
A Necessity for Beginning Life Writing Studies in Iran; The Theory of Life Writing: A Step Towards the Growth of Interdisciplinary Research in the Humanities

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Life writing, with an ancient history among mankind, has increasingly created a huge and interdisciplinary movement in scientific and research centers since the late twentieth century, especially in various fields of modern knowledge, especially humanities and social sciences such as anthropology, ethnography, psychology and sociology, in branches such as women's and gender studies, cultural studies, colonial studies, and post colonialism.

Aim

With the aim of recognizing this concept as an independent identity, emphasizing the necessity of initiating these studies, and presenting a perspective on it in Iran, this article has been written to outline the concept of life writing and its general principles. Before this field is recognized as an independent identity, one cannot hope to plan and implement programs in the field of biographical studies, to establish specialized educational and research centers and groups, to produce and publish scientific achievements, to gather specialists and enthusiasts of this interdisciplinary field under scientific associations, to hold postgraduate courses and specialized and even hobbyist gatherings, to attend international forums and even to host them.

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Theoretical Framework and Methodology

Our era is a time of widespread expression of life stories; such that all kinds of life narratives and their publication in various formats in various media, from printed publications to blogs, even in the form of self-publishing and self-streaming, are ubiquitous and are increasingly widespread, diverse, democratic, interdisciplinary, and critical. However, for research purposes, we need to be able to categorize them all under one umbrella, which is what we are looking for in this article. Despite the long tradition of writing life narratives and the growth of its modern examples over the past century and a half, not only do we not see Life writing studies, but even its necessity and basic concepts are not well understood. In this article, after years of pondering this issue, by expanding studies in this field using library methods and content analysis, we have sought to answer these questions: What is the concept of biography and what areas does it cover? What is the status and position of Iranians in this regard compared to other advanced countries? How can this concept be given a place in the field of Persian writings? How is the position of biography in the vicinity of history and literature, as well as its most important features and role in advancing humanities and social sciences research, recognized?

Discussion

Life writing is intended as an umbrella term to encompass all works that somehow contain a realistic narrative of human life in recording personal memories, experiences, perspectives, and feelings. In the broad field of “biographies” in a variety of formats and media, including written, visual, audio, and mixed types, This concept includes a wide range of writings in the description of a life or parts thereof, in various types of life writing, such as autobiographies, fictional autobiographies, memoirs, work reports, work reports, collective biographies, memorials, testimonies, obituaries, wills, registration forms, personal resumes, obituaries, and even digital forms in blogs, tweets, stories, and the like. They develop increasingly, broadly, diversely, democratically, interdisciplinary, and critically. The author considers this concept to be a synonym for life writing, a common term in the scientific and cultural fields that is prevalent today throughout the world in both the sense of “present infinitive” equivalent to biography, and “infinitive noun” to express the act of recording life

narratives, as well as an overarching genre encompassing a variety of resulting genres.

Findings and Conclusions

In general, lifewriting is associated with the two concepts of “life story” and “nonfiction,” and for this reason, the narratives that are formed within this framework can be recognized under a general genre or “supergenre” with a multitude of subgenres. This broad genre includes the writing of life narratives and beyond in various written, visual, audio, and mixed formats that include types such as auto/biographies, memoirs, plays, music, obituaries, blogs, wills, tombstones, social media such as tweets and stories on virtual networks such as Instagram with various purposes such as spiritual, confessional, educational, emotional, therapeutic, and psychological.

Alongside life writing, which encompasses all forms of recording life narratives, we have coined two terms in the field of writing as synonyms for all its types, which are also not limited to a specific expressive format and encompass a variety of structures from inscriptions and fragments to linear narratives. In this scope, we consider all written works that somehow contain a realistic narrative of human life and that are historically literary in nature and purposefully record personal memories, experiences, perspectives, and feelings.

Keywords

Life writing, life narratives, biographies, autobiographies, memoirs

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