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LITERARY AND ARTISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENIGMATIC GENRE

Abstract: This article examines the origins, characteristics, and mechanisms of the enigmatic genre, as well as its impact on interpretation and active audience engagement. Combining theoretical and analytical approaches, this study aims to highlight the psychological and narrative foundations that make this genre an intriguing field of study.

Keywords: enigmatic genre, mystery, literature, art, interpretation, active engagement.

It is known that the enigmatic, that is, the enigmatic genre, with its unique style, contains mystery, symbols and complex elements in literature and art, and is aimed at making readers and viewers think and be interested. The enigmatic genre has held its own for centuries, breaking the boundaries of traditional storytelling and interpretation. This genre is based on darkness and mystery in its structure, attracts the viewer's attention through symbolic elements and ambiguous stories. The genre appears in folklore, novels, films, and the visual arts, raising interesting questions about audience reception and participation. This study proposes to explore the foundations of the enigmatic genre, its use in various media, and its role in the cognitive and aesthetic development of the audience.

The Origins and Evolution of the Enigmatic Genre. The first traces of the enigmatic genre go back to ancient times, the legends and philosophical narratives of that time had riddles and hidden meanings. The genre developed over the centuries and gained special importance in the 19th century. Artists such as Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Baudelaire, and the painter Gustave Moreau used mystery to evoke deep emotions beyond reason.

With the development of cinema and postmodern literature, the enigmatic genre took on new forms and began to explore concepts such as truth, acceptance, and relativity. In contemporary works, for example through directors David Lynch and Christopher Nolan, the genre has been redefined with fragmented narrative structure and surrealism.

The enigmatic genre is characterized by the following main features:

- **Ambiguous narrative:** Stories are often fragmented and non-linear, forcing viewers to reconstruct the story.
- **Symbols:** Symbolic images and metaphors abound and are sometimes intentionally obscure.
- **Ambiguous characters:** Characters lack clear characters and may represent multiple roles or realities.
- **Open Ending:** Open endings allow the viewer to create different interpretations, which stimulates their thinking.

In fact, the researchers who carried out scientific work on this genre came from the fields of art, literature, cinema and psychology, and aimed at comprehensive study of this genre. Here are some well-known researchers as examples:

1. **Umberto Eco** – The Italian writer and semiotician, in his famous works such as *Il nome della rosa* (The Name of the Rose), used the method of creating an enigmatic story, explaining it through semiotics and symbolic images. He developed theories on the interpretation of enigmatic texts using semiotics.

2. **Roland Barthes** – A French writer and literary critic, he divided texts into open and closed types and wrote about open (i.e, multiple interpretation) texts. His work “The pleasure of the text” (Le

plaisir du texte) made a great contribution to the analysis of the text, which is close to the puzzle genre and requires the activity of the viewer.

3. **David Bordwell** – A film theorist, he has made significant contributions to the study of complex and enigmatic narratives in film. Bordwell's works, particularly *Narration in the Fiction Film*, analyze narrative complexity in film.

4. **Gilles Deleuze** – French philosopher, renowned in film theory, who studied storytelling through film and concepts. In his books *Cinema 1: The Movement-Image* and *Cinema 2: The Time-Image*, he interprets complex and enigmatic works of cinema from an aesthetic and philosophical perspective.

5. **Tzvetan Todorov** – A Bulgarian-French literary critic, he studied fiction and mystery genres in literature. Todorov's "Fantasia: An Introduction to Literary Theory" (Introduction à la littérature fantastique) is known for its analysis of the mysterious narrative structure.

6. **Mark Fisher** – An English philosopher who conducted research on the topics of modern enigmatic and dark aesthetics. His *The Weird and the Eerie* explores the enigmatic and eerie elements in contemporary art and culture.

Along with the analysis of various aspects of the genre, these researchers deeply studied the psychological and aesthetic effects of puzzle stories and created a solid foundation for the scientific analysis of the genre. The above elements encourage the audience to go beyond simply consuming the work and become an active participant. Research shows that enigmatic works require complex cognitive processes, in particular, inference and divergent thinking. In fact, the ambiguity forces the audience to actively think of clues and solutions. Psychological studies show that such works stimulate imagination, associative memory and critical thinking. For example, research by Smith and Harris has shown that the enigmatic genre creates a stronger connection because it requires more interpretation and active participation.

The enigmatic genre has a unique ability to engage the audience emotionally and intellectually. By asking questions, this genre evokes intense emotions and encourages introspective thinking. Recent research in the field of aesthetic psychology suggests that the satisfaction gained from solving mysteries often enhances aesthetic appreciation, even when all questions remain unanswered.

In conclusion, we can say that the enigmatic genre continues to amaze audiences with its ability to defy narrative conventions and promote a deep and active connection with the work. The enigmatic genre, located at the intersection of psychology, philosophy and literary studies, encourages the audience to ask unique questions and explore the multi-layered meanings of the work. This study opens new perspectives on the role of the enigmatic genre in intellectual development and creates a basis for further study of its psychological and aesthetic effects.

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