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### The Dynamic Mode of Poetic Narrativeness

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#### Abstract

The narrativeness of poetry is still considered as a technique of the poets. It is treated as a study of narratology in poetry. The traditional narrative mode of “teller and tale” is quite restrained and couldn't be applied in explaining poetic works. Factually, the narrativeness of poetry is crucial to the aesthetics and is power driven. The argumentation towards the narrativeness of poetry is realized by the study of the dynamics in poetic works. The “teller and tale” mode should be improved, for it is applicable to novel, but not necessarily for poetry. The narrativeness of poetry lies in the dynamics built within. It is realized by the poetic state as a whole rather than the mode “teller and tale”, for not every poetic works aims at telling stories. As Borges once made his statement in *This Craft of Verse*, poetry is just around the corner and ready to embrace you any time. The dynamics of the poetic narrativeness grants the vitality to poetry, thus its beauty transcends regardless of history. Every time poetry embraces you, it is the something calls you from the inner world. Naturally it overflows the verse reflecting the scene. All in this process is communicated by the poetic state within the poems. The power inside drive the poetic works from the spiritual world to the occasions compatible many a time. All the feelings and emotions generate from the dynamics of the poetic narrativeness, thus the communication would successfully improve, which is called “诗境和谐”(Harmony of the poetic state) in Chinese. So, the poetic narration is power-driven mode. The essay would be the analysis of the elements in the poetic dynamics, namely **poetical sense**, **poetical sentiment**, and **poetical speech** compatible with Chinese “诗情”, “诗意”, “诗话”, which grant an initial try to the establishment of the mode of poetic narrativeness dynamics.

*Keywords:* Poetic narrative, narratology, image, empathy, poetic state

#### Introduction

Poetry is the oldest form of literature in human history, which is even older than any written form of language. As the unique verbal tradition in communication for the first residence on the planet, it plays a crucial role in communicating and building the internal and the external world of human kind. Such carrier of the culture and emotion extends its tradition through thousands of years, bath in the glory of mysticism as gods' discourses with poets, transcends the sublime beauty, shatters the mind maze, and sweeps the hesitant haze. The power of the poetry affiliating to the language goes beyond the limits within, as the shining beacon illuminates the darkness when our souls and minds are caught in the middle of somewhere. What could be the possible spirit communicated in lines above and behind? And what it might communicate through itself? These are the questions brought by the heralds to the gaudy spring of human history. Treasured in some books of their wisdoms, blossom the ideas with names written on the stones as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. This heritage of literature rolling in the orbit with hot temperature

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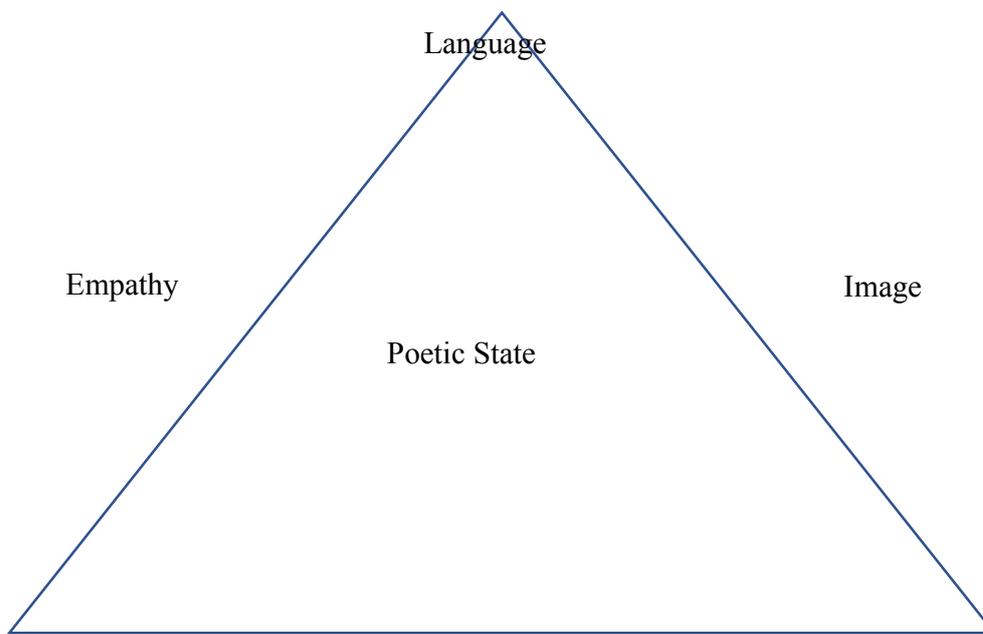
falls to Horace, Virgil and Dante with refinement of spirit value despite the confinement of language. Universal aesthetics achieved in the synthetic poetry as Kant once stated. Such universal understanding is expressed in value of poetry, which is the cultural retrospection in the aesthetical process of poetical world. Jorge Luis Borges once said that poetry can express itself without manipulating other media because it is just over THERE. His “there” refers just the common understanding of poetry individually. Something goes beyond the poetic text into the spiritual world submerging in the human history. Generation by generation, the expression of the poetry remains powerful and authorizing. It arouses the aesthetics both inside and outside the poets and the readers. What makes the lines so powerful in expression is the momentum of the poetic work hiding in the nation’s memory. The dynamics of the poetics is reflected in the narrativeness of the poetic works.

The building of the poetry aims at diversely, from the so-called overflow of the natural feelings and intuitions, to the heroic images interwoven with cultural roots in the background of intertextuality. Then the poetic works are categorized into lyrical poetry and narrative poetry, or others with the approximate standards. However, nothing would stop or prevent aesthetic sense from the communicating with us. The enjoyment could to some points touch the reader with supreme satisfaction regardless the situation and the poets’ identity. Poetic aesthetics overwhelm us any time we surrender ourselves with the limited expression in facing some concrete occasion. Poetic works narrates us instead of we narrating poetic works. No matter the lyrical poetry or the narrative poetry, they both narrate the reader with the authorizing expression. We are borrowed as a way of expression by the poetic works. Thus, make the poetry eternally in history regardless how many generations touch by it. The narrativeness of poetry embodied by the poetic dynamics, which is to some extent, it is the poetic state make it as a whole existing inside the poetic works, generates the original power fulfilling the purpose of narration.

The narrativeness of poetry does not follow the traditional narratology mode, which is a teller and a tale. Some poems shown the traits of telling a story, while most of the poems served for the purpose of expressing inward sentiments. The character and the objects emerging from within are for the same purpose of empathy carriers. Language chosen to express is the genre individually compatible with the poets. However, the words in the poetry are strictly followed the line-rule in poetic works, or the form of poetic works. The genre of the poets is realized by the forms and the competence of applying poetic techniques. Then, the three aspects constitute the upper layer of the poetic narrativeness.

The poetic state is the supreme beauty of the poetic works. As Wang Kuo-Wei in his famous critical works *Poetic Remarks on Human World* comments, it is the critical standard of prime aesthetics in poetic works. With or without the better poetic state determines the vitality of a poem in history, some of which lost in history are powerless in the poetic state. It is the embodiment of poetic narrativeness, or it is the poetic state written by the poets make the narrativeness of poetry into being. The research of the dynamics of poetic works then becomes of the poetic state written or built. It could be written and rewritten diachronically with diversified historical contexts.

The three aspects of the upper narrativeness of poetry constitutes the first layer of the poetic state. It is realized by the three elements as a whole, and expands itself inwardly and outwardly to make the narrativeness of the poetry into 3 different dimensions. With the other two levels of poetic state, the dynamics of the poetry makes an organic narrating mode. The language of the poetry would be realized as poetic speech, the authorized empathy as the poetic sentiment, and the image abstracted as the poetic sense. As is shown below, the essay would elaborate them individually.



### Poetic Speech

Poetic speech is basically the text of a poem, which could be realized into different poetic forms and the language within. As is well known, poetry follows some concrete forms in history. In Chinese poetry theory, composing a poem is a process of filling in the forms of poetry, which once put in WangGuowei's RenJianCiHua, Tian Ci (filling in the form). Both the western and the Chinese poetry strictly follow some rules of form. A certain form of language realized different purposes in narrating the image of the poetry. Form is the frame structure of one poem. In English poetry, there are basically **three forms** at least. It may be an open mind for the category of forms, but the trichotomy would be agreed by many scholars. They are **verse forms, shaping forms and open forms**. Each category is full of many subcategories. As in verse forms, there are the sonnet, the pantoum, the ballad, the villanelle, the sestina, the stanza, the heroic couplet, the blank verse and so on. Also, they have their own criteria for building the subcategories under. For example, as in sonnets, we have English sonnet (Shakespearian sonnet) and Italian sonnet (Petrarchan sonnet). The form of poetry is the image of the text within. Different forms are selected to express the poets' value lying behind the text. Among them, each serve the different narrating properties.

As for the language in which the poets manipulate and express themselves is quite genre orientated. It is only the synchronic study would suffice the purpose of itself. Language communicates different poets historically with their external objects. As Roland Barthes once put, language exists in the internal of the history while the genre external. Genre is taken as the poets' body to express. It is deeply rooted in the language and required by the writing or composing poetry while it is in the process of wording. And as a means of communicating writing and reading poem, genre is from the layer of language and go beyond the language. Thus, the research of the language in the poetic works is the study of the genre within.

### Poetic Forms in the Narrativeness of Poetry

Here not all the categories of this form are being further analyzed. Some of them chosen to be demonstrated are representative of this research. The first one is the **blank verse**. This form of the poetry is not quite the way as poetry goes at a glance, because

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there seldom are some gaps or margins in between the text as a whole. It is not English origin of this kind, while coming from Italian literature with its name *verse sciolti da rima*, namely verse free from rhyme. During the time verse language could be used to narrate story, it meets the immense need of the multitude. Many renaissance poets take advantage of such form for plays and epics including Shakespeare, Luigi Alamanni, and Henry Howard. Though Thomas Wyatt first introduced sonnets to English language, he still used blank verse to translate the *Aeneid*. The convention of this form was finally established with more natural and directive speech. It was considered to be a natural vehicle for rhythmic and sustained speech especially the occasion that emotion and complex argument fell to the prison of rhyme. Such emancipation of poetry in history brought by the poets with the glory of free mind, as Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, and John Milton, still encouraged the successive poets like Alfred Tennyson.

Such image of the text showed its value of freedom, and the value of narrating the heroic stories. The narration could be quite different from the history, or even fictionalized subjectively by the poets. But this image is quite a grand narration both internal and external of the human world in many a poetical works in history.

William Wordsworth's *Prelude* is the personal narration of the poet in a chronological sequence. It is the pilgrimage of poet's soul through different stages of life as narrated in the text of poetry in 14 books, as the poet name it as "growth of a poet's mind—an autobiographical poem". The form of the text is blank verse which is quite the narration of the poet himself. Free minding is shown in this form of the poetry as an advantage in narrating comparing with other forms of expressing situational emotion.

Milton's *Paradise Lost* bears similarity with other English epic in history. It is so explicit in the form of blank verse. The heroic deeds written in blank verse tends to narrate in details without restrains of the fixed rhyme. More freedom in composing is donated to the poets. It then becomes the paradigm of blank verse. With such identical form in poetic text, its function could be enhanced in narrating some kinds of historical events within. The narrativeness of the poem would be fortified in blank verse in *Paradise Lost*, thus the aesthetic point could be achieved in this framework of dynamic narrativeness in poetry.

Comparing the length of Milton's epic, especially the 12 books of *Paradise Lost*, Alfred Tennyson's poetry *Idylls of the Kings* may go at the same but vary in the integrity. The former tends to create the antagonist of the classical works of Bible, while the latter falls into one historical intertextuality with concrete figures compatible in each single chapter. Both of them manipulate blank verse in narrating the heroic stories with the different story lines in history. Thus, the form of the text benefits the narration itself. Still Tennyson's short poem with blank verse also shows the form of this kind, with its title *Ulysses*.

Other forms of the poetry have different advantages or traits in dynamic narrativeness. Sonnet benefits the way of demonstrating ideas or philosophical minding with its theme turn in the couplets of English style and sestets of Italian style. As is shown in Wordsworth's Italian sonnets like *The World Is Too Much With Us* and Shakespeare's 154 English sonnets. While Pantoum is the slowest form in dictating, it is often used for expressing the reminiscent time or the time passed by. The examples are Donald Justice's *Pantoum of the Great Depression*. Also, the *Villanelle* has the form of powerful recurrences of mood and emotion and memory. Its pastoral origin draws near the distance of emotion with conversational tones. No stories built within make it very lyrical, as the examples shown in Dylan Thomas's *Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night* and Elizabeth Bishop's *One Art*.

For shaping forms, like elegy, pastoral, and ode, show their own dynamics in the text. For example, Walt Whitman's most famous elegy *O Captain! My Captain!* and W. H.

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Auden's *In Memory of W. B. Yeats*. The form of such kind does not follow to the concrete one like the verse forms. Because it is less visible than the verse ones and it is also made of slowly evolving customs and decorum. The function of the form embodied in the poetic text as a whole. That is showing the sense of loss and cultural grief in lamenting tone like Tennyson's *In Memoriam* with 133 elegies and John Milton's *Lycidas*.

And the open form foretells the development in poetry. It goes to break the traditional poetic forms within the form itself. The distinct feature of itself is the form it follows, which is to break the old one and give birth to another. The process of making new poetry is not absolutely regardless of form, but a new one. Especially the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the poetry's text form innovated to break the text in different way to achieve the different aesthetics. Still some of them follow the tradition of fixed form, but many a poem goes to the other way.

### The Genre of Language in the Poetic Works

The genre of language in the poetry could be realized in the perspective of register study. The origin of the theory is in M. A. K. Halliday's systemic functional grammar. To be more specific, it is the theory of register. The genre of the text is realized in the layer of register, which is consisted of three aspects namely field, mode, and tenor. They are compatible in text with the functions of experiential, textual, and interpersonal. All these functions are realized in one situational background, which is the context of situation and the higher one, the context of culture.

Also, the genre communicates the poets and the language chosen to express in lines. Creating the poetic works with the dynamics through centuries with the synchronic language tradition realized personally in the genre. Thus, it is well the intermedia between poetic form and the language, could be subcategorized into the context of situation and context of culture as shown above.

One examples of the two aspects could be shown from many a phenomenon, the identity of the poet, his or her poetry accepted, and the historical spans the poetry written, these are the critical factors that influence the context.

The female language and male language in composing poetry are quite different. Psychologically speaking, it is determined by the gender value as demonstrated in the poetical text. Emily Dickinson's poetry tended to depict the inner world of her with some natural reminders around. The outside world transferred inside via the term "correlative objectivity" as T. S. Eliot once put. The occasion could not be duplicated but the feelings might be quite identical in any situation in lives. This is the value of her poetry comparing with a representative contemporary Walt Whitman. He is a passionate singer of the time. His poetry is full of powerful lines. As a national bard, Whitman's poetry makes the whole language community encouraged and moved. The summoning verse lit up many a people's inner world. While Dickinson's slow rhymes extends the beauty in her poetry, Whitman manipulates the quick powerful tempo to generate the enthusiasm. The following is his poem in *Song of Myself*.

I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the Soul,  
The pleasures of heaven are with me and the pains of hell are with me,  
The first I graft and increase upon myself, the latter I translate into a new tongue.  
I am the poet of the woman the same as the man,  
And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man,  
And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men.  
I chant the chant of dilation or pride,  
We have had ducking and deprecating about enough,  
I show that size is only development.

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Have you outstript the rest? are you the President?  
It is a trifle, they will more than arrive there every one, and still pass on.

Passion and power are the twin brothers in the male poet's world, while the twin sisters in female poets are emotion and sentiment. These are the basic genre in the text of gender identity.

The second factor is the historical perspective and ideology reflected in poetry. Generally speaking, literature tends fall into different categories form the historical perspective. It is one branch study in literature. In each individual time in literature, there are unique identical writing genre governed from behind. The language chosen by the poets goes into two extremes, the one is the fashion lost in time, and the one prevailing in time. These are reflected in the works of poetry. The example is quite clear in the Victorian time in literature.

The Victorian time is from 1830 to 1880. A lot of changes took place in England. It was a new world challenging the preceding era in many a field. The traditions gradually adjusted it to meet the new challenge and change during this time. Many an aspect showed in Victorian time. The genre reflects the beauty of sublimity in the Bible and emphasizing the order of the tradition with moral words contained in lines.

The England society didn't follow the style it used to be. The vocabulary of the poets developed with it and some new value endowed in the words diachronically. As the carrier of the new value, it was realized in the poetic works subsequently. Especially the change took place in the church in England. Some religious value through the new words commutated in the poetic works. More residence settled down in urban than rural. The perspective of urban deeply rooted among the public. Two groups of the residence clashed in many aspects. These are the consequence of cultural value exchanging from different backgrounds. In religion, many movements in the church tended to meet the needs of the public. One was called "The Evangelical Movement", which was against the formalizing effects of the Age of Reason upon church. It stood for a puritan renewal of the "vital simplicities" of the old Reformation. The evangelism was part of the fundamentalism, which was still challenged for many theories in church. Among these theories, the idea of nature, or the Darwin's evolution was originated in Victorian time. This new science in nature change common value towards many fields, especially the universe embodied as human feeling and non-human objects. The thoughts and the sights are united into one inner reality. That is human mind, in which the art is searching for the illegitimate emotion projection as literature does. The idea of nature is so different from the Romantic period of Wordsworth, Coleridge and those of Byron, Keats and Shelley. In the coming period the evolution generated other influence in sociology like the theory of Huxley.

Also in mind, some new ideas are formed during this era. It is called the "The New Psychology", which is as a branch of science in the historical stage. With the mental functions developed in many works, a brand-new methodology was taken to make sensory-motor analysis. Thus, the sociology benefit quite fruitfully from the research. This empirical realism in psychology established the theory of associationism, which is the product of human mind in repeated by the passive impression from memory. The so-called unconsciousness came into being and reflected in many literary works. One example is from Tennyson's *In Memoriam* 45.

But as he grows he gathers much  
And learns the use of 'I' and 'me'  
And finds 'I am not what I see,  
And other than the things I touch'

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So rounds he to a separate mind  
From whence clear memory may begin,  
As thro' the frame that binds him in  
His isolation grows defined.

As is shown in previous, it is a collection of elegies for the lost friend of his. In this one, it shows the context in the mind of conscious and unconscious, like the Death resurrecting from the poem. The sad mood fell in realization of the breaking of a link. There are some personal language norms in the creation of the personal self, comparing with loss, loneliness, and fracturing of the universe of experience into the antithesis between self and others. Apparently, Tennyson manipulated the culture of the context to absorb something more. So, the best poetry will be the one that displays the common personal situation via the struggle between custom and decorum in his genre on the one hand, and the culture of the context in the certain historical era on the other.

### Part2: Poetic Sense

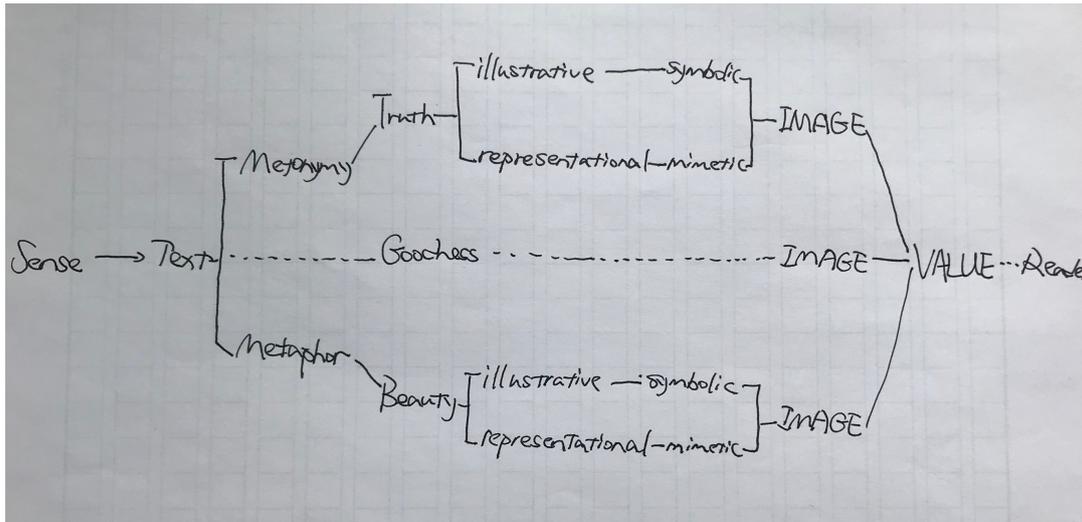
In the ancient times, there are three highest value in the art works, namely truth, beauty, and goodness. In Latin, they are *verum*, *pulchrum*, and *bonum*. It is also the highest purpose of the art. Through the poetic works they could be restored to the maximum as prime requirement for the poets. Poetic sense lies in the expression of the three aspects of value in the works. For the narratology, it is also the ultimate purpose of the process of narration in poetry. Two other parameters should be taken into consideration in the narrativeness of poetry, they are illustrative and representative sense. The illustrative sense is the symbolic one which strictly conventional and followed the arts tradition, while the representational sense is mimetic and revolutionarily innovated in the image building in the poetic works.

In Roman Jakobson's *Two Aspects of Language*, he argued the two semantic lines in the development of discourse. One is metaphor, the other is metonymy. It is quite similar with the connection between beauty and truth in the language of the poetic works. Or the beauty is realized in the metaphoric way, while the truth is in the metonymic way. The combination of the two ways lead to the prime goodness as a whole in the poetic works. The rhetorical route is quite inevitable in leading to the poetical sense.

In analyzing the sense relationship of some poetry, the narrativeness is embodied in the structure of rhetorical route. It is the pilgrimage tour in the realm of aesthetics in poetry. Along the route, poetic sense and the value carried by reveal themselves from the twilight state. Besides the sense is also followed by the equation brought up by Louise M. Rosenblatt as "Sense=Reader + Text". This is negotiated by the process of reading. It is quite obscure in the so called the creation of transacting. What transact in the poetic works is the value written in the reader, not necessarily the aesthetic points but goodness as a whole shown within itself. The plus is not the process of adding, but the process of transacting. Sense would be achieved via the process of transacting in the mode of reader and text.

The whole scheme of sensing in poetic works could be demonstrated below. It is through this scheme, the poetic sense finally perceived by the reader. Or as proved before, it is transacted between the text and the reader.

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The poetic sense communicates to the reader via a complex process as shown above. As the text could be analyzed into two categories aesthetically as metonymy and metaphor. Separately they are embodied as truth and beauty mingling with the ethnical goodness. Then, with the help of narrating, they are achieved into the IMAGE. The process of narrating is the way of achieving in narratology, or the realization of narrativeness in the images. Thus, the poetic sense could be valued in the reader, which the poetic sense would be achieved by the reader.

### Part3: Poetic sentiment

Reading poems, or any other forms of literature, will arouse your inner most feeling and experience from within. Literature is a way leading to our inner most reality. Especially the reading poetry will benefit with assurance of any given situation in lives. If you are homesick, while in facing the image of moonlight for most of the Chinese, they would recite the same line from the well-known poems. Because poetry will achieve the utmost reality into the spiritual world. From the psychological perspective, it is the process of empathy. Some natural objects, critical occasions and concrete places would draw the emotional feedback to the poetic works. This is the way of empathy in poetry. What's more, the empathy in the poetry would express into other domain the feeling of authority. Then, poetry itself would grant the reader an authorized expression and the experience within the works. Its nature in literary works is so evident and quite detached from other forms of literature, like prose or novel. In Chinese traditional works of Four Great Classical Novels, the initial part of each chapter is often dominated by some poems referring to the content. Or, in the Bible or other western classical works, even the modern works like John Fowls' French Lieutenant Woman, the initial part is often dominated by some Victorian poetic works. The poetic sentiment revived the readers' inner spiritual world with authorized expression. So, the poetic sentiment is an authorized empathy.

However, it is not the reader that express the emotion and the feeling outwardly with the poetic sentiment. It is the poem itself express the feeling or the poetic sentiment to the reader. Once, Martin Hedger put it in his famous line "Das Sprache spricht." The language speaks itself. Or the poetic language speaks it to the readers. Thus, the poetic sentiment is the process of recognition through which it communicates itself in the poetic text with the given situation. Every time we read the poem or recite several lines from a certain poetic works, the poetic sentiment would grant us with a certain authorized empathy. It bridges

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the inner and external human world. Thus, the spiritual world would be sufficed with the poetic sentiment.

The process of the recognition is achieved by the way which narrativeness of poetry fulfilled within. The poetical sentiment could be the way of “recognizing” and “recognized” in the recognition. The poetic works always on your mind, and every time by time emerges itself with the compatible occasions would be recognizing. It actively recognizes any situation in lives with poetics. More and more poems we recite in the memory would grant us strong poetic sentiment in “recognizing” external world with spiritual inside. In the initial stage of children education, it is a strong requirement of reciting poems on the enlightenment of literature for most of the nations globally. Not only to foster the younger generation the “absolute inwardness” of the poetic sentiment, but also with the techniques of poetry to endow.

The other way is “recognized” in the poetic sentiment of recognition. It is passively recognized with the poetic works. However, it is fulfilled with the premise of given experience and the previous stage of “recognizing”. Confronted with the unfamiliarly of the poetic works, read or listened by others, the poetic sentiment would be recognized into the spiritual world without labor-forcing recognition. The poetic sentiment would not lead you nowhere. The poetic sentiment within would be successfully narrated.

These are the two ways of recognition of poetic sentiment, with which it would narrates the common-built inner world. It is thus the authorized empathy written in the poetic sentiment grant the feature of the narrativeness in the poetic works. It speaks itself with our mind. Or it narrates itself with our spiritual world, and communicates with both internally and externally.

### **Part4: Poetic State**

Poetic state is utmost inner drive of the poetic narrativeness. It is governed by the inexorable laws with the other 3 aspects demonstrated above, which constitutes the third or the outer layer of poetic works as a whole. Poetic works achieve the aesthetics by the momentum of the poetic state. Poetry is consisted of lines written in the language chosen by poets, which realized abstractly and aesthetically by the genre. That makes the language synchronic symbol of the poets. The unlimitedness of the sublime beauty in poetic works is thus possible through the diachronic environment. Temporal value is created by the language embedded within. Then the lines of the poetry are used to create different value rooted images. The space the author draw the works from the reality make the authorized empathy possible in perceiving the images. The poetic space is made by empathy into the mirror which reflects the distance between expectation or the dream and the reality, precisely it is the responded to the reflection and the psychological distance. Three elements of time, space and the character in the poetic works build up the inner layer or the third layer of the poetic state, which resurrects the blood of literature with warm temperature timelessly.

Poetic state is then the framework made by the demonstration of three layers, with the outer layer: poetic speech, poetic sentiment and poetic sense, then to be realized inside by language, empathy and image, finally the core of the poetic state with time, space and character. It makes the poetic works possible into being. The rule which connect all the elements within the layer is inexorable. The core is not loosely built up but tightly rule-governed system in which all the elements (time, space and character) are connected by the inevitable cause-effect relations, or to some extent, it is transcendently built in the spirit of poetry, which meets Kant’s transcendental aesthetics as a whole preexisting in the poetry.

With the given dynamic mode of poetic narrativeness in poetic state, the purpose of the essay is fulfilled. Poetic state or in Chinese 诗境 is a critical dynamic source in the narrating traits of poetry. The different layers mark the researching boundary with different dimensions. The narrating traits of poetic works would be embodied in the process of communicating. It would go beyond the poetic text, but never get out of the poetic state. The research hopefully and humbly would benefit the narratology in poetics with a little enlightening idea, which would suffice the author's strictly dedication.

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