genre theory in our time, not the least of which is the need to understand the widespread exemplification of generic change, and to note that “genre theory is analogous to social and scientific theories which seek to explain changes in matter, man, and society.” His theoretical discussion reviews some of the Barnwell material he has treated, rehearsing the implications of his work for a new literary history. Reasserting the significance of The London Merchant plot for young people, *Memoirs of George Barnwell* was published in 1810. Written anonymously, the author claims to be a descendent of the Barnwell family. These documents are styled after the genre of penitential narratives in the early eighteenth century.

Cohen sums up his study by reiterating and expanding upon what he sees as the value of the regeneration of genre theory for literary study. The aims of his genre theory “are to explain the nature of the literary universe in which we live and to make it possible for us more adequately to support, resist, revise, or oppose this universe. The choice of any kind of criticism ... rests on literary value propositions each critic holds.

This book is the work of a master. Relations between historical knowledge and literary understanding, the processes involved in the formation, solidification, and transformation of a genre, the elucidation of authenticity as a historical concept, and the intricacies of the relations between the reader and the text are all interwoven here with Ralph Cohen’s characteristic lucidity and explanatory power. Radiating Cohen’s sense of personal engagement with literature along with his sensitivity to the subtle

permutations of narrative, the book shows in the fascinating example of the early 17th-century Ballad of George Barnwell how that ballad's plot can mutate through the genres of poem, tragedy, memoir, and novel. Cohen's work on the dynamics of literary change and continuity has always been expansive, always reaching out to see still more, as this new volume, under the acute editorship of John Rowlett, richly displays.

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