

# Exploring the "Implicit Rules" in the Process of Contemporary Literary Generation

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**Abstract:** The process of literary creation raises a thought-provoking question: In what way does the social system of contemporary literary works exist? Is there an implicit rule? If there is an implicit rule, what is the mechanism of its composition? How does it influence the creative activities of authors? What impact does this implicit rule have on the creative environment of literary activities? This article explains the formation and breakthrough of literary implicit rules from the environment of literary generation, the form of literary generation, and the mechanism of literary generation.

**Keywords:** Contemporary Literature, Literary Generation, Literary Form, Literary Mechanism

## 1. Introduction

Literary activity is a relatively common social activity. Speaking of the birth of a literary work, when a literary creator conceives a piece of work in their mind and expresses it using literary methods, this literary work is then faced with social criticism. Regardless of whether the work is accepted or rejected by society, it is in the process of social criticism that the birth of a work is proclaimed. Thus, although the root of literary creation comes from the author, it is closely related to social criticism.

Danto views literary activities from the perspective of art. In his book "The Artworld," he discusses that literary activities are inherently a form of artistic creation, and the creation of art in literary activities is of "a status with the qualification of an object of appreciation." He believes that artistic activities are created according to the art world, and he points out that "each category system is a framework structure for the art works belonging to that category to be presented as art works." The art world he talks about is a world constituted by people, and the inner activities of people constitute a kind of "implicit rule" [1].

## 2. The Implicit Rules Brought by the Environment of Literary Generation

To illustrate the implicit rules brought by the environment of literary generation, the development of literary criticism is used as an example. Literary criticism is an important part of literary activities. Since the spread, consumption, and acceptance of literary works, literary criticism as a literary activity has emerged, which is an indispensable part of literary creation activities. It has promoted the creation of literary activities, influenced the creation of literary activities, and driven the development of literary theory.

The paradigm of literary criticism in our country can be divided into stages of thirty years each, and it has gone through three stages so far. The first stage was dominated by politicized literary criticism. Before 1978, literary criticism in our country was based on firmly standing on the Marxist position and using Marxist viewpoints and methods to study the humanities and social sciences. The literary theorist Shao Kui Lin mentioned the correct method of conducting literary criticism activities in his 1948 paper. He believed that Marx and Engels, when studying an object, would use an objective attitude to view whether the social class relations reflected in a work are consistent with historical reality. If it exposes the true state of society, then the political stance of a work should be excavated. He believed that literary criticism should be a part of the proletarian struggle activities. [2] Shao Kui Lin's viewpoint represents the mainstream attitude of literary criticism at that time.

In 1978, the "Literary Review" organized the writing of the article "Correcting Errors and Advancing Creative Literary Research and Criticism," which proposed that literary criticism should innovate in the following aspects: it should be guided by Marxism-Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought, innovate in literary research and criticism, and the scope of critical research should surpass the previous understanding; it should liberate the thought on academic and literary issues, allowing literary criticism to make mistakes and correct them; it should innovate in artistic form, separating political issues from academic issues [3]. This paper pointed out the key issues of literary criticism in 1978. From then on, the paradigm of literary criticism moved away from the ideology centered on "class struggle," developing towards a diversified approach based on literary art. During this stage, the direction of development of the literary criticism paradigm was: to focus on economic construction, to promote the development of literary criticism for the advancement of literary arts; the third great ideological liberation occurred, with the gradual rise of literary fever, aesthetic fever, and Western learning fever, literary criticism developed towards the aesthetic approach of literature; Western learning gradually penetrated, new cultural trends formed, and the "pure literature" trend and the change in literary views altered the paradigm of literary criticism. At this time, literary criticism was no longer a mere accessory to literary works; it had become an independent literary genre.

After 1998, the paradigm of literary criticism shifted from formal development to ideological development. This development was reflected in three aspects.

The first aspect is that philosophical and cultural trends have a significant impact on the development of literary criticism. With the deepening of reform and opening up, Western thoughts gradually infiltrated, including Enlightenment, Western Marxism, Positivism, Freudianism, Existentialism... Various trends have influenced literary criticism, and a large number of literary criticism works have been developed from a philosophical perspective to think about literature.

The second aspect is that Western literary criticism theories have also influenced China's literary criticism. Russian Formalist criticism, Anglo-American New Criticism, Structuralism, and various Semiotics theories have all influenced China's literary criticism. At this time, China's literary criticism is no longer confined to the perspective of literature for commentary but has started to develop literary criticism from the perspective of theoretical research.

The third aspect is that literary criticism has once again returned to the contemplation of the relationship between literary criticism and politics. This kind of literary criticism is different from the past political ideology of "taking class struggle as the guiding principle." Instead, it attempts to discuss literary works from the perspective of social relations, explaining the ideological value inherent in literary works themselves.

From the transformation of the literary criticism paradigm, it can be seen that the social environment has an impact on the literary criticism paradigm. The paradigm of literary criticism is created, grows, thinks, and breaks through under the constraints of the social environment. When the social environment changes, a new paradigm of literary criticism will be accepted by the social environment. It becomes a new model of literary criticism, thereby also forming a new kind of constraint.

### 3. The Implicit Rules Brought by the Forms of Literary Generation

After the 1990s, with the development of China's economic system, the country's publishing houses transformed from "pure production type" to "production and operation type." To promote sales, publishers had to delve into the demands of the market and produce books in literary forms that met market needs. In 1993, after discussion, the editorial department of Chun feng Literature and Art Publishing House launched the "Cloth Tiger" series of books, targeting urban white-collar workers. The concept, theme, and style of the literary generation were all designed to cater to the needs of urban white-collar workers.

An Shun Bo from Chun feng Literature and Art Publishing House once proposed the concept of commercial book generation. He said that the past literary forms were too rudimentary, with adults unable to obtain the books they needed and children unable to obtain the books they needed. In order to allow every group to obtain the books they needed, he proposed the concept of a literary generation form based on demand creation. The commercial book creation concept of Chun feng Literature and Art Publishing House was quickly accepted by major book merchants. [4]

Under this concept, the form of youth literature began to take shape. Youth literature depicts the sweetness and bitterness that "post-80s" children experience during adolescence. The form of youth literature catered to the needs of children at that time. Students of the 1980s have their own unforgettable memories. When they were in junior high school, they set the goal of striving for university admission. This struggle was both willingly and unwillingly accepted by the children of that time, because they believed that if they could not get into university, they would not obtain the "golden key" to happiness. Students of the 1980s were influenced by the economic environment and understood the disparity between the rich and the poor from a young age. They prematurely bore the spiritual burden brought by the economy, prematurely losing the innocence and romance that young people should have. This experience was not shared by those born in the 1970s or earlier.

The spiritual unrest and consumption ability of children of the 1980s form a contrast. Many children of the 1980s did not worry about food and clothing issues, and some of their parents even owned cars and real estate. The consumption ability of children of the 1980s was extremely strong. [6]

The formation of the literary form of the 1980s is reflected in three aspects. The first aspect is the development of authors towards stardom. In 2000, the Writers Publishing House published Han Han's first work "San Chong Men" at the age of 17, and since then, Han Han has appeared as a star in the vision of teenagers. In his work "Just Drifting Along," Han Han showcased photos of himself as a race car driver. Han Han's works, his person, and the commercial value he brings are all integrated as a whole. Teenagers of the 1980s were consuming an idol they worshiped, not a literary work. At this time, the artistry of the form of literary creation was no longer the focus of creation, and what publishers needed was a "tailor-made" literary form.

The second aspect is that the demand for literary forms has been further refined: taking the genre of youth literature as an example, publishers have multiple commercial purposes for launching works for teenagers. Children of the 1980s grow up together with children of the same era, and they have common troubles and sorrows, that is, the values of the literary form can meet the needs of children of the 1980s; teenagers of the 1980s, with a bit of greenness, a bit of publicity, and a bit of rebellion, display their unique personalities in youth literature, resonating with teenagers of the same age [6]. Youth literature takes the consumer as the center, refines the types of literary creation, and the content, expression form, and literary thought of works of the same type are very similar.

The third aspect is that due to the drive of commercial interests, publishers require literary creators to ensure writing speed rather than writing quality. The literary form of literary works is no longer particularly emphasized. For example, Zhang Yue ran, an author of the youth literature school, has published a total of 5 books with more than 850,000 words since June 2003. According to the author himself, the long novel "Love on the Steel Rails" took only ten days from conception to completion. The fast-food style of literary works makes it difficult to ensure the depth of thought in literary works [7].

After the 1980s, there were also authors who quietly wrote literary works, with Zhou Hui as a representative. Qiu Huadong once said, "Among the authors born after the 1980s, there are very few who are as quiet as Zhou Hui. She is dedicated to writing with a quiet attitude, calmly and meticulously weaving literary works with a mature demeanor of youth. She treats literary works with an artistic attitude. If she can precipitate for more than ten years, those represented by Zhou Hui can become the pride of literary creators of the 1980s [8]." Zhou Hui has currently published a total of five works of varying lengths, with her representative work being "Live Well". She observes society with a pair of calm and objective eyes, writing down the vicissitudes of life in society with words.

From the birth of youth literature, we can see the constraints of literary forms. When the market recognizes a certain literary form, similar works will be produced in large quantities, forming a literary trend. Although this trend may only affect literary creators for a few years or even a decade, as long as this literary form is still accepted by people, there will be a large number of literary creators who accept the constraints of the literary form. It must be seen that there are always some authors with independent personalities and thoughts who jump out of the constraints and create personalized works. They allow the literary form to develop in a diversified way.

#### 4. The Implicit Rules Brought by the Mechanism of Literary Generation

Once a literary form becomes a market demand, a mechanism is born to cater to the generation of that literary form, creating literary implicit rules in various forms. The birth of literary websites is due to the demand for online literature.

The development of society and science and technology has led to a desire for entertainment. Radio, film, television, and the internet are all developing in the direction of entertainment. The purpose of online literature is for entertainment; people hope to use information work to read literature and obtain a sense of entertainment. The demand of the literary market brings business opportunities, and in the market economy environment, market demand means the development of industrialization. In 1999, the Xian Network, invested in by the Taiwan Acer Group, gathered 300,000 netizens online. The Xian Network made profits by selling online literature on one side and signing contracts to publish printed books on the other. Mainland Chinese enterprise groups followed suit, exploring the business opportunities of online literature [9]. In 2004, Shanghai's Grand Group spent a large sum of money to acquire the fantasy literature portal site Qi Dian, and since then, larger online literature websites have also been acquired one after another. Compared with traditional literary creation mechanisms, online literature has a unique mechanism: First, the website actively explores potential writers and actively packages them. The editors of the literature website will provide a platform for literary creators to publish their works, explore more potential literary creators, and actively sign contracts with them. The copyright of the literary creators belongs to the literature website. Taking the "Ghost Blowing Lamp" series as an example, netizens recognized the series as created by "Tian Xia Ba Chang," but later they learned that Tian Xia Ba Chang was the main creator of volumes 1 to 8, and volumes 9 to 13 were ghostwritten by other literary creators. The website, for economic benefits, blurred the identity of the literary creators; Second, the website requires literary creators to create high click rates to attract netizens to read articles. Under this mechanism, even if a literary work has artistic quality and depth, but lacks click rates, it is still worthless to the website; Third, in order to explore more authors and attract netizens to read works, the website will create a platform for communication between literary creators and netizens. In order to ensure click rates, sometimes the creative ideas of literary creators will be influenced by netizens. Due to the operation mechanism of online literature, online literature can only become commercialized literature, entertainment literature, and fast-food literature. Only a few works such as "Ghost Blowing Lamp" and "Stars Change" can take into account both the commercial value and a certain literary value. This is the effort made by a very small number of online authors in the existing mechanism [10].

#### 5. Conclusion

George Dickie is an aesthetician whose argument posits that literary activities are born within an environment governed by implicit rules. Dickie's viewpoint has been widely accepted by many scholars in the field of literature and art. However, this perspective overlooks the understanding that literary creators themselves have regarding these implicit rules. This study has elucidated that a literary work is created based on the creator's comprehension of implicit rules, considering the environment, form, and mechanisms of literary generation. It may either transcend these implicit rules or reinforce them. Regardless of the motive behind the creation of a literary work, it ultimately becomes a part of the literary aesthetic, thereby constituting a form of implicit rule itself.

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