



* On Poetic Conceptions *
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On Poetic Diction and Pluralistic, Polyvalent Logics

Some thoughts are offered here about how language usage associated with poetic speech conveys unusually complex associations and pluralistic conditions of being. These observations indicate why poetry has always been an important epistemic mode for knowing self and world variously. It is suggested that this style of language usage is not only effective in diversifying emotional and aesthetic awareness, but also for adequately articulating radically complex analytical discourse.

Semantic Effects of Poetic Style and Diction Upon Logical Association

Poetic expression is most generally characterized as an unusually condensed, metaphorical, often vividly imaginal mode of using language. It is typically associated with the formal arrangement of words in verse. Verse lines of text or speech are 'broken' or interrupted by a sense of rhythm, or for the purpose of influencing meaning by interrupting the 'flow,' much in the manner of more explicit punctuation. Standardized punctuation and regularized word spacing are often dispensed with in poetic style so that a reader must decide where to place emphasis or conclude a thought. Both arrangement of lines of text or spoken phrases in verse form and non-standard punctuation add a distinctive quality to how meaningful associations can be made within and between phrases and sentences. The attention of the hearer or reader can be more subtly influenced than by use of written punctuation alone.

Thus poetic usage can amplify meaningful associations between words in ways that more standard speech or writing structured simply by ordinary punctuation cannot. Breaking a line in mid sentence can allow a heightened sense of 'making meaning backward' toward the preceding words while enhancing anticipation of the implied meanings of the yet-to-be read or spoken ones. Poetic style can thus be considered to enhance a certain bi-valence or even polyvalence of meaningful associations between words and the concepts or images these represent.

The term diction is used to indicate a preference or style in choosing words for speech and writing. Thus there tends to be a general diction to everyday, ordinary speech and the writing of commonly read publications such as newspapers. The notion of poetic diction suggests that poetic writing or speech has its own characteristic style for selection and usage of words. In one regard, poetic diction is associated with a tendency to name things and actions in unfamiliar ways. Words more typically used to indicate a thing or a status are often avoided. In this way description is given an often surprising or extra-ordinary quality that can heighten awareness.

Poetic expression tends to further depart from ordinary language usage by overtly manipulating standard rules for punctuation and grammatical syntax. Often there is no punctuation evident at all—not even capitalization—and words can seem to ‘hover’ or ‘float’ in relation to each other. Thus the ways words are arranged in poetic usage often requires some unusual effort on the part of reader or listener to comprehend their meaningful associations. The semantic operation of how meaning is signified in more ordinary language usage is altered. The images, concepts, and actions represented by words in poetic expression are given a more intricately interactive contexting than in more standard usage. The meanings thusly implied and inferred tend to be compounded, more multiple or diversified, thus less reductive. The inherent constitution of language in complexes of multiple word meanings and associations is thereby made more evident and consciously accessible. Such semantic manipulations allow the amplification of meaningful associations between words in sequences by way of a loosening of ordinary grammatical restraints and the habits of prosaic vocabulary. More specific meanings can then be experienced in less hierarchically ordered relationships relative to standardized language usage.

Poetic Amplification of Meaningful Word Associations and Representation of Polyvalent Logics

Viewed from the perspectives of standardized grammar and pragmatic literalism, poetic expression is often criticized for imprecision, exaggeration, and unrealistic representation. However, renowned poets are often credited for having exceptionally sophisticated knowledge of ‘how language makes meaning.’ The effective use of poetic diction seems to require subtle familiarity with the structural rules of language in order to ‘make words more complexly meaningful’ but manipulating and even violating those rules. Standardized structures for language usage readily compare to more general socialized standards for identity and reality. Both are pragmatically reductive and thus both impose limitations upon expressing the radical complexities of concurrent being and becoming.

Poetic diction thus offers a more effective manner of making meaningful expressions of the interplay between reductive and non-reductive, exclusive and inclusive understandings. It is not surprising then that the intensifying and diversifying effects of poetic style and diction upon semantic complexity that make can enhance articulating the multivalent interactive logics tends to be evaded in more ordinary contexts. It is a form of expression that tends to ‘speak of hidden relations,’ present irresolvable contrasts, and evoke ‘impossible realities.’ But the dynamics of this diction are logical in their intricate awareness of how linguistic constructions can articulate the intricate subtleties of consciousness and phenomena.

Thus the claim offered that such usage is actually appropriate to complexly interactive rational thought. Some examples of applying a more poetic modality to logical discourse are provided here. The intention is to demonstrate how a reasonable understanding of the radical concurrencies of self and world can be articulated in a style that best ‘mirrors’ their pluralistically dynamical associations. This effort is addressed to re-presenting the notional qualities of mythical logics (mytho-logos) and the complexities of psycho dynamics (psycho-logos).

Further elaboration of these notions in Chapter Three of text **Manifesting the Many in the One** on page of that title

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