POETIC INQUIRY: A RESPONSIVE METHODOLOGY IN RESEARCH AND EDUCATION

by

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Abstract

My PhD dissertation explores a qualitative methodology of inquiry in the humanities, social sciences, and education called poetic inquiry. The exploration takes place in three movements. The first movement inquires into poetry, as a distinct form of expression from prose, that is concentrated, performative, and affective, resulting from a unique creative process in which the poet responds to her past experiences attentively. This process is promoted by the poet becoming a self-for-an-other whom she presents in her poetry. Here, responsiveness is the lyrical dimension of living that the poet brings to her writing to inspire it. The second movement is a collection of my poetry written in Canada, responsive to the question of my identity as an Iranian-born woman living in diaspora. The poetry is followed by an example of poetic inquiry that emerges out of an intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging and unhomeliness of the world experienced by immigrants. Finally, the third movement includes both an examination of poetic inquiry as a minor form of research distinct from prose-based methodologies and its application to the discourse of the politics of recognition which informs major researches on immigrants’ identities and their recognition in multicultural societies such as Canada. In poetic inquiry, the researcher not only employs a conventional research methodology but, as a poet, also responds ethically to her research in the same way a chorus in Greek drama responds to the dramatic narrative enacted on the stage. This responsiveness is an invocation that makes discursive inquiry act in ways different from its orderly operations so as to transform itself into poetic inquiry. Poetic inquiry includes both customary research and responsiveness as the lyrical dimension of inquiry. I advocate for re-inclusion of the lyrical in the realm of knowledge as research and education. By adding lyrical sensibilities into education, we can restore coherence, enactive complexity, and intensity to educational practices and renders them into educational
poetics as termed by Gitlin and Peck. To theorize poetic inquiry, I borrow concepts from philosophers, poetry scholars, literary theorists, and poets such as Deleuze and Guattari, Levinas, Zwicky, Bakhtin, Bachelard, Auden, and Leggo.
Preface

This dissertation is the original intellectual product of the author Nilofar Shidmehr. It includes theory, poetry, and poetic inquiry.

The dissertation consists of three movements, embodying the doctoral journey of the author, a philosophical thinker and a poet, who, in the course of this journey, emerges as a poetic inquirer.

Movements I and III are theoretical. Movement I investigates poetry as a distinct form of expression from prose, and Movement II explores poetic inquiry as a distinct arts-based methodology of research from the dominant ways of inquiry in the humanities, social sciences and education. Movement II consists of the author’s poetry followed by her emerging poetic inquiry. Movement II is a passage that connects Movements I and III. In the other words, it is the rite of passage from inquiry to poetic inquiry.

The author has an original and eclectic approach towards theory and brings together concepts from multiple and heterogeneous literary and linguistic scholars, philosophers, and poets to intersect in her research in a non-arbitrary way. The variations in each movement create an assemblage of inquiry into poetic inquiry as a way of knowing, that has important implications for both research and education. The dissertation has a triadic architectonics that is fractal in small and large scale.

A version of a subsection of Variation III-II has been published as:


A version of a subsection of Variation III-II of Movement called “Research as an Epistemological Activity and Research as an Ethical Activity” has been published as a book chapter. Reference:

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation lovingly to Petr Straka whose life path merged with mine in the beginning of my PhD program. He has endured with me through all the crises and hardships I have gone through, and has given me courage and hope to continue throughout the way. I have been blessed to have him on my side during this seven-year journey, a man whose sheer hopefulness, caring responsiveness, and lyrical Czech humor can spark in me such cheerful enthusiasm and positive outlook towards the future that, in spite of uncertainty and despair, I continue with my act in the drama of my being while, like a chorus, I am responsive to my act.
Prologue
The Re-inclusion of Poets in the Realm of Inquiry: Advocating for Responsive Research and Education

This dissertation explores an arts-based qualitative methodology of research in the humanities, social sciences, and education called poetic inquiry. It showcases poetic inquiry as a multifaceted way of knowing-expressing that features both narrative-discursive and lyrical-performative modes of inquiry in one figurative play of research. The narrative-discursive part is the customary form of research in the humanities and social sciences, metaphorically set on a stage before the academic research community as its audience; the lyrical-performative part, or poetry, appears as a chorus and responds to the enactment of the research narrative. Central to my conception of poetic inquiry is the idea of inquiry as a dramatic play, similar to those of ancient Greece, including a chorus that performed through responsiveness. This idea reconnects Western thought to a time before Plato had banished poets from inquiry and education.

Poetic inquiry thus re-establishes poets in research and education after a long period of expulsion initiated by Plato at the beginning of the Western “re-search for Truth.” Poetic inquiry provides for “hybrid” research and education, called “educational politics” (Gitlin & Peck, 2005, p. 45). The hybrid includes a heterogeneous combination of multiple modes of inquiry—discursive and lyrical. Poetic inquiry is thus a research methodology, a way of being-expressing-inquiring, and a way of education that heralds and fosters diversity, heterogeneity, and multi-disciplinarity in all activities which involve knowing or knowledge making.

My formulation of poetic inquiry is informed by the views of several literary theorists and philosophers. I draw from Henri Bergson’s and Bachelard’s views to explore intuitive knowing, from Brian Massumi’s theory of affect to theorize the method of intuition in poetry, from Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of “minor” to show poetic inquiry as a minor way of
research, and from Bakhtin’s and Levinas’s concepts of ethical responsiveness to form my concept of lyrical responsiveness.

Poetic inquiry challenges the Platonic idea of the separation of the lyrical from the discursive form of inquiry—the idea that limits knowledge as research and education to its argumentative, analytical, and interpretive methods of knowing—to a sort of activity called “epistēmē,” that involves construction of correct names “orthotēs onomatōn” for contemplated Forms of things (Levin, 2001, p. 13). To Plato, true epistemological activity has the status of “technē,” a status that poetry lacks, because poetry does not yield “‘correctness in assignment’” of names to things (p. 84). Plato rejects pre-Socratic philosophers, especially sophists, for the same reason, even though he shares “a common literary heritage” with them (p. 46). This heritage is the lyrical heritage presented by poets. Plato sees the lyrical as a challenge to knowledge-making activity because he is afraid that the lyrical side of inquiry can awaken the activity of episteme, which Plato believes to be based on customs, laws, and conventions, its “aporetic” dimension, and eventually transform “technē” to something else, to a false representation of the “Real.”

In this dissertation, I advocate for reconnecting the epistemological activity to its pre-Socratic roots by re-including the lyrical in inquiry and education. This re-inclusion amounts to poetic inquiry. Through advocating poetic inquiry as a methodology in research, therefore, I actually advocate for the re-inclusion of the lyrical in the Western tradition of inquiry and education. By reconnecting the dominant Western traditions of knowledge construction and education after Plato to the pre-Socratic traditions in which the lyrical and the discursive were not yet separated, such re-inclusion will restore coherence, enactive complexity, and intensity to Western thought.
Two concepts are central to my conception of poetic inquiry. The first one, which I discuss in Movement I of this dissertation, is the concept of duration as the form of intuitive knowing, grasped in the process lyrical knowing. Like a chorus, duration can potentially activate a desire in the discursive dimension of thinking to bend back on itself and respond to its forms of articulations as it is being articulated, so as to “determine” discursivity and then “reterritorialize” it (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). In particular, I look at intuition and its concomitant method of “affect” (Massumi, 2002a) and argue that the lyrical affects the discursive through inducing in it its potentiality of responsiveness.

Responsiveness is the second central concept of my dissertation. Responsiveness is the act proper to the chorus of inquiry. By their presence in the play of inquiry, poets introduce the lyrical capacity of discursiveness to research. This introduction makes the discursive inquiry address itself in a responsive way. As a result of a dynamic dialogue between the discursive and the lyrical activated by the presence of the chorus, the play of research turns into a spectacle or event of inquiry.

**Wonder: A Poem by Nilofar Shidmehr**

A steller’s jay, small,  
lands on the stalk  
of a daisy, it bends  
under the bird’s weight, heavy,  
its petals almost touching  
the asphalt. My heart  
shudders: is it going to break?  
at this moment, the bird  
flies away,  
and the daisy rises up  
towards the evening light
The Emergence of This Dissertation and the Architectonics of my Doctoral Journey

The dissertation consists of three movements. Each Movement respectively is comprised of a prelude and three variations. Movement I explores poetry as a distinct form of expression resulting from a unique creative process that renders the performance of language different than the way it is performed in prose writing. It demonstrates in which way the poetic way of knowing is different from prose-based ways of knowing. In Variation I-I, informed by the literature on poetry and poetic inquiry, including scholarly writing and poetics, I present the three characteristics of concentratedness, affectiveness, and performativity as essential in distinguishing poetry from prose. These characteristics render poetic knowing as an intuitive way of knowing that is dynamic, reflexive, and most importantly, expressive. For such knowing, as I explain in Variation I-II, the poet must endure her past experiences, or her memories, attentively or response-fully. In other words, the poet must endure the weight of her existence as the other. The process of poetic attentiveness or creation is a process of psycho-synthesis in which the poet lets go of her subject position in the historical world—or her self as ego—to perish while at the same time giving birth to her self as the other from the dynamic locus of otherness. In this way, the poet opens her past—her memories—into a potential future in the present moment. Poetry emerges from the psycho-synthesis of intuition.

As I will discuss in Variation I-III, the distinctness of poetry from prose is marked by poetic rhythm that is different from the mere sound pattern of the poem consisting of meter, rhyme, and traceable rhetorical devices. Rhythm is not tracing but mapping. It is the cartographic embodiment of how the poet achieves the intuition of otherness through letting go of her subject position in historical world. The intuition activates in language its performative and lyrical potentialities, and as a result, invokes a different working of the rhetorical operations
of language. The vehicle of such invocation is the poet’s vital breath. Variation I-III is the
description of how language in poetry works differently than the way it works in prose. In prose,
language operations, which are in the service of making meaning, take place in an orderly way
along the axes of syntax and semantics. In poetry, at the same time as meaning making is in
process, the language bends back on itself along a third axis, interjected by the lyrical, and
addresses and responds to its orderly operation. The result is the expression called poetry with its
distinct linguistic mapping called rhythm. Rhythm is the congealment of the three key
characteristics of poetry as concentratedness, affectiveness, and performativity that render poetry
distinct from prose.

Movement II starts with a prelude which includes my poetry manuscript *The Triangle of
the Names of an Immigrant*. My poetry expresses the intuitive moments of exploring my identity
as an Iranian immigrant in Vancouver. These moments express how I endure the weight of my
exilic identity and diasporic existence in the moments of poetic creation. The manuscript
comprises three sections: Narratives, Biographics, and Ironics, each starting with a prelude
followed by a few poems. The prelude II is followed by three Variations. These variations
together present an instance of my emerging poetic inquiry in response to the discourses such as
immigrants’ identities and the politics of recognition of these identities in multicultural societies
such as Canada. The response presented in each variation is invoked by one of the poetry
manuscript’s sections: Narratives, Biographics, and Ironics.

In Movement III consisting of three variations, I theorize poetic inquiry as a qualitative
methodology of research distinct from other methodologies. Variation III-I offers my
formulation of poetic inquiry as a methodology of research. I introduce poetic inquiry as ethical
responsiveness towards the other, the self, and language. Poetic inquiry is a research process in
which the inquirer endures the inquiry ethically and responsively. That is, as she inquires about
the research subject via one of the traditional discursive ways of research in the humanities,
social sciences, and education, she simultaneously responds ethically to her act of inquiry in a
way similar to a chorus in Greek drama responding to the dramatic narrative enacted on the
stage. This way of responding to one’s own act of discursive inquiry is equivalent to enduring
the inquiry ethically. In Variation III-II, I give the name “major research” to all narrative-
discursive ways of knowing or prose-based ways of research (e.g. ethnographic study, interview
study, narrative study, phenomenological study, etc.), that are often employed in academia by
researchers from various theoretical orientation such as critical theorists, structuralists, and
postmodernists. Then I call poetic inquiry “minor research.”

Variation III-II discusses how minor research is not in opposition to major research,
since in poetic inquiry the researcher is involved in discursive inquiry in the same way as major
research inquirers are. However, in addition, she also engages in a responsive activity as
responding to the act of inquiry that is being enacted in the figurative play of research. Poetic
inquiry thus includes both discursive AND responsive modes of inquiry. Therefore, the
difference between major and minor research is that minor research has something in excess. The
excessive part is the lyrical expression presented by the figurative chorus of research via which
the inquirer-poet endures her act of inquiry lyrically and thus responsively. The lyrical response
deterritorializes the discursive activity of research so as to bring about a reterritorialization of the
discourse. The final reterritorialized document cannot be properly called research. It is poetic
inquiry.

In Variation III-III, I first discuss how the presence of poetry admits discursive research
in process affects the discursive operation of inquiry and as a result creates poetic inquiry. Then,
I present this discussion through the example of my own emerging poetic inquiry that I presented in Variations II-I, II-II, and II-III. I examine how the intuition of the pathos of belonging/not-belonging experienced by immigrants presented in my poetry invokes the researches informed by the politics of recognition to respond to its own categorization of identity and recognition. I conclude that such invocation can potentially turn these researches into poetic inquiry. My poetic inquiry is an example.

Each variation in this dissertation is an outing during which I explore the three corners comprising the world of my study: poetry, inquiry, and poetic inquiry. The variations present a rhizomatic cartography of the exploration of poetic inquiry. Together, they embody a fractal and non-arbitrary distribution of a singular theme into a finished movement—a distribution that formed itself in an intuitive way. Respectively, the movements together embody a similar triadic fractal linkage of concrete parts into the finished whole of my dissertation.

The variations have an “architectonic” aesthetic shape, to borrow a term from Bakhtin (1990). The shape presents how I-as-inquirer and I-as-poet relate to one another in a responsive way, so that I-as-poetic-inquirer is consummated. It also presents how I-as-researcher (researching on immigrants’ identity) and I-as-immigrant relate to one another so that I-as-self-discoverer is consummated. As a poet, I have impregnated my poetry with my act of inquiry. As an inquirer, I have impregnated my inquiry with my poetry. The responsiveness of my acts has conditioned the interpretation of my identity as an immigrant. My inquiry into my self and into my poetry, expressed in Movement II of the dissertation, became united as my “answerability” to my diasporic living. My responsive form of literacy as responsibility for my act of inquiry as living, thinking, enunciating, conversing, writing, and expressing reverberates throughout this dissertation.
The relation of variations in the dissertation to one another is a relation of contiguity. They do not create a whole; rather, they stay in a dynamic tension with one another. To remind the reader of variation’s triadic form, I marked the beginning of each variation by a visual sign—that of a triangle. The preludes are respectively marked by a different visual sign—that of a circle, that represent the motif of that movement. The motif of the first movement is the concept of duration and the motif of the third movement is the concept of responsiveness. Each variation then is a response to this motif. Respectively, each response is a performance in which the inquirer bends backwards towards the previous variation and from there bends forward towards the next variation or movement and expresses herself in relationship to the motif set in the prelude. The patterns of responsiveness of three variations interfere with one another and create a movement. The three movements also interfere with one another in a responsive way and together they create the map of my doctoral expedition, depicted in this dissertation.
Movement I: On Poetry and Responsiveness
Prelude I
Poetry, it is generally agreed, is distinct from prose. Yet it is very difficult to say exactly how and why poetry is different. To explain the distinctness of poetry, many poets and scholars suggest that poetry is a form of expression in which two different elements are at work at the same time. Some describe them as a linguistic exterior or skin and a non-linguistic interior (Stevens, 1997, p. 2007, cited in Zwicky, 2012, p.57). The rhetorical theorists called these two aspects of poetry sense and meaning while the early formalists called them opaque language and transparent language, and the later Russian Formalists referred to the familiar and non-familiar. Other suggested dyads include the material, creative imagination and the conceptual, abstract imagination (Bachelard, 1971); the sacred and the profane, or primary imagination and secondary imagination (Auden, 2007); the enactive and the non-enactive process (Lee, 1998); experience and sensitivity (Gustafson, 1987); a wordy awareness and a wordless awareness (Zwicky, 2012). No doubt other poets and poetic scholars have their own descriptive terms. As Leavy (2009), referring to Hirshfield (1998) puts it, poetry “relies on the word and lyrical invocation, thus merging two vehicles of expression” (p. 64).

**Poetry and Prose: How Are They Distinct?**

Following this tradition, I also identify two elements at work in poetry, calling them the lyrical and the non-lyrical. Zwicky (2012), in her book *Auden as Philosopher: How Poets Think*, provides an account of Auden’s sense of the lyrical as something that “has no sense of time,” is “self-forgetful,” “desires nothing except to praise,” and is “without humour,” meaning that it is “chillingly impersonal” (pp. 15-16). Zwicky (pp. 24-26) also cites many poets’ and scholars’ descriptions of the lyrical, including “a preverbal reality at the heart of words” (Domanski, 2006); an “ecstatic mental appetite” (Lilburn); a curiosity which “yearns beyond [the] barrier of intelligibility to know the withinness of things,” to create a form of “attention . . . a sort of
readiness, a species of longing which is without the desire to possess, and [which] does not really wish to be talked about” (McKay, 2001). Additional notions of the lyrical include “the invisible rendered visible: breath on glass” (Michaels, 1995); “a moment of insight” leading to “a further breakthrough” to see things in themselves (Page, 2007). Another poet likens the lyrical to an “epiphany [as a] sudden moment of insight, a sense of revelation [that] bring[s] with it a kind of wonder and awe . . . a sense of being opened up to something greater than myself, divine or otherwise . . . the epiphany before an object as a moment in which its soul, its whatness, leap to us from the vestment of its appearance” (Sinclair, 2009). And finally Zwicky cites Gustafson’s description of the lyrical as “moments of awakening . . . [during which] the surprise of the significance of each [thing] is achieved” and “the discovery of endowed reality [within things]” which contributes to a “deepness of living” (Gustafson, 1987).

Zwicky (2012) herself mentions at one point that the lyrical is a form of “intuition” (p. 28). She describes it as “immediate awareness of resonance [of things] . . . sustained attention to abstract and concrete images—kinaesthetic, aural, tactile, emotional, visual, and olfactory gestalts an ontological attention, and the perception of “what is there in ways that calculative reason cannot [make up]” (Zwicky, 2012, p. 27, emphasis in original). Zwicky (pp. 22-26) provides a few poets’ descriptions of how the lyrical as a form of intuition acts to deepen our lives. Intuition “essentially means to be aware, to answer the call from life itself, to practice the veneration of its numerous forms” (Domanski, 2006); it presents an “irresistible urge to acknowledge the awe [felt] in the presence of creation”; it acts like a “voice” that “embodies being” (Lee, 1998); it steps “in tune with being, hearing and echoing the music and heartbeat of being” (Bringhurst, 2007); it inspires us to utter names “which its subjects . . . intone if they
stood to sing” (Lilburn, 1999); and it embodies “inspiration, divination, rapture” (Gustafson, 1987).

As for the non-lyrical, descriptions suggest that it “is active” and it is “articulate” (Zwicky, 2012, pp. 16-17). The non-lyrical is “an epidermis of narrative, a layer of hypotheses, orders, causal grids by which the world is rendered intelligible” (Lilburn, 1999, cited in Zwicky, pp. 23-24). In action, the non-lyrical creates “logical orders in thought” and it “craves agreement with other minds”; it “approves of regularity, of spatial symmetry and temporal repetition, or law and order: it disapproves of loose ends, irrelevance, and mess” (p. 17). In general, the task of the non-lyrical is to communicate a message from one party to another. The message created by the non-lyrical is fit and appropriate for easy communication.

The processes affiliated with the workings of the lyrical and the non-lyrical in poetry, especially in reference to Auden’s description, correspond to Freud’s primary and secondary processes. Zwicky (2012) explains the primary process as “the mode of awareness that, according to Freud, operates in dreams, in slips of the tongue, in prelinguistic children. It is characterized by timelessness, by the absence of a sense of self, by nonlogical associative relationships, and it often resists verbal formulation” (p. 15). In Freud, “the hallmark of secondary process is language-use, which discriminates and preserves logical orders in thought” (p. 17). The non-lyrical process happens in both poetry and prose. To Auden, as Zwicky indicates, the non-lyrical “creates rite” (p. 19), with rite meaning an expression that is orderly and thus analyzable and communicable. The operation of the non-lyrical creates a form of expression known as prose which “must be both true to the experience and, if possible, intelligible to others.” Poetry, however, is different: “The poem reveals its ritual nature in its ‘deliberately and ostentatiously different’ use of language.”
The lyrical and the non-lyrical can work together to create a singular expression called poetry because they both involve images. Yet the non-lyrical, depending on orderly operations of language, also includes an “awareness of syntax and semantics, of sentential logic, of the definitions, connotations, and etymologies of words” (Zwicky, 2012, p. 28). According to Zwicky, the non-lyrical by itself creates “image-thought” during a process that “is importantly and fundamentally involved in trying to match the tone-qualities of language—the pitch and rhythm of words, their emotional resonance, the cadence of phrases and stanzas—to ontological experience. But words, unlike musical tones, carry all the non-imagery baggage, too—the very stuff that makes language especially suitable as a vehicle of analysis and systematic causal ordering” (p. 28). The lyrical, however, does not know anything about language order which is responsible for meaning making function of language and about systematic analysis of thought with regard to its meaning—about things that become possible through semantic and syntax operations of language, known as rhetorical operations of language.

The lyrical embodies a desire to express “awe” towards the “ontological” that is being experienced, and the non-lyrical attempts to capture and describe it through words, or more precisely, through regularities of language (Zwicky, 2012, p. 19). The lyrical has no desire to capture, possess, or control “the ontological”—no desire to make it a part of its identity. In fact, having no recourse to language, the lyrical has no identity and no intention to capture “the ontological.” The lyrical mode of expression thus is only to praise “the ontological.” Without any resort to words, the way it expresses itself is through sound. The lyrical performs a vocation through which it calls on language to head its syntax and semantic operations as they take place. It calls on language as it is operating orderly to address and respond to its orderly operations, aimed at producing and communicating messages. Since the lyrical has no desire to capture “the
ontological,” it is assumed to behave passively or receptively towards “the ontological.” Although this is true, the presence of the lyrical and its passivity (vocation) “affects” the working of the non-lyrical (Massumi, 2002a). This vocation invokes a movement of address-response in the non-lyrical.

The important point here is that lyrical passivity, its unwillingness to capture “the ontological,” is seeded with an urge to express its awe towards “the ontological.” Zwicky (2012) emphasizes that “it must respond, and can respond only with awe” (p. 15). These seeds of desire for praising “the ontological” render the lyrical passivity “enactive” (p. 24). This response, performed through the movement of voicing (enunciation), resonates “with things on that wavelength across the whole breadth of what is” (Lee, cited in Zwicky, p. 23). The performance of the movement of response by the lyrical enacts in the orderly working of the non-lyrical “a trajectory [which] enacts an ontophony, a music of being.” In other words, the lyrical performance of praise or awe towards “the ontological” enacts a trajectory in the working of the non-lyrical that is other or different than its semantic and syntactic axes along which it operates. This is a third axis which many scholars and poets associate with deepness or intensity of living. The presence of the lyrical in the working of the non-lyrical introduces a new axis or trajectory to its rhetorical axes of operations of language. Some poetic scholars such as Bachelard (1971) call it an oneiric axis of imagination. In our dreams, we experience living through intense images which cannot be put into words.

The lyrical affects the working of the non-lyrical by introducing or inserting into its operations a third heterogeneous axis. This introduction or insertion makes the lyrical presence enactive, with the result that the non-lyrical, while it continues working in its usual, orderly, or rhetorical way, “leans into the world and back to [a] state when the mind bespoke the soul of
things” (Lilburn, cited in Zwicky, 2012, p. 24). I interpret Lilburn’s comments to mean that through its enactive presence, the lyrical invokes a different working of the non-lyrical—a working that is not directed towards creating “thought-image” and rendering it into linguistic form as prose. This invocation makes the non-lyrical cease working briefly so as to turn around on itself and to bring itself to life, to resume working after a collapse (death). The result is poetry. To Zwicky and many poets and scholars, it seems that language’s behavior in poetry is “a fraught and paradoxical activity—a bit like trying to get a locomotive to dance or an accountant’s ledger to sing” (p. 28). With its singular performance that is very different than the way language works in prose, the language of poetry is “affective”—meaning that the image that poetry embodies “manages to make the experience, or its trace, live again in the imagination of the reader” (p. 29). As Leavy (2009) describes, “poetry evokes an emotional response from readers” (p. 67).

Many poets and scholars believe that poetry creates “the semblance of events lived and felt”—“a piece of virtual life” (Langer, cited in Ely et. al., 1999, p. 135). Virtual here means that “[m]ore than a window onto an aspect of social life, poetry places a magnifying glass in front of that reality, where the experience is even bolder than everyday life” (Leavy, 2009, p. 68, emphasis in original). The unique affectivity of poetry comes from the fact that “the intensity and compression of poetry emphasizes the vividness of a moment” (Ely, et. al., 1999, p. 135). This moment reflects the moment of intuition that the lyrical presents to the working of the non-lyrical. Ely et al. refer to this moment of intuition as an event when they write, “Through their use of language, rhythm, and space, poems represent ‘the essence of an event’ by painting ‘a scene’ that evokes strong imagery and emotions.”
The moment of intuition presented by the lyrical gives poetry a certain singular deepness which prose cannot. To Richardson (1998), readers of poetry “connect with something deep within them” (p. 459). Leavy (2009) also asserts that “[t]he human connection, resonance, and emotionality fostered by poetry results from the unique form poems occupy as compared with other styles of writing” (p. 68). Eliot (1966) describes poetry as having a unique form of concentration. He argues that, contrary to romanticism’s conception of poetry as emotions recollected in tranquility, poetry is neither emotion, nor recollection, nor, without distortion of meaning, tranquility. It is concentration, and a new thing resulting from the concentration, of a very great number of experiences which to the practical and active person would not seem to be experiences at all; it is a concentration which does not happen consciously or of deliberation. These experiences are not ‘recollected,’ and they unite in an atmosphere which is ‘tranquil’ only in that it is passive attending upon the event. (pp. 67-68)

Many poets and poetry scholars use the term “attention” in place of Eliot’s term “concentration.” The concept of attention emphasizes concentratedness, affectiveness, and performativity as three vital elements of poetry which distinguish it from prose.

**The Lyrical as the Chorus**

Eliot (1966) is right that romanticism’s description of poetry as “‘emotion recollected in tranquility’ is an inexact formula” (p. 67). Having reviewed different views about how poetry is distinct from prose, I propose that the process of poetry creation involves a performance of turning a crowd of “recollected occasions of feeling” into a community of enunciation, distinguished from prose by its quality of affective concentratedness (Auden, 1996, p. 791). As I suggested, this transformation happens because of the presence of the lyrical as a form of intuition. As the lyrical does not act like the non-lyrical (that is, through rhetorical operations of language such as semantics and syntax), it can be called a “third participant” in the creative process (Bakhtin, 1994, p. 169). I suggest that the chorus in Greek drama is a good simile for
describing this third participant. Like the chorus, the lyrical is a special witness to the rhetorical acting of language. The chorus in Greek drama, through its act of singing and dancing, affects the play by responding to the verbal discourse or the enactment of the narrative on the stage and the audience’s reaction to it.

In Greek drama, the chorus as a third participant addresses the enactment of narrative. The chorus is what Levinas (1989a) calls the “other consciousness” of the play’s utterance, which is not limited in time and place (p.81). That is, it does not represent a historical person. The actors and the audience, however, are grounded in the space-time-value matrix which shapes their acting. Bakhtin calls this matrix “chronotope” (1986/1993). In Greek drama, chronotope creates the unity of action (time and place) of the narrative-discursive part of the play, analyzed in depth by Aristotle (2012) in his book Poetics. The unity of time and place in the form of Space as a universal container of identical entities implies the unity of action on which discursivity is built. The unity of action, in the Aristotelian way of thinking, “has a logic proper to good story-telling rather than a fidelity to the probabilities of real life” (Lattimore, 1964, p. 6). Chronotope renders the narrative into “an ordered series of events” and in this ordering it claims “its own rights.” The narrative or discursive part of drama thus “is shaped . . . it seems, by certain formal conditions or formal limitations as well, patterns of story as it were.”

The order implied by story patterns gives the story its “moral rhetoric” (Lattimore, 1964, p. 7). Morality is always already intertwined with the idea of necessity. Lattimore continues that “when the details of the story do so cohere, we feel a sense of necessity, of must-be-so: one could almost call fate.” In the narrative part of drama, as the archetype of all discursive forms, the narrative actualities and also the possibilities of the play (as different enactments of the story) are driven from this sense of necessity. The potentialities of the play, however, present an
enactment of the narrative that can bring about diversions. Because the diversions do not conform to the idea of necessity, they fall outside the actualities and possibilities of the narrative. The actors, rooted in their chronotopes, cannot enact such potentialities; they can only actualize possibilities of action by creating their own enactments of story patterns as an actualization or a possible actualization of unfolding the narrative given to them before their act. Story patterns limit the actors’ ability to enact the narrative. Potentialities of the play, however, can only be embodied by the chorus as it dances and sings. Plato, as the founder of Western discursivity, did not recognize and acknowledge potentialities of action in Greek drama (tragedy), embodied by the chorus. He saw drama, which he called poetry, as limited to its chronotopic part and called it the imitation of action. Following him, his student Aristotle also argued “that tragedy is the imitation of the action” (Lattimore, 1964, p.2) and consequently made “little reference to the chorus in the Poetics” (Walton, 1984, p. 16).

Walton (1984) emphasizes that “the chorus means virtually nothing to Aristotle” (p. 20) because there is nothing, I suppose, about “Unity of Time” (my emphasis) in the chorus movement (p. 21). It seems that Aristotle took “aiōn” for “chronos.” As Rehm (2003) explains, “Chronos is time understood as an enduring continuum, but its child aiōn represents an individual life, a specific lifespan, or an epoch within time’s wider extension” (p. 122, emphasis in original). According to Rehm’s definition, narrative time (or discursive time), that represents the unity of time and thus action and is implied in Bakhtin’s concept of chronotope, is actually aiōn. The chorus, however, presents an enduring time. This is the time which only the chorus as the third participant of the play can intuit and embody in its responsiveness. In other words, in its responsiveness, the chorus presents an enduring continuum to the play. Therefore, without a chorus, Greek drama cannot explore “the complexity of temporal experience within the highly
compressed time of its performance” (p. 126). The continuum of time, embodied by the chorus’ movement of dancing and singing, does not conform to the narrative time that pertains to the unity of action. This is because “[t]he unity of action requires only that the action be complete in itself and so arranged that no part could be displaced or removed without damaging the whole” (Walton, 1984, p. 22). The chorus movement (dancing and singing) does not conform to the unity of action that is the underlying logic of all narrative-discursive forms. As Rehm (2003) points out:

The presence of the Chorus in tragedy raises an obstacle to the seductions of character and character-driven plot, variations of which still dominate popular theatre today. The Chorus’ relative freedom from the constraints of plot allows them to comment on the action and challenge its direction. As noted above, the Chorus introduces a spatial and temporal reach far beyond that required to ‘tell the story’. […] The inclusive sweep of choral –lyric from folk memory and ritual to the most experiential ‘new music’ hardly represents rote conventionalism. The variation in placement, tempo, length and meter of choral lyric suggests its inherent flexibility and resistance to a single interpretive or ideological function. (p. 113)

The chorus movement of dancing-singing that embodies its act of responsiveness is a potentiality outside narrative enactment. When this potentiality becomes present by the chorus in the play, it cannot be caught in chronotopes which determine the “how” of narrative enactment. By its presence, such potentiality leaves its marks or effects of temporality on narrative enactment while the play takes place. By its presence in the play, the chorus, therefore, introduces an anachronism into the play because it introduces a third line, a temporal line, to the axes of narrative action and their unity.

In choronotopic arrangements of action, or discourse, the rhetorical act of language as meaning-making happens as a result of semiotic interaction between one who uses language to transmit a message (a sender or addressee) and one who receives the message (a receiver or addressee). This semiotic interaction is always guided, but not fully determined, by what Bakhtin
calls “speech genres” (1986). Speech genres “describe the broad set of linguistic conventions that
speakers [addressers and addressees] more or less tacitly agree upon as operative for any
particular discursive context (written or spoken)” (Roberts, 1994, p. 248). Speech genres are
closely related to narrative genres underlying prose. Narrative genres are particular ways of
narrating that we use to ground and model experience in pregiven story patterns. Poetry is a
distinct form of expression from prose because it cannot be fully analyzed by speech genres. This
is because the lyrical works in non-orderly ways that interrupt and interfere with the regular,
orderly working of the non-lyrical.

A useful analogy can be made with a simple fountain pen. Imagine the pen as a tool we
can use in a regular, orderly way to write prose. We are using it in a non-lyrical way to perform
the act of writing as an act of communication. While we write, however, the pen starts to spill
ink onto the paper. The ink marks interrupt and interfere with the act of writing. They spread on
the paper as the writing continues. As the pen spills more ink, its rate of spillage seems to
increase, as if the pen desires to spill even more. As a result, ink marks grow like buds on
patterns of writing, smudging them and turning them into something else which cannot be called
prose. This could not have happened if the pen had not spilled. The spilled ink allows a
relationship between the act of writing by the pen with the pen itself. It is a relation of
“doubling” (Deleuze, 1986, p, 101). Spilling allows “a relation to oneself to emerge” which
develops its own unique text (p. 100). This text is singular and intense with patterns that cannot
be entirely analyzed by linguistic theories. The same is true about poetry: it escapes structuralist
analysis. Poetry is manifested by the presence of the lyrical acting like the chorus: it invokes a
desire in the non-lyrical to act differently than its usual conformation with rules of speech genres.
Auden (1996) defines this desire as a desire for “Justice.”
Poetry and Justice as its Ethical Drive of Enunciation

Auden (1996) maintains that poetry is a performance for making the historical world a just world, as the poet intuits it once was. He argues that the poet achieves this by transforming a crowd of recollected occasions of feeling into a verbal society which embodies a community of enunciation. Creating this embodiment, for Auden, is the performance of transformation made possible when a poem “must presuppose—sometimes mistakenly—that the history of the language is at an end” (p. 791). To Auden, language is a system we use to attempt to organize and regulate human experience. In this system, the relation between seemingly similar perceptions and experiences is that of identity.

Because this system regulates experience, understanding and cognition are ordered according to relations of identity. Auden says that language is aimed at organizing our experiences as though the world were mathematically perfect, symmetrical, and ordered—as though the world were fixed and we were experiencing the same thing again and again. Poetry, however, is a performance via language to prove otherwise—to prove that the world represented in our system of language is not the embodiment of Justice. In this sense, poetry acts in a similar manner as a chorus in Greek drama. The chorus’s response to what is enacted on the stage shows that this enactment is not entirely just.

To Auden, if we could organize and describe our experiences justly via language functions in the form of speech or prose, there could be no poetry. But there is poetry which, to Auden (1996), is the art of “reflecting” on our experiences via our sensations. The reflection happening in poetry is not, however, a simple reflection. It does not produce the same relation of identity given to us in language when we organize our experience linguistically according to the rules and structures of language. As Auden explains:
It has been said that a poem should not mean but be. This is not quite accurate. In a poem, as distinct from many other kinds of verbal societies, meaning and being are identical. A poem might be called a pseudo-person. Like a person, it is unique and addresses the reader personally. On the other hand, like a natural being and unlike a historical person, it cannot lie. (p. 791)

The distinctness of poetry lies in the fact that the final poetic order does not correspond to the order of the regular working of language, which is predominantly the case in prose. This final order, to Auden, is the embodiment of Justice that is an impossibility in prosaic arrangements. As Auden (1996) explains:

The nature of the final poetic order is the outcome of a … struggle between the recollected occasions of feeling and the verbal system. As a society the verbal system is actively coercive upon the occasions it is attempting to embody, what it cannot embody truthfully it excludes. As a potential community the occasions are passively resistant to all claims of the system to embody them which they do not recognize as just; they decline all unjust persuasions. As members of crowds, every occasion competes with every other, demanding inclusion and a dominant position to which they are not necessarily entitled, and every word demands that the system shall modify itself in its case, that a special exception shall be made for it and it only. In a successful poem, society and community are one order and the system may love itself because the feelings which it embodies are all members of the same community. (p. 791)

Poetry, in this sense, is thus the performance of a desire for Justice. Poetry is the potentiality of a community of expressions to embody Justice in an historical world—an impossibility. It is thus an aspiration towards a Utopia where the ordered verbal society can transform into memories of becoming a perfect community in a future.

In the process of writing or uttering poetry, a poet, according to Auden (1996), postulates three things. Firstly, she supposes that a just historical world exists—a world in which her feelings are justified. The just world is not identical to the historical world where the poet existed and experienced certain feelings, but the worlds are analogous. In the just world, the poet could be an “I-for-the-other” whom she encountered in her experience (Levinas, 1989a; Bakhtin, 1986/1993). Secondly, a poet supposes that this historical world is a fallen world—a world in
which she is accused of taking the place of the other. This is the world that fostered her feelings which she is now collecting. This is also the world of past events to which she is currently responding. Thirdly, a poet assumes that this fallen historical world is redeemable through her response, as if the injustice she is accused of could be reconciled in the future. These three postulates make it possible for a poet to connect the past to the future through a just re-embodiment of her memories. The poet can thus turn the ordered verbal society that language intends to represent as her experience into a community of recollected occasions of feeling.

Although to write poetry the poet “requires pre-existing occasions of feeling and a pre-existing language out of which to create,” she does not create a world identical to the past world in which she lived and from which she got her feelings and language (Auden, 1996, p. 792). Poetry cannot be written out of an intention; it comes from a genuinely compulsive motive, desiring the creation of a just world. The compulsion comes in the form of an ethical obligation or command, urging the poet to sacrifice her “feelings completely to the poem so that they are no longer [hers] but the poem’s” (Auden, 793). During this sacrifice, however, there is a potentiality for future resurrection of the occasions of feelings which she now surrenders to the poem. This future is a Utopia: as a becoming of Justice. As Auden (1996) puts it, “Every good poem is very nearly a Utopia. Again, an analogy, not an imitation; the harmony is possible and verbal only” (p. 793).

Shafiyi (1990), a Persian poet and poetic scholar who follows the Russian formalist Schlovsky, also believes that poetry is the resurrection of words. He maintains that in ordinary usage of language, words have become dead and forgotten; only in poetry do they rise from the dead and start living anew. Shafiyi explains that “resurrection of words” means that because of the way language is performed in poetry, the signifiers and also signification itself are
resurrected and achieve a new life—a living of their own. According to Shafiyi, this is the reason why we can distinguish poetry from prose, even though we cannot tell why and how poetry is a performance of the resurrection of language.

This resurrection is a becoming of Justice described by Auden (1996). Justice is always a becoming. Poetry is the performance by which the poet, through her breath calls out to the dead language and thus invokes it to come to life again. Here what inspires and re-inspires the dead language to bring itself to life—to the resurrection—is the breath of the poet as the vehicle of her response to the accusation of contributing to the downfall of the world. Shafiyi (1990) asserts that there are no set rules for such performance, because this performance (calling or invocation) does not subject itself to the orders or commands of language and its genres. Neither does the dead language have a rule calling itself to a resurrection, so language never knows how it will resurrect itself in the future through a text which we call poetry.
Variation I-I
Human kind has forever been attracted to poetry because of the musicality and poignancy it portrays in the rhythms of its contracted form, and because of the mystery it suggests in the ambiguity it retains. So much can be said in so few words and in such compelling ways. Poetry is an imaginative awareness of experience expressed through meaning, sound, and rhythmic language choices so as to evoke an embodied response . . . It portrays particular qualities of being, elicits metaphorical wondering, synthesizes various modes of perception, and shows a way of paying attention . . . It is a form of inquiry. (Butler-Kisber & Stewart, 2009, p.3)

Butler-Kisber and Stewart, in the quotation above, introduce the three characteristics of poetry which, according to several poets and poetic inquiry scholars, distinguish it from prose. They are: affectiveness, concentratedness, and performativity. These characteristics render the poet’s act of inquiry into some “otherness in proximity” as a form of attentiveness towards this other to which or to whom the poet relates via linguistic expression. By doing so, these three characteristics make the act of inquiry in poetry distinct from the act of inquiry in prose. What poetry has in addition to prose is responsiveness that forms the expression. The three characteristics of poetry mentioned above are different presentations of responsiveness.

Those who define poetry generally agree that this linguistic form affects the reader in a very special way that even the most poignant, provocative, or highly emotional prose does not. To these poetic scholars, poetry is the expression of a kind of intuition which makes the reader experience a sort of epiphany or breaking through—an experience urging the reader to respond with awe or praise towards the otherness which the poet intuits. Poets themselves report a similar experience, describing it as a certain intensity during their creative process. The process begins with a poet’s desire to inquire into, or respond to, an other in proximity. As the poet becomes one-for-the-other, her intuitive response is embodied in a linguistic form. The feeling of epiphany or breakthrough suggests that this becoming happens, but virtually. The becoming that is embodied in the linguistic patterns of a poem affects the reader or listener to desire and experience a becoming of her own through her own experience of the performance of the poem.
Performativity is the second characteristic of poetry commonly cited by scholars. Poetic performativity refers to the way in which language is expressed in poetry, orally or in writing. Poetry’s language shows a certain distinct quality because it does not primarily strive to communicate a meaning, message, story, or image to the reader/listener. Something in poetry resists translation into meaning, narrative, or image as a communicable message. Unlike in prose, one cannot replace the signs or words of a poem with their cognates and one cannot change the arrangement of signs and lines without losing the entire form of expression. The way poetry is congealed through its unique patterns gives it a certain aesthetic quality absent in prose. However, it is not possible to analyze this aesthetic quality through the rhetorical analysis of the language of poetry or its patterns of sound. Performativity of poetry seems to stem from the way language or its rhetorical operations (syntax and semantics) act differently than they do when aimed at creating prose.

The aesthetic nature of poetry introduced by its special performativity as explained above is expressed through the quality of concentratedness, also lacking in prose. Concentratedness, as the third distinctive characteristic of poetry, reveals itself in the intensity of poetry’s linguistic patterns known as rhythm. Rhythm here is not reducible to meter, rhythm, alliteration, sound pattern, or imagistic arrangement, and attempts to describe concentratedness vary. For example Billy Collins, former US Poet Laureate writes:

Poetry, I think, is an interruption of silence. The poem makes sense largely because it has this space around it. It is inhabiting a part of this space, but leaving space around it. So a poem is an interruption of silence, an occupation of science; whereas public language is a continuation of noise. (quoted in Leavy, 2009, p. 64)

Poets and poetic scholars believe that concentratedness is responsible for evoking in readers/listeners an emotional response that is quite different from their response to prose, largely because the readers/listeners become inflicted with the intensity compressed in poetry’s
linguistic patterns (including silence and the space around it as Collins describes) and are urged to respond with variations of that intensity. This intensity gives them a feeling of epiphany or breakthrough—feelings as if they died and were born anew and fresh—as if they were resurrected, but not as the same people they were before. They feel they are resurrected as new people. Both poets and their readers or listeners share a similar experience of performance, although with different variations of intensity and at different times: the poet during the creation and the audience during the reading or recitation. This experience affects them both to act in a certain way. As we will see, the three characteristics of poetry are so entangled with one another that we can only separate them conceptually. Nevertheless, these are characteristics which poets and poetic scholars use to distinguish poetry from prose. Furthermore, they are responsible for a form of knowing shared by poets and poetry readers that is distinct from forms of knowing constructed in prose.

**Poetry as Concentrated Expression: Inquiry as the Process of Attending**

Concentratedness embodies the form of the poet’s attentiveness towards the other she inquires about and thus acts in relation to. Such attentiveness uses a process of inquiry which is synthetic, not analytic. In this process, the poet as the inquirer dissolves into the inquired, or the other, and then responds to her own act of inquiry from the other’s position. Poetry is the poet’s response as described or embodied in language. Wesling (1980) describes the alchemic process or synthesis in poetry using the metaphor of organic growth. He believes that poetry has an organic form which he describes as “a calculated overstatement of a literal impossibility” (p. 2). To Wesling, the poetic devices are forms of “likenings (e.g. in sound, sense, position)” that make possible the growth of such “impossibility” (p. 3). The literal impossibility describes the impossibility of dissolving into the otherness, which is inquired into, and which happens in
poetry. Finch (2005) also describes the process of poetry as "the alchemy of form and message" (p. 163). She suggests that even though poetry might not be different from other forms of expression in subject matter or tone, it is distinct from them because of "an overarching alteration of trajectory and purpose that orients poetry in terms of a quieter internally focused world" (p. 163).

Cahnmann-Taylor (2009) sees poetry as a form of inquiry that "increase[s] attention to complexity, feeling, and new ways of seeing" (p. 13). Like her, Butler-Kisber and Stewart (2009) also think that, because of the rigor and insight affiliated with increased attention, the form of inquiry which defines poetry and employs poetic inquiry says things that might not otherwise be said as it expands the potential for empiricism. They maintain that a poetic style of writing "not only enhances the presentation of ideas, but also stimulates and formulates the conception of ideas themselves" (p. 16). To them, poetic devices add a special form of attention to the process of inquiry which gives it a certain "liveliness and accuracy" that does not exist in prose-based forms of inquiry (p. 19).

Cahnmann-Taylor (2009) thinks that poetry, with its concentrated and attention-sharpening form, seems to have the movement or inertia of music. Borson (1995) agrees: "Poetry is made of words, yet it is exactly as articulate as music, and as distinct from ordinary speech" (p. 124). Luce-Kapler (2009) hints at this attention-boosting character of poetry which, like music, "has a way of drawing us toward a phenomenon so that we feel reverberation of a shared moment" (p. 75). Thomas (2009) also thinks that her poetry, like all poetry, "calls for deep immersion, porous receptivity, sensual attunement in ways of attending and being present in and to the world" (p. 130). Leggo (2009) highlights the concentrated nature of poetry that is similar
to music when he asserts that poetry’s form makes us pay a certain attention to words and silences.

Neilsen discerns the special aesthetic quality of poetry by its concentrated form. Neilsen (2012) writes, “Poetry drew me to the heart of where I longed to go. For me, poetry is philosophy, inquiry, prayer; it is learning to pay attention, to listen, to be awake” (p. 19). To Neilsen, the act of attending implied in writing poetry resembles the act of dwelling—the act of finding a place of refuge. As Neilsen describes it:

Poetry was a place to search and gather memories and experiences, and to dwell in them; it was an act of inquiry, of transforming and creating—and recreating—the possibility of home. It was a place of refuge, gelang, a place to belong. (p. 21)

Therefore, the act of attending in the process of inquiry specific to poetry is not simply paying more attention to the subject of inquiry; rather, it is an act of creating a home as a place of non-alienation—a place where the poet as inquirer is co-dwelling with the inquired as the other. This potentiality of co-dwelling is what concentratedness of poetry amounts to—the concentratedness which poets and scholars of poetry agree to be a distinctive quality of poetry.

Poetry then is a relation of attentiveness in which the poet as inquirer becomes the inquired via co-dwelling in an intense and compact space of potentiality. In a historical world, this co-dwelling is impossible because two things cannot be in the same place at the same time. The space of co-dwelling can only emerge in poetry. It is a dynamic locus of being that “is always deepening, gathering itself in, accumulating, but reading to move” (Neilsen, 2012, p. 24). This happens in poetry because the poet’s “patterning sensibility and the occasions it commemorates are so intrinsic to each other . . . that they meld into a third entity, which we might call, simply, the lyric” (Finch, 2005, p. 163). Lyricism implies the joining of the forces of desire and eroticism. In this sense, home-making as it happens in poetry is not an act of
constructing and building; rather, it is an act of love that consummates the poet as the inquirer. The synthesis of these two forces is a co-dwelling as something transformative, not constructive.

Shira (2012) also emphasizes that the act of inquiry in poetry is actually a way of engaging in what Irigaray refers to as a “poetic way of dwelling” (p. 152). This engagement, as Thomas (2004) describes it, is such that a “mere momentary glance” becomes a place of contact, producing feelings of joy and wonder (p. 242). The description of the process of writing poetry by Marlatt (2008) reinforces Shira’s and Thomas’s descriptions: “In poetry . . . sound will initiate thought by a process of association, words call each other up, evoke each other, provoke each other, nudge each other into utterance . . . a form of thought that is not rational but erotic because it works by attraction, a drawing, a pulling toward, a ‘liking’” (p. 10).

Since the act of inquiry in poetry, as co-dwelling of the inquirer and the inquired in a dynamic locus, is not an act of knowledge construction or knowledge-making, it cannot be planned or willed. Wolff (2012) reports on the process of writing poetry as it happened to her friend Rosemary Blake: “The new line does not come from her ‘own imagination alone.’ It can’t be planned, or even ‘willed’” (p. 62). Unlike the conscious and willful act of knowledge-making which involves capturing the inquired in order to construct knowledge from what has been grasped, the act of inquiry in poetry is the sort of act that requires no receptivity on the part of the inquirer. As Wolff explains:

Poetic knowing, it seems, requires a radical receptivity—an opening up of the self, even a stepping beyond self—to where there’s meeting of the self in the other. Self is also intuited or felt through imaginal glimpses at external things. (p. 62)

In the following passage Friesen (1995) also raises the same point about the importance of receptivity in the process of creating poetry: “Perhaps, learning to write poetry is like learning to dream. There are techniques and skills but, more importantly, there must be receptivity. A
condition of spirit. An opening, a patience, a letting go” (p. 121). Poetic receptiveness is what being in a locus of co-dwelling with the other means: it is a dynamic readiness for meeting the other in her home of being. It is an excess to being situated in the place which the self as ego, consisting of a consciousness, a will, and a face occupies—the place from which it captures the other in the other’s position in order to know the other, in order to make the other part of its own self-consciousness. In order to dwell in the place of the other, the self must let go of her position in “Being” it has defined for itself as ego. This place of the other is a potential space of becoming a self-for-the-other. As Irigaray (2002) describes:

In order to be able to welcome the other, a certain fullness must be restored, which escapes the control of the will. Time is indispensable for such a reconstitution which will permit the memory of oneself, of the other, of their difference and of their approach. (p. 154)

When this potentiality or surcharge of receptiveness emerges, it becomes responsiveness towards the self as other. In poetry, the released responsiveness manifests itself in the working of language. Poetic rhythm, which is not reducible to meter or any sound pattern of poetry, is the sign of this manifestation. Attentiveness is another name for responsiveness towards the other; thus, the process of inquiry in poetry is the process of attending to the other in a responsive way. The first step of this process is to abandon the ego and move into the space of responsiveness. This space is not actual but virtual, a space of potentiality for the poet to become a self-for-the-other. Many poets and poetic scholars including Friesen (1995) call it duration. Duration is a compact and intense time that presents itself as the first characteristic of poetry, its concentratedness—one of the three characteristics which distinguish poetry from prose.

Poetry as Affective Expression: Inquiry as Dynamic Empathizing with the Other

The second characteristic of poetry to be gleaned from what poets and poetic scholars say about poetry and their process of creating poetry is affectiveness. The concept of affect
immediately suggests the concepts of emotion and subjective knowing. Yet perhaps surprisingly, many poetry scholars note that this affective form of inquiry occurs with an aesthetic distance which seems contradictory to emotion and subjectivity. Hoogland and Wiebe (2012) describe aesthetic distance as “stepping out from distracting emotions, such as ‘nostalgia,’ into a state of ‘cool observation’ in which the researcher can see the researched with more critical eyes” (p. 317). Aesthetic distance, however, “is not simply submerging or rejecting one’s feelings . . . but, rather, involves stepping into (as if water) an imaginative space freed from ego constraints. It is at this point that narrative inquiry generally can learn from poetic inquiries” (Hoogland & Wiebe, 2012, pp. 317-318). Aesthetic distance “is precisely this distance from the ego that enables the emotional connectedness we call empathy—and because it is remote from ego threat, as we enter imaginatively what is actually at a remove from us, we are given both vision and connection” (pp. 327-328). But to some authors, aesthetic distance is not a state of “cool observation” (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 82). Being in “aesthetic distance” is what I earlier called “being in a space of co-dwelling with other.” That is, aesthetic distancing involves a dynamic process of leaving one’s place in the world as a historical person and moving to the home of otherness. Leggo (2002) calls this process “imaginative openness.”

Fidyk (2012) explains the process of imaginative openness as a process of deep attendance to otherness, a process that can potentially transform someone into an excess of himself/herself: “When one acquires the skill of deep attendance, one in a sense forgets oneself and yet becomes something more than previously imagined” (p. 352). Hirshfield (1998) calls this “a kind of fullness that overspills everything” (p. 32). The fullness presents the potentiality of befriending the self and the other, of their co-dwelling. It presents the potentiality of one becoming a self-for-the-other. Yet there are certain acts required for this potentiality to emerge,
which I will discuss in the next section about performativity. The first step, however, is to relocate the self from one’s ego position, from one’s position in history, to the locus of the other’s being. This is a space where one can be at-one-ment with oneself and at the same time with the other.

Fidyk (2012) defines this space as “where non-self abides” (p. 352). To Fidyk, non-self does not mean a self which does not exist. Rather, non-self is just “a form of non-self-centered subjectivity . . . The intent is not to deny or to reject the self but to recognize the self-representation as representation, as a concept without existence of its own.” In other words, Fidyk continues, no-self implies “shifting awareness from an ego perspective—the ‘I’ of the subject situated in a specific position—to a later and more comprehensive self or no-self perspective.” The locus of “non-being” is not an actual or possible place in the historical space of being. It is a place where the self is potentially freed from the constraint of subject position that happens as a result of imaginative openness or deep attentiveness towards the other. It is a charged space from which a form of dynamic empathizing with the other can emerge and be manifested, the space where the surcharge of becoming a self-for-the-other can be released. Imaginative openness that creates the non-self is equivalent of keeping the senses and imagination open. It is poet’s habit of being. This habit consists in expressing self by othering self.

The first step of the inquiry process embodied by the writing of poetry is the “process of de-centering or dissolution of the ego” or, in other words, aesthetic distancing (Fidyk, 2012, p. 352). Here, the poet as inquirer disrupts the grammar of her reflective consciousness to make consciousness available to its wider purview, which is the ability to think freely, in a way not dependent upon concepts determined by essentialist thinking to be the necessary tools of thought. It invites an orientation to language and thinking which is no longer dependent on this or that but acts out of a forgetfulness of language as self-
consciously appropriated ego-identity, working instead in a condition of ‘non-abiding.’ (Smith, 1999, p. 86)

Hirshfield’s (1998) story of the process of aesthetic distancing also resonates with Smith’s:

For a poem to be fully alive, the poet needs to surrender the protection of the known and venture into a different relationship with the subject—or is it objects? Both words miss—of her attention. The poet must learn from what dwells outside her conceptions, capacities, and even language: from exile and silence. (pp. 120-121)

Here, the locus of exile and silence is the locus of “non-abiding” Smith (1999) has introduced.

This means that in aesthetic distancing, the poet not only lets go of her position in the historical space of being but also of her consciousness, and thus her language by means of which she can claim knowledge of the other. Aesthetic distancing makes the poet eligible for dwelling in the house of otherness, where she desires to dwell. Her inquiry of the other is set by this desire. In this house, however, she is allowed to enter as a non-being only, as a ghost who has no access to the language she once had when she was rooted in the space of being as a historical person—one who defines herself by her consciousness, her will, and the mask of the subject for her face.

The poet must first surrender these before she can enter the locus of otherness. Yeats (1996) asserts that the affectiveness of poetry that moves both the poet herself and her “hearer” comes from “a vivid speech that has no law.” (p. 26). This speech comes to life at a “moment of revelation.” The condition of the occurrence of such speech is that the poet lets go of her ego and becomes like a ghost, a specter in her own being, or in Yeat’s words “self-possessed in self-surrender.” Once the poet has let her ego dissolve, she is in a locus of non-being.

The locus of non-abiding is a place which does “not permit capture” (Fels and Ricketts, 1993, p. 121). Therefore, by moving to this place, the poet is no longer a subject permitted to capture the other in order to represent what is captured as knowledge, the kind of representation
that happens in prose. The self in the locus of non-abiding is a ghost and ghosts cannot grasp anything in the space of being. If the metaphor for knowing as capturing is a hand grasping something outside the inquirer/knower in the world, in poetry, the metaphoric hand of the inquirer is “related to things through caress” rather than the grasp (McKay, 1995, p. 22). It should be noted that this gesture can only emerge from a locus of non-abiding, and for the poet as inquirer to reach this stage she first need to let go of her subject position. I will discuss the gesture of caressing in the next section on the third characteristic of poetry, performativity.

McKay (1995) explains that the grasp is the primordial grasp, as the philosopher Levinas calls it, the grasp that connects the knower to the known. This is the grasp through which “knowledge as power begins”—the knowledge through which the other is rendered as the self’s “interior” (p. 22). Through the grasp, the “passage from ontological to epistemological dwelling” takes place, leaving the inquirer to reside in a “home of knowing” she establishes for herself in the interiority of her epistemological territory. In other words, the inquirer’s epistemological home is her interiority, which after the passage includes what she has already grasped from the other and has claimed as her own knowledge.

Poetic knowing, as explained earlier, embodies the co-dwelling with the other or making a home in which one can dwell with the other. In this respect, as McKay rightly states, “To make home is to establish identity with primordial grasps, yes; but it is also, in some measure, to give it away with an extended palm.” The image of the palm is important, but will be discussed in the next section; here, the focus is on the act of giving away the primordial grasp, which Friesen (1995) calls “sabotage.” In short, the process of sabotage is triggered by the poet’s constant “calling-into-question of our freedom to control, process, or reduce the other” (Lee, 2002, p. 69),
indicating the poet’s first step of abandoning her place in historical world and moving to a locus of “non-abiding.”

The second stage of the poetry creation process is becoming a self-for-the-other. The poem that emerges at the end of this process is the embodiment of otherness in its concrete sense, not a representation of the otherness. By abandoning her subject position and moving to the place of non-being, the poet has lost her self as a conscious ego; but before becoming a self-for-the-other, she first must bring her self to life. To do this, the poet bends back from the place of non-abiding in which she is present as a specter or a ghost towards the space of being and addresses her past self as an inquirer. In her address, she creates a certain subjectivity of inquiry. We must note, however, that she has no access to standard operations of language or rhetorical operations of language (syntax and semantics) for this creation.

Therefore this creation is a performance, a movement in language (also discussed in the next part about the third characteristics of poetry as performativity). The past self must nevertheless respond to the address so that the poet, who is now a ghost, can become a self-for-the-other in the space of being in a future which is yet to come. This response or invocation is a movement performed from the space of being-in-the past towards the space of being-in-the future. In this movement, a subjectivity comes to life by taking responsibility for her act of inquiry, by affirming her self in “Being” through her utterance of responsiveness. The degree to which the poet becomes a self-for-the-other depends on the intensity of this invocation. The synthesis of these two movements of address and response, of invocation and evocation, that involves a bending backwards towards the past from the locus of non-being and a bending forward towards a future space of being, creates the dynamic movement of empathizing with the other which poetry embodies.
Prose can also be emotion-full and evocative. It can create a form of empathizing with the other or the inquired. Yet the movement of empathizing in prose is not dynamic. In prose, the writer or inquirer does not leave her place as a historical being in historical world. Firmly situated in her position, she represents a conscious will which inquires. This is also the place from which the knower empathizes with the other. Both inquiring and empathizing require a reflective movement in which the prose writer captures the other and re-presents what she has captured in language (discourse) that is available to the consciousness. In the empathizing mode of inquiry, the prose writer thus reflects on the situation and circumstances of the other which she has assumed as unfortunate. In this form of empathizing with the other, the other is reduced to her situation and circumstances which themselves are reduced to some narrative. Prose evokes the readers’ emotions through the re-presentation of the other as unfortunate—through the narrative of the other’s predicament. The movement required for empathizing with the other in the process of writing prose is the movement of capture, also called reflection, plus the movement of representation that occurs through language. The mode of reflection is sympathy. Sympathy moralizes the act of capture. It gives the representation of the other a highly emotional form.

Emotional, evocative, and poignant prose, nevertheless, is not affective in the way poetry is. What gives poetry its second characteristic, affectiveness, is the dynamic process of emphasizing with the other, as described earlier. Because of the affectiveness of poetry, its readers experience the same process of dynamic empathizing as the poet but with different degrees of intensity. As Faulkner (2012) indicates, poetry is affective because of its evocative character. It evokes from the readers a desire to bring their selves to life as otherness which the poem embodies. Poetry is affective in this dynamic way—a characteristic that distinguishes it
from prose. In Steffler’s words (1995), poetry “retains an implicit sense of the mind’s joy in discovering and locating itself in reality, an implicit sense of capturing insights, capturing experience in a dynamic, unstable world” (p. 46).

**Poetry as Performative Expression: Inquiry as the Process of Intuition**

The third characteristic of poetry which distinguishes it from prose is performativity. I linger on what this characteristic means longer than I did on other characteristics because the discussion of performativity also includes elaboration on the other two characteristics of poetry and shows that these three characteristics are actually one thing. Poetic performance involves the synthesis of the patterns of address and response, while the poet becomes a self-for-the-other. Since this way of becoming depends on language, and language communicates via mouth and ear, this process is “[a] way of happening, ‘a mouth.’ Add ‘an ear’ and say poetry is what happens between mouth and ear. The emphasis is always on ‘a way’” (Friesen, 1995, p. 119).

The rhythmic mapping of the poem reflects the interference patterns of the two motions unfolding in the poet’s mind, those of invocation and evocation. In the former, from the locus of non-abiding, the poet addresses a self in the past to become one-for-the-other, while in the latter that self brings itself to life in the future, as it responds to the address and becomes a self-for-the-other. Many poetic scholars including Faulkner (2012) and Sullivan (2009) promote this idea. They suggest that poetry “generates structures that would carry within themselves the motions of the mind, with unexpected turns and surprising connections” (Sullivan, 2009, p. 123).

Address and response (invocation and evocation) constitute the poem’s patterns of affective intensity, expressing fractal patterns of lyrical expression. As Sullivan (2012) writes, “Fractal patterning occurs in poetry” and fractal patterns are “patterns of nonlinear processes that change over time” (p. 90). She further elaborates that “serious poetry is a matter of deep structures,
meticulous patterning, and cognitive engagement.” These patterns are the patterns of subliminality of conscious attention. Lee (2002) calls them “syncopation” (p. 28) and emphasizes that they are patterns of both “order and flux” (p. 30). These are not prosaic patterns, which are signs of an actual order of language.

It seems that how language acts in poetry resonates with the process in the poet’s mind. In the process of poetry creation, language folds back on itself in complex ways that proliferate meaning. Interestingly, in this process, the poet “cannot compose from the ‘self’ as a coherent entity” (Walsh, 2012, p. 365). This means that the poet is both her self in the past before abandoning her place in “Being” and her self as the other in the future, while these selves respond to one another. As Butler-Kisber (2012) with reference to Flores (1982) explains:

Flores (1982) indicates that poetry serves to “add to one’s observation the process of observation” (p. 18). In doing so, Butler-Kisber (2012) continues, it also adds “a dimension to our study of our own methods, by turning the subject into an object, by turning the observing I into the observed me” (p. 372) That is why the language in poetry draws “attention to itself, that makes itself visible.” Revell (2007) also indicates that poetry is both the result of “a form of attention” and “the consequence of attention” (p. 5). This form of attention is often called poetic intuition.

Poetic Intuition is thus a certain type of attention which generates more attention and opens the inquiring mind to “recognitions that momentarily reveal us, naked and vulnerable” (Fels and Ricketts, 2012, p. 277). Like the patterns of mind, the language patterns of poetry look similar to “a line drawn in sand before an oncoming tide… [whose] markings are temporal,
ephemeral” (p. 279). Friesen (1995) describes these patterns as “giving voice, evoking, invoking. Holding together loosely. Precise. Elusive. A handful of water” (p. 121). According to poetry scholars such as Sullivan (2009, 2012), poetic intuition, like all sorts of intuition, follows a sort of associative logic “by which we arrive at the solution of a problem without reasoning toward it” (Damasio, 1994, p. 188). Sullivan (2009) thinks that associative logic embodies the motions of the mind and writes:

> Many poems re-enact the motions of the mind. Motions of the mind are not always linear. In fact, they are rarely so. Their logic is ecologic, weblike and intricate in its relations. Feelings and intuitions are inextricably part of that intricacy. (p. 89)

In poetry, associative logic is the result of the motions of mind as invocation and evocation from a space of non-abiding, motions aimed at giving birth to the poet’s self as the other. Poetry’s associative logic embodies an associative leap—a leap of faith in otherness of the self—in the potentiality of becoming a self-for-the-other. The leap of faith involves a bending backwards of the mind to the past and a bending forward into the future.

McKay (1995) describes the performance of taking the leap of faith in poetry through the metaphor of turning the motion of a hand aimed at grasping the other to a hand caressing the other or applauding otherness. This performance process is also called poetic intuition. McKay calls it “poetic attention” and writes:

> I am calling it that, though even as I name it I can feel the falsity (and in some way the transgression) of nomination; it’s a sort of readiness, a species of longing which is without the desire to possess, and it does not really wish to be talked about. To me, this is a form of knowing which counters the ‘primordial grasp’ in home-making, and celebrates the wilderness of the other; it gives ontological applause. (p. 24)

This performance of ontological applause, I suggest, is not a performance of knowing in its common sense, which happens in prose writing. Rather, it is the performance of an ethical activity that can only happen because of the poet/inquirer’s faith in otherness of her self. This
faith is what prevents her from touching down in an epistemological land after taking the leap of inquiry. Instead, in the process of poetry creation, the poet lands on the ontological landscape of the self in a future which is yet to come.

McKay’s metaphor of the grasping hand turning into an applauding one resonates with Friesen’s idea (1995) that during process of poetry creation, the poet’s mind experiences a performance of “altering intensions” or “sabotage” (p. 119). This experience is another name for poetic intuition. The experience of intuition feels like the experience of “fleetingness with time which is a way to shape time” (Wormser & Cappella, 2000, p. viii). This is the experience of concentratedness (compactness) and affectiveness by the senses which poetry excites. That is why the three characteristics specific to poetry (concentratedness, performativity, and affectiveness) are so entangled that they look like one. As Faulkner (2005) explains, poetry is unique because it “stresses moments of subjective feeling and emotion in a short space” (p. 6). The performance of stressing is done by the way in which a poem “engages our fleetingness and makes it articulate. It seizes and shapes time” (Wormser & Cappella, 2000, p. viii).

This means that the performativity of poetry which is manifested through and in language has something to do with the shaping of time, a kind of shaping that is different than the way in which time is shaped in prose. McKay (1995) explains the formation of the trail of time in the process of creating poetry as

a trail made of moments rather than minutes, wild bits of time which resist elapsing according to a schedule. Pauses. Each one bell-shaped, into which you step as an applicant for the position of tongue. Or: each pause is designated as the unbuilt dwelling of that moment—a cabin, a stanza, a gazebo, a frame—a room which the trail accepts as a fiction or wish. (p. 27)

As we see in Mackay’s description, linguistic performativity of poetry originates in the way time is shaped in the synthesis of the two motions in which the mind, situated outside historical time,
addresses itself as it was in the past and responds to this address as the mind which is coming to birth in the future.

Poetry thus re/composes clock-time to duration (the compact, intense time) of the birth of the mind as otherness from a locus of nothingness. Prose does not recompose time to duration. Prose either recomposes linear historical time to nonlinear historical time or vice versa. The poet, however, resists shaping time to a trail of moments that elapse according to a schedule, to a historical narrative which prose is meant to tell. The first step of the poetry creation process must embody this resistance as the poet leaves the historical space of being and moves to the locus of non-abiding. Only then can the poet move to the address and response as the next stage of the process. Since performance of the mind in the process of writing poetry is distinct from the mind’s performance in the process of writing prose, the linguistic shape of poetry and prose are also distinct. That is why Bringhurst (2007) asserts that poetry’s real performative form is motion: it is “dancing at the heart of being” (p. 16). He further expresses this movement as dancing when he writes, “What poetry knows, or what it strives to know, is the dancing at the heart of being.” Lee (2002) also describes poetry as “dancing in & out of phase in the reader’s body-sense” (p. 28).

Poetry conceived as dancing/movement helps us explain poetry’s specific expressive performance which is quite different in kind from prose’s form of expression. As Bringhurst (1995) explains, “In poetry the gestures—which are still only gestures, not scriptures, not fixed text, but gestures, like a dancer’s gestures—keep turning into the words” (p. 28). What Bringhurst calls gestures are the two movements I have described as invocation and evocation. Viewing poetry as dance is fundamental to comprehending poetry as performativity because it prevents us from reducing it to craftsmanship of and with words. The performance of poetry
does not construct a representation of the other, the one whom the poet inquires about, in the shape of a communicable message or narrative to be presented to an audience.

Because of its specific performativity, poetry stands “for its own sake” (Steffler, 1995, p. 47). Poetry’s performance is born out of self’s desire to consummate with the other. As Steffler explains, “perhaps human desire to express is always a kind of flowering, analogous to all flowering in nature, because it aims for communion, and is thus a kind of plumage put out to facilitate union, joining with other people living and imagined, or with a god, or with life beyond itself” (pp. 50-51). This desire makes the poet leave her place of being as a subject to perform the movements of invocation and evocation from a locus of non-being. What emerges from this performance is poetry, resembling the other which the poet’s mind desired to embody.

Like Steffler (1995), many other poets also maintain that poetry is a “semblance of direct experience” (p. 49). They also think that a “poem, one can surely say, is a thing; because it is singular and concrete” and because it embodies “its meaning as a thing, not statement or formula.” That is why a “poem, ideally, can be carried around in the memory like a small stone in the pocket” (p. 51). Maltman (1995) expressed the same idea during his interview with Borson and Patton. To Maltman, the compactness and coherency in a poem is the same as that in an object. The rhythmic patterns of the poem resulting from the interference of the movements of invocation and evocation embody this compactness and coherency. They express the intensity with which the poet has become the other she desired to become—the desire that set her on a path of inquiry. In other words, the combination of words in the poem resonates with the intensity of the creative process of the poet. It is this intensity that the poet “communicates” so powerfully to the reader or listener. Steffler (1995) indicates that poetry hits our senses by “communicating excitement through the character of the poem’s language—not through the
words’ denotations or the poem’s statements so much through how the poem lives as an entity. The poet’s excitement seems to communicate directly, subliminally to the reader. This happens most often in lyric poetry, or in lyric elements of poetry in general” (p. 48).

The reader or listener experiences a variation of the same creative process the poet experienced during the emergence of the poem. Eliot (1966) reminds us that in good poetry it is not “the intensity of emotions, the components [of the poem], but the intensity of the artistic process, the pressure, so to speak, under which the fusion takes place, that counts” (p. 65). So what counts is that the poet “endures” the fusion or the synthesis that arises from the interference of the movements of invocation and evocation, issued from the locus of non-abiding by the poet’s self as a ghost. In her own process of inquiry via writing poetry, Larabee (2012) notes that the fusion begins to unravel as a holistic transmuting of the spiritual/emotional into the physical, facilitated by the intellectual, endeavor of recording, expressing. The mystics of this process create more questions and discovery—constantly deepening my self inquiry and what I can say I’ve come to know. (p. 463)

Larabee is right that the process of poetry is actually a self-inquiry. That is why poetic experience is “[o]ur experience as encountered from being inside the performance which breathes what matters into presence” (Fels and Ricketts, 2012, p. 287). Poetic process thus is “far from being just a concretization of self, [it] is the place where it pours itself out into the world, interiority opening itself to material expression” (McKay, 1995, p. 22). Poetic performance of language, however, is not simply choosing a combination of words to describe what was perceived without connection to the experience or perception. As McKay explains:

Even after linguistic composition has begun and the air is thick with the problematics of reference, this kind of knowing remains in touch with perception. The … poet may (should, in fact) resort to the field guide or library, but will keep coming, back, figuratively speaking, to the trail—to the grain of the experience. (p. 24)
Poetic performance of language resonates with the way the mind re-members with itself as another during the creative process. Bringhurst (1995) also indicates that poetry relates to “Mnemosyne: memory” (p. 60). He maintains that song/dance and story are separate yet related because they are both the children of the same mother: Mnemosyne, the personification of memory in Greek mythology. However, Bringhurst continues, lyrics are the performance of “minding the mind.” This performance is an act of responsiveness via memory. In Steffler’s words (1995), “Poetry is first of all a state of mind. Before it’s a verbal structure, it’s a way of perceiving and interacting with the world, including oneself, one’s own life” (p. 48).

The condition for such perception-interaction is “a readiness for intensity and acuity and surprise” (p. 48). Then the mind is ready to bend back over and reach and respond to itself in the past in the hope that the past can come to life differently in the future. Lilburn believes that “Poetry remembers. Poetry leans into the world and back to this state when the mind bespoke the souls of things, gave them back as reflections in a peculiar pool. In poetry the mind remembers itself as a prelapsarian thing that thought as others gave scent” (p. 164). The process of inquiry which the poetic creative process embodies is thus a performance of re-membering a past opening to the future—a process that is manifested in language through the poet’s breath. As Dark (2012) puts it, “Poetry prompts an emotional re-living and re-framing of everyday events” (p. 518).

Linguistically, inquiry performed in the process of creating poetry is the performance of remembering, from a place of complete forgetfulness of language, a language which opens to a future of meaning. Michaels (1995) asserts that “[m]emory is the skeleton under the lyric skin” (p. 180). Borson (1995) also maintains that time is not only “the breath and the limbs” of poetry but its “nervous system” (p. 126). Remembering here is another name for the performance of
shaping time. Poetry’s linguistic patterns embody the duration, the compact and intense time, apprehended in the creative process. Borson describes this duration as “a flow of things; and when we are inside it we simply see and feel things in a particular way—in a singularly intense way” (p. 128). Poetic intuition occurs to the mind when it places itself in the flux where things exist as themselves or as they really are, not as representations. This gives the body a sensation of pure freedom—pure agency—and turns the tongue from being a “repository of history” into a “repository of memory” (Michaels, 1995, p. 182). The same sensation is transferred to the reader in a contagious way. That is why poetry “tempts us to lower our guard and take a hit of the real fact of being alive . . . and conscious in the phenomenal world” (p. 48). When the poet in her creative process (or the reader in the process of reading) confronts the real fact of being alive in her own memory, she suddenly realizes she is a “non-alibi” in her own being (Bakhtin, 1986/1993). Therefore she virtually, yet directly, hits the concrete reality of otherness. If this “hitting of reality” is then put into words, we will have a poem.

During poetry creation, therefore, it is not only the mind that is bent on itself to intuit its own duration, but also “[l]anguage, yes, is bent back on itself in contemplation” (Lilburn, 1995, p. 172). As a result, language also re-members with itself in a future of meaning where things come to life again as they are named for the first time by the poet. Michaels (1995) writes that poetic intuition often “feels like memory, the way love often feels like memory. It’s as if the poem touches the body just where an experience is carried, autonomic, at a depth beyond language, unknown until named” (p. 180). Paton (1995) thinks that the mind in its virtual state embodies the meanings of things beyond language. Poetic intuition happens only when the mind is in its virtual state, when it embodies the other in her concreteness which is beyond the grasp of language. That is why in poetry, as Paton (1995) writes:
The writing itself only exists as itself because it is particular. It differs from everything else—in spite of all its links to other utterances, and to the whole social world which language is. It is distinctive, and every failure to recognize that singularity is another form of escape from what threatened to draw us in. The poem is an example only of itself. (p. 158)

Poetry’s performativity thus consists in performing language in a singular way—in a way that can bring about “the resurrection of the words,” a term introduced by the Russian formalist Shklovsky (Bann & Edinburgh, 1973, p. 41).

The breath of the poet is what inspires and re-inspires the resurrection of the dead language to carry her response to the other she desires to become. This breathing into the corpse of language manifests a new life for language so that words come to life for the first time as the poet utters them. This utterance is a calling of the other by her proper name. The poet breathes into things their otherness; this is the poet’s way of giving herself a self—for giving herself her proper name, thus bringing her self to a new life.
Variation I-II
Take a lump of sugar: It has a spatial configuration. But if we approach it from that angle, all we will ever grasp are differences in degree between that sugar and any other thing. But it also has a duration, a rhythm of duration, a way of being in time that is at least partially revealed in the process of its dissolving, and that shows how this sugar differs in kind not only from other things, but first and foremost from itself. This alteration, which is one with the essence or the substance of a thing, is what we grasp when we conceive of it in terms of Duration. In this respect, Bergson’s famous formulation, “I must wait until the sugar dissolves” has a broader meaning than is given to it by its context. It signifies that my own duration, such as I live it in the impatience of waiting, for example, serves to reveal other durations that beat to other rhythms, that differ in kind from mine. (Deleuze, 1988, pp. 31-32)

The three characteristics of poetry as different presentations of responsiveness, which distinguish it from prose, concentratedness, affectiveness, and performativity, are congealed in the sound and image pattern of poetry known as rhythm. Rhythm hints at the synthesis of intuition that happens during the creation of the poem. The synthesis of intuition is a synthesis of two movements set by the poet’s desire to become a self-for-the-other she inquires about. These are the movements of invocation and evocation, or address and response that I explained in Variation I-I. These movements, as I have shown, can only be issued from a locus of non-abiding. To place her mind in such locus, the poet must shed her mask of the subject as a historical person and take a leap of faith to alter the intention of her active consciousness—the intention to capture the other in its totality, claim what is grasped as knowledge, and make it a part of self-consciousness.

The main operation of reflective consciousness is analysis, also used in science. Prose writing embodies narrative time, whose subject/narrator is reflective consciousness as a historical person. Narrative time accords with spatial or historical time, both linear and nonlinear. What the poet senses in the intuitive process is the duration of her self as other. Poetry is the linguistic composition of this duration. Duration is not the spatial time that consciousness assumes as a given condition for its operations, or “reflective thinking.” It is the time formed as the result of
the poet’s enduring her self which has become the other. Poets and poetic scholars have talked about duration differently. For example, Leavy (2009) writes, “In general, poems are highly attentive to space (which includes both breath and pauses), using words sparsely in order to paint what I term a *feeling picture*” (p. 64). Then, to reinforce her description of poetry as presentation of the space of silence, which I introduced in Variation I-I, she summarizes her argument: “poetry is a form that itself brings attention to silence (or as a poet might say, to space) and also relies on emotional evocation as a part of meaning-making while simultaneously exposing the fluidity and multiplicity of meaning” (pp. 65-66). This space which Leavy talks about is not spatial time. It is nothing but compact intense time or duration.

**Space, Spatial Time, and Reflective Thinking**

The indispensable condition for reflective thinking is the presumption of Space as a universal and homogeneous container of simultaneity of identical entities. Time is also presumed in reflective thinking, defined as a series of identical and simultaneous points of Space. Space and Time in this sense are assumed by Kant (1998) whose main philosophical project concerned determining the conditions that make reflective knowing (objective knowledge, in his words) possible in the first place. To Kant, Space and Time are the first of these conditions, which are “*a priori*” constituents of our human mind (p. 158). Without Space and Time, perception, and thus experiencing and representing phenomena, is not possible. Objective or reflective thinking which leads to knowledge, in Kant’s opinion, is representation of phenomena. Reflective thinking is spatial thinking conceived in terms of extension and homogeneity because, according to Kant, phenomena are homogenous and extensive. Time in spatial thinking is extension.

Space and Time as defined by Kant correspond to the idea of number (Bergson, 1956). The idea of number is the main symbol for reflective thinking. Therefore, in order to understand
reflective thinking better, we need to understand how the idea of Space relates to the idea of number and symbolic representation of phenomena as a way of identity-making or of making a heterogeneous multiplicity called phenomenon look like a homogenous package of identical entities. In his book *Time and Free Will*, Henri Bergson (1956) shows how the idea of Space is associated with the idea of number by the way the idea of number enables us to localize phenomena in space. The first step to gain knowledge of the other /object in Space is through this localization. Without first localizing the other as an entity in Space, as a homogenous container of simultaneity of identical entities, it is impossible to grasp the other which is reduced to its totality as an object.

This idea of entities in Space is linked with their symbolic representation and visualization, which are the pillars of reflective ways of knowing and inquiry. As Bergson explains, “Every clear idea of number implies a visual image in space” (p. 79). In reflective thinking, the idea of number is also the basis for grasping the idea of time. What we count as moments of duration or time are actually the points in that space. Time or duration, therefore, becomes a perceived succession of simultaneous points in space because we think of number as a certain juxtaposition in space. Such a way of juxtaposing entities reduced to simultaneous points in space creates the grammar to make the identity for an other which is inquired about in reflective thinking.

Since the idea of number is bound with the act of localizing extensive bodies and juxtaposing them in a successive chain in space, we also associate the idea of multiplicity with the idea of number in our reflective mode of thinking. Reflective consciousness “shows us our body as one image among others and our understanding as a certain faculty of dissociating, of distinguishing, of opposing logically, but not of creating” (Bergson, 1988, p. 181). Moreover, we
Imagine our own “states of consciousness” to be symbolic and numerical representations in Space, arranged in a successive manner. As Bergson points out, the reflective thinker cannot analyze her states of consciousness without first symbolically representing them in space. This is how we think about our states of consciousness when we think of time, since we automatically think of a homogenous medium (container) in which our conscious states form a discrete multiplicity. Bergson (1956) characterizes the view of time in reflective thinking in this way, and maintains that it leads to a false idea of duration:

If time, as the reflective consciousness states from a discrete series so as to admit of being counted, and if on the other hand our conception of number ends in spreading out in space everything which can be directly counted, it is to be presumed that time, understood in the sense of a medium in which we make distinctions and count, is nothing but space. That which goes to confirm this opinion is that we are compelled to borrow from space the images which describe what reflective consciousness feels about time and even about succession; it follows that pure duration must be something different. (p. 91)

A reflective way of thinking leads to another false idea about our sensations: it tells us that they are extended and quantitative. In reflective thinking, Space as a principle of quantitative differentiation enables us to distinguish our sensations from one another as if they were a number of identical and simultaneous points. These very sensations that we feel as unextended and simply qualitative are, however, those which underlie our notion of space in the first place. Hence, we believe our sensations to be extended and quantitative. The fallacy caused by this conceptualization of our sensations leads us to commit a big mistake: despite our sensory perception that qualities differ by intensity, we interpret them in terms of extensity. Therefore, even though our senses and thus our experiences are grounded in heterogeneity, reflective thinking encourages our minds to believe that quality is a certain form of quantity.

As Bergson (1956) indicates, reflective thinking expresses “an insatiable desire to separate, substitutes the symbol for the reality, or perceives the reality through the symbol” (p.
128). It also expresses the abstraction mechanism necessary for symbolic representation of phenomena. The language employed by reflective consciousness is a reservoir of symbols or words that represent the world and our states of consciousness, and it has a functional purpose to deliver messages from sender to receiver. In other words, language in reflective thinking is constructed and employed for a utilitarian end. It is employed for making phenomena into symbols with certain meanings. Language used in this way imposes the stability of perception on our sensations, but removes from our sensations their reverberation, their life, and their color. Our feelings become lifeless states of reflective consciousness which we translate into words in our daily communications and interactions. Bergson (1956) explains:

We instinctively tend to solidify our impressions in order to express them in language. Hence we confuse the feeling itself, which is in a perpetual state of becoming, with its permanent external object, and especially with the word which expresses this object. In the same way as the fleeting duration of our ego is fixed by its projection in homogeneous space, our constantly changing impressions, wrapping themselves round the external object which is their case, take on its definite outlines and its immobility. (p.130)

Therefore, what we actually do in reflective thinking is “substituting for the interpenetration of the real terms the juxtaposition of their symbols” (Bergson, 1956, p. 134). In a parallel way, we substitute a juxtaposition of fixed states of consciousness with our sensations. This is, as Bergson reminds us, the equivalent of making duration out of space. Not only do we distance ourselves further and further from the other, but we also distance ourselves from our deeper selves, allowing it to “assume the form of a numerical multiplicity, and to spread out in a homogeneous space” (p. 136). This numerical multiplicity set in space is called the subject by reflective consciousness. Our idea of ourselves as subjects thus gains its identity through the operations of reflective consciousness executed with the help of the symbolic system of our languages.
Poetry as the Embodiment of Time as Duration

To think differently about time and to think of time in terms of intensity, to employ a way of thinking that resonates with our sensations, we need a concept of time that captures its ability to endure. We can reach this concept only when consciousness or ego stops separating its present state from its former states. Duration is the time when ego lets “the other” live. This is the flowing time that passes to consciousness without having any stake in the process or outcome, without having a chance to exert a will in the name of the ego, and thus asserting the privilege of being a subject.

Olson (1996) maintains that the root of the word “breath” in Aryan languages corresponds to the state of selflessness maintained in the notion of duration. The early Sanskrit word breath consists of “not” and “to be” (“na” and “bhu”). This not-being points to the perishing or the losing of the self or ego. Olson says that real poetry or “objectism” is the getting rid of the lyrical interference of the individual as ego, of the ‘subject’ and his soul, that peculiar presumption by which western man has interposed himself between what he is as a creature of nature (with certain instructions to carry out) and those other creations of nature which we may, with no derogation, call objects. (p. 874)

Poetry therefore happens as an event in the moments when the poet recognizes himself as an object like everything else. Object is Olson’s word for otherness.

In the moments of selflessness, when the poet becomes a participant “in the larger force, he will be able to listen, and his hearing through himself will give him secrets objects share” (Olson, 1996, p. 847). Bachelard (1971) calls this participation a “magical” participation” to which the poet is “materially” summoned by her “material imagination” (p. 60). Bachelard, following Minkowski, a Bergsonian, thinks that “the essence of life is not ‘a feeling of being, of existence,’ but a feeling of participation in a flowing onward, necessarily expressed in terms of time, and secondarily expressed in terms of space” (Gaudin, 1971, p. 71). Moments of
annihilation occur when the poet goes “against [the language’s] syntax, in fact against grammar generally, that is as we have inherited it” (Olson, 1996, p. 872). This is when the poet goes against the grammar of reflective thinking. Moments of annihilation of the subject are the moment of recognition of self as otherness, or object in Olson’s language. These are also the moments of re-composition of the self as otherness. Olson maintains that in these very moments, a “projective poet” goes from his “fine ear … down through the workings of his own throat to that place where breath comes from, where breath has its beginnings, where drama has to come from, where, the coincidence is, all act springs” (p. 876). To Olson, a poem is made of the syllable and the line. The syllable is associated with the working of the ear and the ear is linked to the mind/memory and its speed. Syllable presents the dance of the mind that exists both in poetry and prose. The line, on the other hand, Olson maintains, comes from the breath. It is associated with rhythm and rhythm is specific only to poetry. Rhythm is not meter but the intense linguistic mapping of poetry, including silence.

Olson (1996) writes that the breath “is right here, in the line, that the shaping takes place, each moment of the going” (p. 870). The line thus is “the threshing floor for the dance” of the mind/memory, holding all the intensities of the mind/memory’s dance and giving the heterogeneous moments or intensities of the memory a coherency via rhythm that renders them into poetry. Olson repeats: “And the line, comes (I swear it) from the breath” (p. 870). Breath is the source of rhythm, and rhythm is the expression of duration which occurs to and passes through the poet’s mind. That is why duration cannot be constructed by putting together states of consciousness as if they were points of a homogeneous space. Time is unconstructed; the past and present form “an organic whole, as happens when we recall the notes of a tune, melting so to
speak, into one another” (Bergson, 1958, p. 100). This organic whole, formed from the intensities of memory, opens up to the future.

Rhythm embodies the patterns of intensity of this organic whole, manifested in language. Therefore it expresses a composite of concentrated intensities, which explains why concentratedness, as one of the three characteristics of poetry which distinguish it from prose, shows itself through rhythm. Rhythm, however, emerges from the poet’s breath. In rhythm, as in breath, we have succession without distinction as if there were a mutual penetration between intensities. Consequently, rhythm, strictly speaking, does not correspond to spatial time as a certain orderly succession of distinct mental states; therefore it does not relate to the representation of space as a homogeneous container of identical and distinct entities. In rhythm, intensities within the poet’s breath add themselves dynamically to one another and organize themselves not only in a singular and unpredictable way, but also in a concentrated and affective way. Rhythm is thus contagious and affects readers in unpredictable and singular ways.

Rhythm indicates that intensities of duration that the poet’s breath delivers in utterance have congealed in the linguistic mapping of the poem. Bergson (1956) writes that duration “might well be nothing but a succession of qualitative changes, which melt into and permeate one another, without precise outlines, without any tendency to externalize themselves in relation to one another, without any affiliation with number; it would be pure heterogeneity” (p. 104). Lee (2000) calls this heterogeneity “a flux: of freedom, of chaos, of both” (p. 30). He maintains that flux and coherence are what create poetry whose special “syntax guides us through a specific rhythm of attention” (p. 36). Bachelard (1971) thinks that poetry is a multiplicity of heterogeneous images. Poetic images to Bachelard, are, however, like the images in reverie. As a result, poetry cannot be defined by adding these images as if they were distinct points of a story.
Poetic images do not externalize themselves in relation to one another. Rather, they permeate and melt into one another without a precise outline—without a pre-given narrative. They are heterogeneous, qualitative, and continuous. The criteria for recognizing these images, according to Bachelard, as Gaudin (1971) narrates, are: “recurrence, inversion of logical categories, proliferation of ambivalences, irradiation with a resulting annexation of other images, and above all the power to offer richer suggestions at each reading” (p. xxxv).

The images in Bachelard’s theory are neither perception nor concepts, as both these concepts are aspects of reflective thinking. Rather, the images correspond to our sensations. For this reason, Bachelard (1971) argues that “[t]he image cannot give matter to the concept by giving stability to the image” (p. 6). Poetic images are not abstract like scientific ones. Ransom (1966) maintains that poetic images are images in an “original state of freedom” and adds that

[i]t is not by refutation but by abstraction that science destroys the image. It means to get its ‘value’ out of the image, and we may be sure that it has no use for the image in its original state of freedom. (p. 85)

In Pelias’s words (2004): “Science is the act of looking at a tree and seeing lumber. Poetry is the act of looking at a tree and seeing a tree” (p. 9). Ransom (1966) similarly argues that for poetic images to emerge, we need to divert our habitual way of abstraction so that we become able to “contemplate things as they are in their rich and contingent materially” as they appear to us in our dreams (p. 85). Rather than showing an order of points in a reflective space of thinking, the sequence of poetic images shows a special order of “vivacity” emerging from “a movement of the imagination [emphasis in original]” (Bachelard, 1971, p. 22). Their sequence thus embodies “coherence through mobility” (p. 37). This sequence embodies duration—the flowing time made from a multiplicity of intensities in a concentrated way.
To Bachelard (1971) and several other poets and poetic scholars, poetic images are not snapshots of frozen or fixed moments of an imaginary homogenous space; rather, they are moments of what Bachelard calls “dynamic imagination” (p. 66). For example, Pound (1966) maintains that “‘image’ is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time” (p. 31). He then adds: “It is the presentation of such a ‘complex’ instantaneously which gives that sense of liberation; that sense of freedom from time limits and space limits; that sense of sudden growth.” The sense of sudden growth points to the high concentratedness of poetry that is implied in duration. Yet, as Bachelard (1971) indicates, this concentratedness can only affect the reader and transfer its intensities to her senses in a contagious way if it reverberates. Bachelard maintains that the important thing about poetic images is their reverberation. Reverberation, I suggest, is Bachelard’s term for what I call rhythm. In this reverberation, we see a certain performance of language which is different than the performance of language in prose.

Poetic rhythm works against the symbolism of time in reflective thinking. Beats or intensities which create rhythm cannot be reduced to a number of strokes and perceived as quantity. Moreover, they “do not give a place to symbolical representation derived from extensity” (Bergson, 1956, p. 128). That is why the way language performs in poetry is different from the way it works in prose. Poetry’s language presents a map of intensities corresponding to the intensities the poet experiences in the creative process. In the creative process, as I have suggested in Variation I-I, the poet steps outside of her constructed subject position and from a place of non-being intuits continuous and heterogeneous moments of the singularity of her self as she desires to become a self-for-the-other. Bachelard (1971) calls this intuition dynamic imagination and maintains that it a way of “restoring to each thing its own movement” (p. 21).
He then asserts, “To acquire a feeling for the imaginative role of language, we must patiently seek, in every word, the desire for otherness.”

Bergson (1956) calls intuition “a mobile sympathy” (p. 13) which is the expression of “a state of responsiveness” (p. 14). The mobile sympathy expressed in poetry is contagious and affects the reader. It affects us to put to sleep the active or rather resistant powers of our personality, and thus to bring us into a state of perfect responsiveness, in which we realize the idea that is suggested to us and sympathize with the feeling that is expressed. (p. 14)

In poetry, rhythm or the reverberation of poetic images is responsible for affecting us. Bergson writes that rhythm can “take hold of us with such force that even the faintest imitation of a groan will suffice to fill us with the utmost sadness” (p. 15). For Bachelard, poetic images “are not primarily visual, auditive, or tactile; they are spoken (Gaudin, 1971, p. xx). Moreover, as in dreams, they are spoken as if preceding thought. Rhythm is the sign of their utterance.

To Bergson, rhythm can affect us because it does something to our attention. It makes intensity emerge in our attention in the form of a contagion. Bergson (1956) explains:

The poet is he with whom feelings develop into images, and the images themselves into words which translate them while obeying the laws of rhythm. In seeing these images pass before our eyes we in our turn experience the feeling which was, so to speak, their emotional equivalent; but we should never realize these images so strongly without the regular movements of the rhythm by which soul is lulled into self-forgetfulness, and, as in a dream, thinks and sees with the poet. The plastic arts contain an effect of the same kind by the fixity which they suddenly impose upon life, and which a physical contagion carries over to the attention of the spectator. (p. 15)

Poetic contagion works through suggestion, which is the reverberation of images “in the subjectivity of the reader” (Gaudin, 1971, p. 31). Suggestion works like this: intensities of rhythm are transported to us “all at once into the indefinable psychological state which the poetic expression called them forth” (Bergson, 1956, p. 18). This psychological state that feels like a
growing tension of the soul constitutes poetic attention. To Bergson (1988), writing in *Matter and Memory*, attention implies a backward movement of the mind which thus gives up the pursuit of the useful effect of a present perception: there will indeed be, first, an inhibition of movement, an arresting action. But upon this general attitude, more subtle movements will soon graft themselves . . . With these movements the positive, no longer merely negative, work of attention begins. It is continued by memories. (p. 101)

The positive form of attention “might feel like intense emotions such as rage, anger, and love, but it is different from them with regard to one important thing: it demands something of us” (Worms, 1992, p. 112). It demands a response, our own acting-uttering. It is felt as a call from the other which addresses the self and demands responsiveness. According to Bergson (1958), rhythm suggests and demands from us the “unreflective idea of acting” (p. 28).

Responsiveness as the unreflective idea of acting does not work according to the relations of causality because it is not bound by the absolute law of reflective consciousness, which, as Bergson states, is the law of identity. Bergson (1956) writes:

> The principle of identity is the absolute law of our consciousness: it asserts that what is thought is thought at the moment when we think it: and what gives this principle its absolute necessity is that it does not bind the future to the present, but only the present to present: it expresses the unshakable confidence that consciousness feels in itself, so long as, faithful to its duty, it confines itself to declaring the apparent present state of the mind. But the principle of causality, in so far as it is supposed to bind the future to the present, could never take the form of a necessary principle; for the successive moments of real time are not bound up with one another, and no effort of logic will succeed in proving that what has been will be or will continue to be, that the same antecedents will always give rise to identical consequents. (p. 208)

The call in poetry that demands a response from us comes from memory and not from our consciousness. Consciousness is always set in present, spatial time but memory is “conservation and accumulation of the past in present” (Bergson, 1920, p. 8). At the same time, however, memory is also “anticipation of future.” The charge of this anticipation urges us to act—that is to attend the otherness. As Bergson continues:
The future is there; it calls up, or rather, it draws us to it; its uninterrupted traction makes us advance along the route of time and requires us also to be continually acting. All action is an encroachment on the future. (p. 8)

The demand coming from this call impressed in us via rhythm is to endure. The other calls us to endure her very otherness by our very self. This demand does not relate to any external cause and it cannot be disavowed. It is neither an oath of allegiance nor a social contract. And it is not a necessity; it is an obligation. We can refuse to act on the demands of our reflective consciousness but we cannot escape the demands put on us by our very selves to respond to the other. In poetry, duration is the space of ethical obligation towards the other. This is an obligation without the presence of necessity, without the presence of cause and effect. Duration is the space of complete absence of any law of nature, making it the space of the full presence of the self’s desire to become one-for-the-other. What brings forth the emergence of this space is the inertia of memory. Our freedom lies in enduring this very space, which is not spatial time. As Bergson (1956) explains, “Our conception of Freedom is the relation of the concrete self to the act it performs” (p. 219). This relation is what poetic attention means. In poetry, we do not speculate on our habitual daily actions, as we do in prose, but “we speculate on the intimate nature of action, that is to say, when we are discussing human freedom” (Bergson, 1988, p. 186).

**Reflective Knowing and Poetic Knowing**

In his book *Matter and Memory* (1988), Bergson calls the organic way of knowing via memory “attentive recognition.” According to Guerlac (2006), this is “a mode of recognition that involves memory images” (p. 130). Organic knowing happens only when we break from reflective thinking which Bergson thinks has become habitual. Reflective thinking entails thinking in terms of Space as a container of simultaneous identities. In organic knowing, contrary
to our habit of mind in reflective thinking, we do not regress from the present to the past; rather we progress from the past into the future. Gurleac explains:

This memory simply waits for a break to announce itself between the actual impression and the concomitant movement into which it projects its images \([y \ faire \ passer \ ses \ images]\). Usually an effort is required to go back over the course of our past \([pour \ remonter \ le \ cours \ de \ notre \ passé]\) and discover the memory image known, localized personal, which would pertain \([se \ rapporterait]\) to the present. By means of this effort we disengage from the action to which our perception inclines us. This would push us towards the future; we have to move backwards \([reculons]\) into the past. (p. 131)

In the creative process specific to poetry this organic way of knowing occurs. What is “attentively recognized” then is the other the poet inquired about. Her inquiry embodied her desire to become a self-for-the-other. The difference of poetry from other forms of attentive recognition is that, in poetry, the medium through which the recognition of otherness or attention emerges is the poet’s very breath. As Olson (1996) asserts, poetry corresponds to “certain laws and possibilities of the breath, of the breathing of the man who writes as well as to his listening” (p. 867). Olson distinguishes “the breathing” from “the hearing” (p. 868) and maintains that a poem advances in its “proper force” only if “a poet manages to register both the acquisitions of his ear and the pressures of his breath” (p. 869).

Poetic thinking therefore is thinking in terms of intensity or in-tension of our vital breathing. This is the way poets think and the result of their thinking is a synthesis or event called poetic intuition. Intuition is the event of enduring the otherness by the concrete self as the poet becomes one with one she inquires into. Poetry expresses the performance of such enduring via utterance. In *The Creative Mind*, Bergson (1946) describes the process of intuition:

Having in fact left the curve of his thought, to follow straight along a tangent, he has become exterior to himself. He returns to himself when he gets back in intuition. Of these departures toward an affirmation and these returns to the primary intuition are constituted the zigzaggings of a doctrine which “develops,” that is to say which loses itself, finds itself again, and endlessly corrects itself. (p. 130)
Bergson (1946) contrasts this intuitive way of knowing with a scientific way of knowing: “The latter depends on the viewpoint chosen and the symbols employed, while the former is taken from no viewpoint and rests on no symbol” (p. 187). The process of intuitive knowing involves transporting oneself to the interior of the other in order to coincide with “what is unique and consequently inexpressible” in the other (p. 190). This process is distinct from the analytic process that supports the reflective way of knowing, the basis of scientific inquiry. Bergson writes that analysis is the operation which reduces the object to elements already known, that is, common to that object and others. Analyzing then consists in expressing a thing in terms of what is not it. All analysis is thus a translation, a development into symbols, a representation taken from successive points of view from which are noted a corresponding number of contacts between the new object under consideration and others believed to be already known. (p. 190)

Intuition, however, is not an analysis but a synthesis—a composition. It is the composition of subjectivity through affirming one’s self “to be” from the singular, unique, and concrete position of the other. Bachelard (1971) describes it as an “opening-out” (p. 37). This opening-out, however, is never from the interiority of the subject. Rather, it issues from a locus of non-being of the subject with the faith that a future concrete self is potentially able to emerge and thus “to be.” In this opening out, one composes herself as “coherence through mobility” (p. 37). Intuition is thus a composition of the very self which endures otherness. In other words, it is the composition of duration of the self as it becomes a self-for-the-other. It is not the same as the juxtaposition of the symbolic and immobile states of consciousness called the subject that is a prerequisite for reflective thinking. On the contrary, such composition of duration “excludes all idea of juxtaposition, reciprocal exteriority and extension” (Bergson, 1946, p. 193). To understand intuitive thinking in terms of time durée or duration helps us to understand it in terms of multiplicity and heterogeneity.
The composed self as duration, however, is not a conceptual representation. Bergson (1946) also insists on this point:

It is enough for us to have shown that our duration can be presented to us directly in an intuition, that it can be suggested indirectly to us by images, but that it cannot—if we give to the word *concept* its proper meaning—be enclosed in a conceptual representation. (p. 198)

In poetry, rhythm or reverberation of poetic images presents the duration of otherness or the intuited self of the poet. Rhythm cannot be analyzed by reaping the sound patterns, images, or metaphors of a poem and juxtaposing them beside one another as if they were distinct entities. The analytic method cannot know the synthesis of intuition.

To Bergson, the method of intuition can be called metaphysical empiricism. This is a kind of empiricism that “[s]ees itself obliged to make an absolutely new effort for each new object it studies” (Bergson, 1946, p. 207). Poetry is a special practice of such empiricism, which Bachelard (1971) calls “creative or material imagination.” In each poem, by her vital breath, the poet sees herself obliged to give a new response to the otherness she desires to become. In other words, in each poem, the poet gives her vital breath to the other: she therefore dies as a subject and comes to life as the other. Poetic intuition is thus located in the mobility of her vital breathing, in the mobility of duration of self-as-the-other and means intuiting things in their very movement and state of change. As Bachelard (1971) says, intuition is “restoring to each thing its own movement” (p. 21). For these reasons, as Hopkins thinks and Scully (1966) puts it, the poet is not a traveler but an “‘unraveller’ who had pursed a way into the heart of things” (p. 73).

The important distinction between intuition and analysis is that “from intuition one can pass on to analysis, but not from analysis to intuition” (Bergson, 1946, p. 213). This is because analysis always starts by assuming the view of space as empty and immobile—the space “simply conceived, never perceived” that only “has the value of a symbol” (p. 215; emphasis in original).
From this presumption of space, then, analysis aims to understand mobility. Yet, because of this presumption, it never recognizes mobility and always recognizes immobility. As Bergson explains, the problems are due to the fact that we claim to go from space to movement, from the trajectory to the flight, from immobile positions to mobility, and pass from one to the other by way of composition. But it is movement which precedes immobility, and between positions and a displacement there is not the relation of parts to the whole, but that of the diversity of possible viewpoints to the real indivisibility of the object. (pp. 215-216)

In other words, analytical methods already depend on “ready-made concepts” (Bergson, 1946, p. 216). The intuitive method, however, is different since one starts from movement to reach, or form, the space. The space here is nothing but duration.

In the intuitive process of poetic creation, the poet invests in her own concrete mobility or agency to form the space. Space does not exist as a pre-given container of reference points which guide the poet’s movement of intuition. Without points of reference, the poet has no suggested procedure for ways of moving about in her memory. In other words, in the poet’s duration of memory, there exists no definite image of space prior to moving. In this way, the poet places herself within duration through thought. Such action is a challenge or “dépassement” to the prophet of reflective thinking, Kant, because he thinks that it is impossible “to detach oneself from space without leaving extension” (Bergson, 1988, p. 187). Even though Kant is right that such a thing is impossible within reflective thinking, it is “possible” within memory. The poet in the process of intuition is set in her memory, not in the actual or historical space of being.

Moreover, the poet is motivated not by any image of the other she looks for but by her own desire to search and find her way to the other. As the poet moves about in her memory, she always bends back over herself, over her concrete sense-experiences, to decide how to move next. The poet’s movements are formed by her sensual responses to the otherness which is
always in proximity. What Bergson (1920) explains in the following passage can be the description of our imagined poet’s movement:

What we actually perceive is a certain span of duration composed of two parts—our immediate past and our imminent future. We lean on the past, we bend forward on the future: leaning and bending forward is the characteristic attitude of a conscious being. (pp. 8-9)

The poet experiences the otherness in proximity as intensity. She has no plan or will to capture things she encounters. As she responds to their proximity, she bends back over herself to reconstruct her self, and its immediate position. Through this reconstruction, she decides her next step. Therefore, the space for the poet is not extensive, but intensive. This does not mean that she has left extensity, yet the poet experiences space as the otherness in proximity in her memory, the other that she encounters and endures. The space is the rhythm of what she endures as she is moving about in her memory, following a logic of continuity. Along the way, the poet constantly figures out her concrete “self-in-here” (in her senses) by the mobility of the concrete “self-in-there” (in her memory). In this way, the poet participates in the consummation of her concrete self.

In our everyday life, however, we do not live in the durable and mobile space of our memories. So, in order to provide ourselves with a solid foundation, we use non-intuitive ways of knowing, including positive science, which “substitute for the continuous the discontinuous, for mobility stability, for the tendency in process of change fixed points which mark a direction of change and tendency” (Bergson, 1946, p. 222). This substitution often seems necessary for practical reasons. Practicality has established certain procedures of reflectivity for our mind to follow. In other words, we are inhabited by practicality, although we may be free of inborn mental structures such as Space and Time, the transcendental aesthetic foundations of our mind according to Kant. Other, non-reflective ways of thinking that do not depend on methods of
analysis remain. These are intuitive ways of thinking which work through the method of composition.

To intuit, we should reverse our familiar reflective mental procedures, or in Bergson’s words (1946), “the normal direction of the workings of thought” (p. 224). We respectively must violate the normal operation of our practical habituation. This particular violation sets us on a flight of intuition. To intuitively fly means “to adapt the mobile continuity of pattern of things” (p. 225). Poetry is one of the expressions of such adaptation. Rhythm in poetry indicates the mobility of things the poet intuits.

Intuition, therefore, starts from the flight of mind towards otherness, which cannot be turned into a symbol or a concept. Bachelard (1971) also maintains the same point. He distinguishes between two kinds of imagination, reproductive and imaginative, corresponding to reflective thinking/analysis and intuitive thinking/synthesis. To him, the flight of creative imagination is oneiric, which points to the insufficiency of psychoanalysis for aesthetics because in psychoanalysis “symbols are the fundamental concepts of investigation” (p. 64). In poetry, the line of the mind’s flight or leap is intuited, and manifested in language via the poet’s breath as rhythm. Therefore, through perception of rhythm, one senses mobility of the self in her desire to become one-for-the-other. It is the self’s duration of otherness which translates to the intensity of rhythmic patterns through the poet’s breath in poetry. The degree of this intensity depends on how the poet hits the otherness in her mobility. Sensing the intensity, however, is psychological, which explains why Bergson (1946) writes, “duration is psychological in essence” (p. 217). Rhythm is the expression of this psychological happening or synthesis in language. It is the linguistic expression of the convergence of a multiplicity of heterogeneous patterns of intensity forming as the poet is taking a flight of intuition. The how of this psychological synthesis, as
Bergson rightly indicates, is not clear. The only thing that can be said is that the flight of intuition feels like freedom. This is when the self experiences her very subjectivity as an unexplainable intensity which she expresses in her poetry.

The feeling of freedom, however, as I explained earlier, does not imply freedom-from-something, and thus does not represent any actuality or possibility. Rather, it relates to the potentiality of becoming one-for-the-other. Freedom of self-realization emerges from the desire to become one who can bear one’s own proper name. It is a potentiality, neither a necessity nor a possibility. It is the potentiality of becoming real so that one can be called by one’s own proper name—the potentiality of being born anew, which in historical space is an impossibility.

In poetic intuition, the poet creates this potentiality through her active breathing, which she engages to affect the system of language. It is via the performance of her active breathing as “languaging” that the poet, through giving up her own position in the symbolic system of language, brings about the death of the subject of enunciation. Within the same performance, she also creates her self as the other. Poetic intuition can also be performed in other forms of creative writing through engaging the breath towards self-writing or self-realization. In this performance, the writing transforms to the expression of ecstasy in the way Lacoue-Labarthe (1979/1989) suggests in his concept of émoi. As Avriam (1994) writes: “Lacoue-Labarthe also attaches the word émoi, which ordinarily means ‘emotion’ or ‘excitement,’ but which he playfully etymologizes as é-moi, ‘outside-me’ (1979, 285; think of ecstasy, standing outside)” (p. 216).

Yet just as music draws one outside of oneself, it simultaneously brings back the image of the self. In Lacoue-Labarthe’s view, rhythm is the condition of possibility of ecstasy because rhythm is the expression of a potentiality compelling “the subject in two ways—first to disappear, and then to reemerge through self-writing” (p. 217). This is the potentiality of confirming one’s own
right to become real—the potentiality of subjectivity—the potentiality of uttering one’s own proper name, through which the writer gives herself natality.
Variation I-III
O on O: A Poem by Nilofar Shidmehr

A little bird, O, Landing
On
A little child, O, Singing.

As I have explained in the Prelude I, in this movement of the dissertation, I explore the ways in which poetry is a distinct form of expression as well as a distinct way of knowing from prose. As many scholars have noticed, the distinctness of poetry is congealed in its rhythm as the mapping of language. This mapping, showing the three characteristics of poetry as concentratedness, affectiveness, and performativity, explained in Variation I-I, presents a narrative singularity which cannot be derived from content or the form of poetry. This singularity, embodied as rhythm, relates to responsive form of expression in poetry.

Literary theorists and linguists such as Russian formalists (early and late formalists) have made several attempts to explain the singular linguistic mapping of poetry. However, they have only managed to give descriptions of this mapping, without being able to explain what is responsible for such singularity that does not exist, at least distinctively, in prose. The singularity of language special to poetry shows a tension between sound and sense or content and form in poetry. Most theorists believe that the tension is the sign of two things being in play in poetry. Early formalists called them transparent and opaque language and attributed it to a dominant factor in language. A contemporary literary theorist Aviram (1994) also sees the two forces at play in poetry: a literal reality of language as the arbitrator of meaning, and another sublime reality called rhythm that exists outside language and is the source of meaninglessness in poetry. Later formalists in their theory of defamiliarization explained that the tension in poetry is due to the fact that literary devices in poetry are in the service of form whose definite function is “to make the familiar experiences of life, including language itself, appear strange and unfamiliar,
and therefore, in a sense, freshly perceptible after the senses have been dulled by familiarity” (p. 65).

The difficulty with formalists’ theories is that they try to explain the singular linguistic mapping of poetry by merely identifying rhetorical devices such as repetition, meter, rhyme, and others, even though the same devices can be also used in prose. Without resorting back to rhetorical explanations, even the theory of defamiliarization cannot explain the source of the nonsensical or the opaque that seems to be responsible for noticed poem’s tension and thus for the defamiliarization effect that distinguishes poetry from prose. That is why scholars such as Aviram resort to some sublime vital force outside language to explain the source of the force of defamiliarization. Their theories however suffer from an ungrounded presumption of the existence of some reality outside language that theorist like Derrida (1998) would not agree to and would say, “there is no outside the text—il n’y a pas de hors-text.” Or as Aviram (1994) himself puts it, “We live in a world that is already a world of language” (p. 25).

In this variation, I will show that duration, introduced in Variation I-II, as a performative and affective potentiality in language, not another reality or force outside language, is responsible for distinct linguistic mapping of language in poetry or rhythm. Duration makes poetry language not work in its orderly way through the rhetorical operations known as semantics and syntax; therefore, poetry’s linguistic mapping cannot be explained through structuralist analysis. Before laying out my theory of rhythm as duration’s linguistic manifestation, I discuss the shortcomings of Jakobson’s theory of poetry (1960) as one of the most advanced linguistic theories that considered the task of explaining the distinctness of poetry from prose with regard to its special linguistic mapping. I argue that, because of his structuralist approach to linguistic analysis, Jakobson could not see the special performativity of poetry’s
language and thus explain its concentratedness and affectiveness in relation to its performativity, simply because he missed recognizing duration. To show how duration affects the rhetorical operations of language in working in the process of poetry creation and brings about a linguistic singularity, I employ Bachelard’s concept of “the axis of sublimination” (1971) and Deleuze and Gauttari’s concept of “order-words” (1987).

**Jakobson’s Theory of Poetry and the Missing Duration as the Potentiality of Language**

Jakobson’s structuralist theory of poetry is one of the most influential and discussed theory in the twentieth century. Jakobson was famous for his structuralist approach to linguistics, according to which the main purpose of language is communication. He defined six communication functions for language, each associated with a factor that makes the communication process possible. These factors are: addresser, addressee, context, message, contact, and code. Jakobson maintained that, depending on the purpose of communication, one of these functions becomes dominant while others remain subordinate. When the focus of communication is on the message itself, the function of communication, according to Jakobson, is poetic. He wrote, “focus on the message for its own sake, is the POETIC function of language” (Jakobson 1960, p. 356; emphasis in original). Even though it seems correct that in poetry the message for its own sake becomes important, the crucial question remains unanswered—what is responsible for putting the emphasis of communication on the message? To answer this question, Jakobson tried to explain what is specific in poetry that distinguishes it from prose.

Jakobson first argues that poetry, like any other utterance, is a product of the working of language along two axes of selection and of combination—the axes which he adopts from Saussure’s paradigmatic and syntagmatic linguistic axes. The axis of selection points towards the metaphoric pole and the axes of combination points towards the metonymic pole of linguistic
process. We should note that the terms metaphor and metonymy in Jakobson’s theory are not figures of speech; rather, they are linguistic processes which organize the linguistics of communication.

The process of selection determines the word choice or semantics of an utterance. Selection is one of the “two basic modes of arrangement used in verbal behavior” (Jakobson, 1960, p. 358). As all poets and poetry scholars unexceptionally agree, there is a certain selection of words without which a poem will not be a poem. Jakobson maintains that selection, in poetry as well as in prose, “is produced on the base of equivalence, similarity and dissimilarity, synonymity and antonymity.” For example, he continues, if “‘child’ is the subject of the message, the speaker selects one among the extant, more or less similar, nouns like child, kid, youngster, tot, all of them equivalent in a certain respect, and then . . . he may select one of the semantically cognate verbs—sleeps, dozes, nods, naps.”

Yet there is more than selection. Another linguistic process or mode of arrangement in verbal behavior, combination, also occurs. According to Jakobson, a particular combination process determines, in the above example, how “child” or its semantic equivalents are combined with “sleeps” or other cognate verbs. The process of combination addresses the syntax mode of our verbal behavior. Combination is responsible for “the build up of [a] sequence” of words and uses “contiguity” (Jakobson, 1960, p. 358). Let us look at my poem in the beginning of this variation and see how Jakobson analyses its linguistic mapping. In my poem, a small bird lands on the head of a small child and the speaker responds with awe, as expressed through the repetition of “O.” Yet there is also something else operating underneath this straightforward expression of two events—something that cannot be explained. As a result, there is an obvious tension suggested by the sound and image mapping of the poem.
Jakobson would say that, during the creation of my poem, two basic behaviors were involved: a selection of signs for the two subjects of the poem, the child and the bird; and a combination of words/signs, such as the gerund “landing” to go with the bird and the gerund “singing” to go with the child. The words/signs as discrete entities in each line of the poem are in a contiguous relation with one another. As a result of rhetorical operations of language as selection and combination, a chain of signs is formed, telling the narrative. However, the two basic behaviors of selection and combination are not particular to poetry only. For example, in a prosaic formulation of the narrative of my poem as “a small bird lands on the head of a small child who is singing,” the two operations of selection and combination are also involved. So the question still remains: what does distinguish a poetic utterance from other utterances?

Jakobson answers that in poetry, “[t]he poetic function projects the principle of equivalence from the axis of selection into the axis of combination. Equivalence is promoted to the constitutive device of the sequence” (Jakobson, 1960, p. 358; emphasis in original). More specifically, Jakobson continues:

[i]n poetry one syllable is equalized with any other syllable of the same sequence; word stress is assumed to equal word stress, as unstress equals unstress; prosodic long is matched with long, and short with short; word boundary equals word boundary, no boundary equals no boundary; syntactic pause equals syntactic pause, no pause equals no pause. Syllables are converted into units of measure, and so are morae or stresses. (p. 358)

In other words, Jakobson is saying that poetry is distinguished from other utterances by the way in which axis of selection (process of equivalence) is superimposed on the axis of combination. We can see such projection to some degree in my opening poem, but not all instances of poetry, especially free verse, modern, and postmodern prose poetry, follow the same projected structuring that Jakobson maintains.
Even if this formula could be generalizable to all kinds of poetry, Jakobson’s description of poetic mapping does not tell us what prompts the superimposition projection of the axis of selection onto the axis of combination. Jakobson can only say that the poetic function becomes dominant via this superimposition so that the focus of communication in poetry is on the message for its own sake. By this explanation, however, Jakobson’s argument becomes circular.

Avoiding the question of why a particular function of language is dominant, Jakobson then turns his discussion towards the place of rhythm in poetry. To Jakobson (1960), what lies underneath the structure of any single line in poetry is “verse design” which “determines the invariant features of the verse instances and sets up the limits of variations” (p. 364). Verse design, in his definition, is the design of the “time” sequence of poetry, with time being spatial or clock time. Meter is one linguistic property of verse design, and intonation is another that has a constitutive value. Jakobson argues that verse instances embody the verse design. Therefore, “[d]esign and instances are correlative concepts. The verse design determines the invariant features of the verse instances and sets up the limits of variations.” To Jakobson, even though “verse is primarily a recurrent ‘figure of sound’, [any] attempts to confine such poetic conventions as meter, alliteration, or rhyme to the sound level are speculative reasonings without any empirical justifications” (p. 367). If we accept this assertion, then the question becomes how sound variation is related to verse design in poetry.

Jakobson (1960) answers this question by introducing “the principle of parallelism” to which he thinks all artifice of poetry can be reduced. He writes that the “structure of poetry is that of continuous parallelism” and maintains that a kind of parallelism called “marked parallelism” “is concerned with the structure of verse—in rhythm, the recurrences of a certain sequences of syllables, in meter, the recurrence of a certain sequence of rhythm, in alliteration, in
assonance and in rhyme” (p. 368). This recurrence or parallelism, Jakobson continues, answers to a parallelism in words and their sense of meaning as well as in “metaphor, simile, parable, and so on, where the effect is sought in likeness of things, and antithesis, contrast, and so on, where it is sought in unlikeness.”

We can thus see that Jakobson’s conceptualization of the connection between sound and sense/meaning in poetry corresponds to his principle of equivalence discussed earlier, according to which, in poetry, the axis of selection (comparison and contrast) is projected onto the axis of combination. In poetry, as he writes:

equivalence in sound, projected into the sequence as its constitutive principle, inevitably involves semantic equivalence, and on any linguistic level any constituent of such a sequence prompts one of the two correlative experiences which Hopkins neatly defines as ‘comparison for likeness’ sake’ and ‘comparison for unlikeness’ sake.’ (Jakobson, 1960, pp. 368-369)

According to Jakobson, the two correlative acts or habits of comparison and contrast involved in the process of selection constitute language’s metaphoric act, that is projected onto the axis of combination which corresponds to the metonymic act or habit of combination as juxtaposing signs/sounds using the relations of contiguity and thus forming the grammar of the sequence of signs/sounds. The principle of equivalence, in Jakobson’s theory, is manifested both in the organization of sounds as rhythm and in the formation of rhetorical devices.

The explanation ultimately provided by the principle of equivalence is that, in poetry, the signs/sounds are not organized in the same way they are in prose, so they do not present the same grammar. The grammar of prose is nothing but a spatial grammar between signs, as discrete and identical entities, juxtaposed along the axis of time (in this case, narrative time). A spatial grammar is always made through relations of contiguity. However, in poetry, the way in which signs are arranged reflects a sense of opacity.
Like Jakobson, early Formalists maintained that this opacity is due to the dominance of the poetic function of language, which diverts all our attention towards the signifiers. Aviram (1994) also refers to this opacity through indicating “an obvious tension between sense and sound, or between the opaque, or nonsensical, or nonsemantic form and the more or less transparent thematic meaning” (p. 101). However, both Formalists and Jakobson are unable to say what causes a function to become dominant in one linguistic form and not in another, and what causes the axis of selection to be projected onto the axis of combination in the one form and not in the other.

They can only point to a certain opacity of poetic language and detect a parallelism in the mapping of some poetry. Their shortcoming is due to the fact that none can see duration as a potentiality in language that can become present admits the rhetorical operations of language and affects these operations to work in a way that does not conform to rhetorical working of language. I nevertheless suggest that duration, which I introduced in Variation I-II, gives poetry its specific expression distinct from prose. By its sudden presence, duration introduces and inserts a new axis in the rhetorical operations of language in the process of poetry creation.

**Duration’s Act of Invocation and the Axis of Sublimation**

Duration is not a reality existing outside a language system. As I explained in Variation I-II, duration is rather a lyrical potentiality which can become present in language and perform a vocation, a calling out, addressed to language. In poetry, this becoming present and performing invocation constitute the stages of intuition brought forth through the poet’s vital breath. Duration is not something that can be identified by its actual or possible existence (being) inside or outside language systems, but by the fact that when it becomes present, virtually, it acts. Borrowing from Massumi (2002a), I call the way duration acts “affecting.”
Duration’s invocation affects the language system by calling it to respond to itself. Duration demands evocation from language that is addressed towards its own rhetorical operations, but it need not be oppositional as assumed in Hegelian dialectic. The particularity of this invocation is that it demands another response which acts like an address and demands yet another response. In this respect it can be called “dialogical” (Bakhtin, 1990, 1981/1930). Duration prompts a series of address-response from a language system to itself, its rhetorical operations, and its symbolic structuring of signs.

Duration is time but not spatial time according to which rhetorical operations take place. The rhetorical operations of language are directed towards meaning-making and communication. The fundamental structure underlying meaning-making towards which rhetorical operations work is narrative-making. Narrative-making is always already done in spatial time. Narrative moments are discrete and identical points corresponding to simultaneous moments of present in spatial time—in clock time. Duration, however, can only become present in a language system as potentiality, since it is an impossibility in spatial time.

Jakobson’s axes of selection and combination, or axes of metaphor and metonymy, describe the two dimensions of the rhetorical operations of language. These operations create a discursive form called prose through fashioning narratives ordered according to a narrative arrangement of time. Linguistic order is made through selecting discrete linguistic entities or signs according to the rules of comparison and contrast and juxtaposing them along the axis of metonymy according to the relation of contiguity. The resulting linguistic passage resonates with narrative order in which narrative moments as discrete entities, external to one another, are juxtaposed along the line of action.
The juxtaposition of narrative moments to one another is governed by pregiven story patterns. That is, narrative moments, which are distributed along the line of action, unfold according to one of the possible story patterns. Just as the patterns of unfolding and their possible variations are predictable, the linguistic patterns of our rhetorical behavior are also predictable: they are patterns of selection based on synonymity and antonymity and patterns of juxtaposition based on contiguity. These patterns create an order of meaning so that the relationship of communication can be completed, or in Jakobson’s words, the message can be delivered effectively from the sender to the receiver.

However, structural linguistic analysis, even Jakobson’s theory as one of its most outstanding examples, cannot recognize the unique operation of duration which takes place in poetry. Duration is beyond this kind of analysis because, unlike linguistic entities and unlike moments in narrative, moments in duration “permeate one another, imperceptibly organize themselves into a whole, and bind the past to the present by this very process of connexion” (Bergson, 1956, p. 121). The moments in duration are not linked to one another according to relations of contiguity. In other words, duration “cannot be reduced to any modality of distance or geometrical contiguity” (Levinas, 1989b, p. 90). The relation of contiguity is the simultaneous relation of discrete entities, making it always a relation of the present to the present. Rhetorical order made through such relation is always a representation. Duration has no grammar of contiguity, as do linguistic representations. It is a multiplicity of qualitatively heterogeneous moments.

When duration becomes present in poetry, it provides the potentiality of the emergence of a narrative singularity whose moments cannot be projected onto the line of narrative action or organized by story patterns. No story pattern can potentially explain the heterogeneity of such
singular narrative. A narrative singularity cannot be turned into rhetorical representation created through the linguistic operations of selection and combination based on contiguity. The heterogeneous moments of a narrative singularity are in a relation of anachronistic proximity to one another. When duration becomes present in a language system, it introduces the surcharge of anachronism and its operations along rhetorical axes of metaphor and metonymy as defined by Jakobson. Earlier I described how such potential or duration can become present in language system; I now point out that this happens as the result of a state of virtual death of language during the synthesis of intuition when reflective consciousness gives up. In this state, language system temporally suspends itself.

What Aviram (1994) calls rhythm or the extra-linguistic vital force is duration. Duration, however, is not real or even possible entity. It is virtual. Neither is it outside the language system. It is a potentiality or surcharge of language that can become present in language, a potentiality that does not yield to the rhetorical rules of language and thus it cannot be situated along rhetorical axes of selection and combination. When duration becomes present, it acts. The act of duration is invocation as vocalizing an order or command that demands a response.

Duration affects the rhetorical operations of language as they take place through this invocation. It transfers the germs of such invocation into the language system. Duration makes the language system contagious with invocation-evocation—with address and response. As a result, the language system, while it acts orderly or rhetorically, bends on itself, addresses itself, and responds to itself along a third axis which duration inserts.

This axis is not another rhetorical axis of language. It is not an axis of opposition (e.g. dialectical Hegelian opposition) in relation to the rhetorical axis of language. Rather, it is an axis of “deterritorialization” along which rhetorical operations of language can take “flight” (Deleuze
Bachelard (1971) recognizes this axis in his literary theory of poetry and calls it the axis of “sublimation” (p. 73). To Bachelard (1971), sublimation hints at an oneiric operation and at what Bergson calls the “order of life” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 19). Bachelard says that the poet creates this order through “being receptive to an overture of language” (p. 74). What he describes as overture of language is what I call duration as it becomes present and performs the act of invocation. Without the axis of sublimation, poetry, for Bachelard, would not be “a synthesizing force for human existence” (p. 97). He characterizes the act of sublimation as “alchemy,” with the alchemist projecting “his depth” (pp. 53-54). Depth is a third dimension that “projects itself into material image”—the dimension which, according to Bachelard, the psychologist Young (1875-1961) recognized because of “his long study of alchemy” (p. 53). When this depth becomes present in a language system, language exceeds its thematic and rhetorical territoriality and spills over itself. The result is the formation of patterns of intensity known as rhythm.

Jakobson’s axes of selection and combination, as rhetorical axes of language, relate, in the words of Olson (1996), to “the HEAD, by way of EAR, to the SYLLABLE” (p. 870). Unlike Jakobson, Olson sees in poetry “the line.” Olson writes, “the HEART, by way of the BREATH, to the LINE.” This is the axis along which language folds to address and respond to itself when duration becomes present in language system. In this address-response or invocation-evocation, language takes flight and “deterritorializes” its system of orderly functioning, or its rhetorical operations of selection and combination, as they take place (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The flight of language can be called an overture of language. The result is a “reterritorialization” which we call poetry. Poetry’s language is thus a mapping (“reterritorializzazione”) that shows the intensity of the flight of language.
Aviram and the Formalists similarly identified the intense language of poetry. Jakobson maintained that a certain design underneath the patterns of intensity explained the tension in poetry, which he described as the projection of the axis of selection onto the axis of combination. However, as argued above, this explanation does not apply to all types of poetry, and even if it did, it still does not explain why such a projection happens in poetry and not in prose. The real question is about what motivates such a special function of language in poetry. However, Jakobson, with his structuralist approach, cannot answer this question because structuralism cannot recognize duration and the axis of deterritorialization or sublimation that it inserts into a language system when it becomes present. The line or axis of deterritorialization is an axis of anachronism in relation to the rhetorical axes of language along which its operations take place—the axes corresponding to the chronic view of time.

**Duration’s Affect: Order-Word’s Act**

Each poem presents a singular mapping, a narrative of singularity that does not obey any narrative patterns the way prose does. This means that the singular narrative that a poem embodies is not a tracing of some narrative pattern. The singular pattern of each poem shows the three characteristics of affectiveness, concentratedness, and performativity. Poetry as affective and concentrated mapping of a singular performativity of language arises through the invocation inserted by duration. This invocation influences language as the language acts in its orderly, rhetorical way so as to articulate a narrative in the form of prose. As a result, instead of prose, poetry emerges. The way duration acts which results in such a singular mapping of language resembles the way “order-words” act in the theory of Deleuze and Guattari (1987), that is to create “incorporeal transformation.”
Deleuze and Guattari maintain that “language is made not to be believed but to be obeyed, and to compel obedience” (p. 76). That is why, to Deleuze and Guattari, the elementary unit of language is the order-word. They argue that language is the transmission of the word as order-word, not the communication of a sign as information. Like Austin (1955/1975), Deleuze and Guattari notice acts internal to speech and recognize the immanent relations between the illocutionary statements and the acts. They show that Austin’s demonstration of illocutionary statements or speech acts has made it impossible to conceive of speech or language as a code for communication or giving information. Also, Austin’s work has made it impossible to define semantic/syntax/phonetics independently of pragmatics. To them, language theorists should focus on pragmatics. Order-words do not carry a message or information from a first party to another, who then decides whether to believe the message or not. Rather, order-words carry orders, or commands, to social bodies—orders that act on bodies and transform them, immediately and incorporeally. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) write, “Language is not content to go from a first party to a second party, from one who has seen to one who has not, but necessarily goes from a second party to a third party, neither of whom has seen” (p. 76).

To Deleuze and Guattari (1987) speech acts are a function coextensive with language. As they explain, “It is the illocutionary that constituted the non-discursive or implicit presuppositions. And the illocutionary is in turn explained by collective assemblages of enunciation, by juridical acts or equivalents of juridical acts” (p. 78). Order-words are not only commands, but also acts connected to statements by a social obligation. In order-words “there is no individual enunciation. There is not even a subject of enunciation” (p. 78). Instead there is a collective assemblage of enunciation which assumes primary importance when the enunciation takes a social character. The authors define social collective assemblages as those “acts
immanent to language that are in redundancy with a statement or constitute order-words” (p. 80). Such acts, they continue, make incorporeal transformations in a society and are “attributed to the bodies of that society” (emphasis in original). For example, a judge’s sentence comprises order-words and by it the accused is transformed into a convict. The conviction is attributed to the body of the person through the enactment of the sentence. As Deleuze and Guattari state, the transformation of the accused into a convict is a pure instantaneous act or incorporeal attribute that is expressed in the judge’s sentence. Other examples of order-words are: “From tomorrow you are retired,” “you are not a child anymore,” “the war will begin from today,” “this is the body and the blood of Christ I am giving you.” Deleuze and Guattari maintain that incorporeal transformation is recognizable by its instantaneousness, its immediacy, by the simultaneity of the statement expressing the transformation and the effect the transformation produces; that is why order-words are precisely dated, to the hour, minute, and second, and take effect the moment they are dated. (p. 81)

This brief explanation of Deleuze and Guattari’s order-words and their immanent act to create incorporeal transformation in social bodies helps demonstrate why duration behaves like order-words as it appears in language system during the process of poetic creation. Like order-words, duration acts, and its act is invocation. Through this act it addresses a language system to behave differently from its orderly, rhetorical, and utilitarian way. That is, more precisely, duration orders the language system not to create prose. Through this ordering, duration brings about a reterritorialization of language congealed as poetry. Duration’s invocation of responsiveness, which I call languaging, has no subject of enunciation as a specific person. It includes a multiplicity of voices, a collective assemblage of enunciation, like a chorus. This chorus establishes the subjectivity of languaging which acts anachronistically in relation to language operating in its orderly, rhetorical manner. Languaging embodies a movement of address-response that takes place at the same time as language acts rhetorically. The result of these two
occurring simultaneously is poetry, which is distinct from prose. Through its act of invocation, duration motivates language to fold over itself continuously along the axis of flight introduced by duration, at the same time as it acts rhetorically through operations of selection and combination. This activity creates a reterritorialization of the product that its orderly functioning was meant to bring about—a reterritorialization of prose called poetry. Poetry is a transformation of prose made possible by the presence of duration and its act of invocation.

The transformation is instantaneous and simultaneous with the act of duration. Like incorporeal transformation, which immediately takes effect in social bodies after the performance of order-words, the transformation of language takes effect immediately in the rhetorical working of language when duration appears and performs invocation. Language starts to act chronically and anachronistically at the same time. These two kinds of acting are coextensive yet redundant, creating something that is not discursive in the same way as prose: it is not a narrative of an actual or possible version of a story pattern. Deleuze and Guattari (1987) argue that order-words or assemblages of enunciation issue different subjectification and signification proceedings to bodies (bodies of society, bodies of people, and the body of the world).

Similarly, invocation as the act of duration issues different kinds of subjectification and proceedings to the rhetorical working of language which is aimed at creating discourse. In this performance, an immediate effect takes place in the “here” and “now” of the rhetorical acting of a language system. As a result, “[t]he warp of the instantaneous transformations is . . . inserted into the woof of the continuous modifications” (p. 86).

On the surface, poetry is not linguistically different than prose, yet there are subtle and indispensable differences caused by the differences in the working of the language system. The
difference between poetry and prose is similar to the difference between the bodies of an accused before or after the order-words performed by the court turns the body into that of a convict. The body of language in poetry and prose, on the face of it, is not different. Yet the body of poetry embodies something different than the body of prose: poetry is not a representation. Jakobson (1960) makes the same point when he says that in poetry, unlike in prose, the referential function of language is not dominant.

In poetry, as a result of the anachronistic performance of language, the line of lyrical expression is introduced into the line of rhetorical expression, which is discursive-narrative. This can take place because these lines are independent, yet coextensive and in a redundant relationship. It is impossible to determine the “points of intervention or insertion” of the lyrical with the rhetorical expression because, while working anachronistically, language acts like “an abstract machine” of languaging (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). This abstract machine is not universal, or even general, but singular; it has not invariable or obligatory rules, but optional rules that ceaselessly vary in each performance of languaging as folding inwards and outwards. That is why in poetry the rhetorical functioning of language, which aims to create prose, is inseparable from “a movement of deterritorialization that carries [it] away” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 87).

The abstract machine of language freely decides which statements or words will enter into possible rhetorical operations of language and obey obligatory rules of selection and combination, and which ones will serve instead as a fluid matter for variation. The act of this abstract machine brings about an incorporeal transformation of the form of the orderly, rhetorical, and discursive behavior of language. In the end, we get poetry. Rhythm, as an intense, affective, and compact mapping of language in poetry is the indication of a transformation which
has taken place in language—a transformation that cannot be explained by rhetorical and thematic structuralist analysis. It is instead the sign that a deterritorialization of rhetorical acting of language has taken place. What invoke deterritorialization are duration and its motivating act of vocation which demands the language system to respond to its work.

Duration prompts language to an “order of life” from an “order of mechanism” (Deleuze, 1988, p. 19), or rhetorical order. The order of life relates to the potential or “the energy of language to inscribe,” as Leggo (2004b) puts it. I call this potential or energy duration, which becomes present in poetry. Leggo’s description of poetry with regard to rhythm summarizes my argument in this variation:

[Poetry] is about rhythm (from Greek Rhythmos): measures or measured motion. Rhythm is the relation of part to part and of parts to the whole. It is balance, the flowing of blood, breath, breathing, not breath-taking but breath-giving. Rhythm is the measure of speech, of the heart, of dancing, of the seasons, knowing the living word, the energy of language to inscribe, instrip hope, even in the midst of each day’s wild chaos. (p. 7)
Movement II: Poetry Manuscript and Three Responses
Prelude II: Poetry Manuscript

The Triangle of the Names of an Immigrant

(Narratives, Biographics, and Ironics)
I: Narratives

Prelude: Somebody Is Calling My Name

I don’t know the meaning of my name. But I know one thing: my name is entirely what I am. Already, I’ve forgotten the name that’s given to me. Maybe if I think harder, I’ll remember it. Yet I feel no urge to look for it: it was like all those things that must have been lost, those that must have been gone and set free in formlessness.

I shaped my new name on my own, though. First, it was simply an insignificant speck of pollen among thousands of other specks, drifting around in the air, searching for the pistil. I waved at that very spec and it floated toward me. “Just don’t forget to water me every day,” it whispered.

In the beginning, I got confused when someone called me by my name. So much that I even wondered if anybody had called me at all. Was that really MY name? Or could there be someone else who was given that name? Perhaps I was neither that name nor the person behind it. Or, I might be both.

That’s why, once, upon return to myself, when I responded, “Yeah?” the person who’d called me suddenly hesitated and asked me, “Are you really yourself?”

Somehow, my new name sounded familiar to the people in the new place where I’d arrived at the end of a journey of self-discovery. And that was the primary reason for me to get used to that name. Unlike my given name, my new name didn’t provoke a bundle of interlocking questions whenever I uttered it:

“Pardon me?”
“What did you say?”
“Can you spell it?”
“What does it mean?”
“I beg your pardon?”
“What does it mean?”
“Can you repeat?”
“Hey, that’s beautiful.”
“Well…”

These questions always stunned me and made me feel threatened, for I came to live here free from the people who bombarded me with endless questions. And, as I said, this was the
primary reason for getting used to my new name. Yet, I changed my new name countless times, as I found myself used to the boredom of having nothing to puzzle over. In essence, of course, all the names were, well, one: They only changed shape as wine does in different glasses, even glasses of the most contradictory cast.

Once, one of my classmates asked, “Do you know what your name means?” I didn’t. I inquired why he asked that question.

“It’s pretty,” he answered. “In an ancient story I used to read as a child, it was the name of an intrepid and impulsive woman who had countless lovers. She gambled away their money.”

He looked me squarely in the eye, trying to pull the image of that mythic woman out of my gaze. All of a sudden I felt the image of that woman emerging from the deep, rippling through onto my skin. I turned my head coyly, tossing my hair gently from one shoulder to the other. Astounded, my classmate stepped back.

“That woman… drove her lovers insane… by just tossing her hair… from one shoulder to the other,” he stuttered in surprise.

Then, in a moment of silence and gloom, a soft breeze began to flow and touched my hair. I trembled and my hair floated in the wind. All of a sudden, a thousand dancing hands bloomed out of my shoulders and underarms and lifted me off the ground. My body glided smoothly; my feet moved like fins of a fish; my hair was set loose on a crest of air, unfolding wings and ascending passionately. Then, with millions of blazing, lithe specks that flew around me, I became a sun, rising above the threshold where he stood, astounded and impassioned.

Another day, a young man whom I’d seen a couple of times caught me off guard between two pillars of books in the library. “You know, I found out that your name’s historical,” he confessed. “There is a statue, with your name, that’s been standing at the threshold of an ancient tomb for thousands of years.”

And I wait, standing there, perhaps for thousands of centuries, not for thousands of years, and certainly not for this very moment when I find myself listening to him. “It’s as if you’ve looked at me from beyond history,” he twitched.

Suddenly I am standing there, on a pillar much taller than the book shelves, which rises to the sky. I am built of stone from head to toe. My eyes, the line of my cheek, even my hair are
fixed in a still sketch. My lips are two rocks carved and sealed together. My hands are locked on to my chest. No breeze or wind, not even a storm can give my hair the slightest movement now, or set it free to scatter across my stone shoulders.

Whoever I may be, I know that now I’m the precise and perfect meaning of my name. One might say it is the name of a flower that grows out of the breast of a vestigial wall, as another might find it reminiscent of a cat stretching her body under the sun at noon.

Once again, somebody calls my name. Now, I have no doubt that the name I hear is the one that lives in me. It’s the one that bursts in the vagina of this moment and is attached to the umbilical cord of being, suspended between warmth and cold, question and answer, blood and color, freedom and slavery, as it spins restlessly, awaiting its new birth.
Lovers’ Applications

Today you start with, it’s getting colder and colder here, to knit us together with a common chatline thread.
What about there?
Thinking about my answer, again, I forget what I repeated a hundred times to myself to talk about: the dream of a time we are back together.

I, a young girl, plait my hair and glance out of the corner of my eye at the neighbor’s roof. You, a young man, peek from the roof, give me the cue to come over. My mother is busy taking her wedding quilt into the yard for a cotton carder she has called in the street.

He beats the cotton, as I slip out the door. We rush to the attic. Your mother has gone shopping. Our naked bodies are two threads, white. Your breath stitches to mine.

You type in Farsi and place a linking icon beside your lines, so that we are woven together in the fabric of the past.

Can’t you move to a country closer by? Can you speak to a lawyer or do something to bring me over to Canada? I have no Farsi font so write my silence in English.

I should have known distance would tear us apart at the seams. I imagine your face becoming tight like a shrunken shirt as I read your lines and think how short I got my hair cut this time, how I am tired of wearing my pre-emigration clothes how I always knew you were not patient enough from the way you hurried me every winter as I was knitting you a new warm sweater.

What can a lawyer do? Canada’s immigration
has no provision for lovers’ applications.
My finger trembles on the keys.
If only I could pull the thread
to bring you out of the screen.

I push my nails into my palm
until it hurts. I think we are caught
on the yarn of it. The person who knits
this world into a village has dropped
the ball and it is rolling away from us.
Until You Wave, There, My Flag

Mountains can never reach one another,  
but we sure can.  
(Iranian Proverb)

“I’ll love you, dear, I’ll love you  
Till China and Africa meet,  
And the river jumps over the mountain  
And salmon sing in the street,”  
(W. H. Auden)

The snow on my monitor  
is hot. I can’t roll it into a ball  
or slip it under your shirt.  
Nor can I slide my fingers  
between your thin lips as you gape  
when your camera catches my image  
at this deserted end of the Net  
and you start again:

Will there again be a day  
when we climb a mountain together?

Yes, remember this – we’ll find each other  
on a mountain top,

I start again  
as I am looking at the images  
of the Alamkooh you sent me and those  
of Andes and the Himalayas—  
our hiking group never reached.

My monitor is tiled with Mount Alborz  
on whose lap sits Tehran but I’m sitting lonely  
far from the Cypress on my swivel chair,  
firmly holding to its arms  
while my speakers crackle with your voice:  
I’ll emigrate. Even though I should  
pass through all the world’s  
security chains to get to the Grouse.

Of course,

I whisper in a distant voice
when I see your impatient head off-screen and I shut
my eyes for a moment to keep
your picture ascending, alone
in the cold bowls of my eyelids.

But this time I am gone when you appear
on the screen and try
to keep your head up, although your eyes
blur like a lake on Mount Sabalaan
under the drizzling rain, and your lips,
thin as a thread, twitch suddenly,
waiting for me to appear again.

But I refuse. I know I won’t climb
a conversation with you again
until the snow is cold,
until Mount Alborz meets the Grouse
and my hand reaches your lips,
until the world is a rolling ball,
on which you stand secure and straight
like the flag we hoisted on the Tochaal,
and sway your body the way you did
when you held me in your arms,

until you wave that flag, again,
inside my heart.
Illiteracy

For Robert Dziekanski to die
on the day of his landing in Vancouver
enough if he couldn’t speak it—
or read and write the tongue
that now animates
my mouth unconsciously.

What caught my eye
were his legs, soundlessly
quivering on the white floor.
Mine still quiver too,
even today fifteen years
after the day I’d landed,
every time my listeners hear
only muteness
on my accented lips.

The three police officers could not read
the hands he half-raised
before stepping back from the pointed guns
that spoke in the same tongue
as they did.

Even the electric current which passed
through his body spoke
in the same unbending words.
Cover

Up there,
high on a leafless maple tree
the fresh Christmas snow has filled
in the nest of a missing bird.

And down here,
deep onto the sidewalk
behind the back door
of the Salvation Army
the snow has quilted

this folded cardboard in which,
the entire autumn,
nested
a nameless prostitute.
Runners

The man outside whom I watch
instead of the morning news,
begins his day
before I start my own,
running on the Stairmaster.

He, too, exercises:
lifts his weights in wine bottles,
takes a deep breath, stands up,
drops them into a plastic bag,
breaths out.

His muscles stretch
as he squeezes cans of pop and beer.
Then as it gets brighter outside
he speeds up. Me, too,
on the Stairmaster.

Later neither have I a second
to take a sip from my bottle;
nor he to suck at his,
before a truck appears
to collect the garbage

from our building
and he dashes down
the street in the same weary
runners I wear, speeding up
on the Stairmaster.
Airplanes and I, Alone and Together

I went to the West Coast’s farthest side to see a real whale for the first time in my life—in the animations I used to watch as a child in Iran, it looked plump and white and friendly, like an airplane.

As an adult, an airplane meant a lot to me when I was yet in Tehran, trapped, and did not know how to escape the country which seemed like a big prison almost to anyone—outside or inside.

I imagined the airplane which would come to take me away, this would mean that not only could I leave but also I left legally, thus welcomed where I’d arrive, not dismissed like a refugee.

Only if I could leave all scrapes of the past behind me and escape all histories and what the future held for us, being locked in a land where we could be gassed like people of Halabcheh, by our own government.

Or we could be attacked by foreign airplanes which arrived unexpectedly to cast their shadows on us, running out to the basements or onto the streets when the “Red” siren went off.

Thinking of my solitary plane tough I did not want to end up thinking about the airplanes together: that was different—only if I could escape the ghost of the future and the shadow of the past, still looming over our lives.

Only if I could and I did. So to recall my visualization of freedom I travelled to Tofino to watch a whale, which, I, as a child, had imagined to look like an airplane, landed at a friendly airport.

I did not see any real whale, though for two hours, my eyes swooped into each clamoring wave.
and came back shaken and in vain.
I was so disappointed that the tour guide showed us a movie instead.

The whales on the screen travelled together not alone, and contrary to my imagination, they did not look like airplanes. O Good Lord, an afterthought trailed in my mind like their image: 
I did not ever wish to see airplanes fly in formation.
Alive

The question then became whether I’d extend my attention to another soul’s reflection in the rainy glass of the entrance of the building I came to enter

or whether I would refuse to look at the suffering of another, like I do on days I fear seeing my own eerie image in the mirror. In order not to encounter a crumbling soul or a cumbersome body I had turned onto the street off Hastings and parked right in front of the Co-op radio to reach the entrance, breathless, in just a few safe strides.

My mind focused on my part in the show which was going to start in a few minutes, I raised my eyes to find myself in the figure of another young woman with a lifted chin, trying to find a vein on her neck to inject a syringe she held up by her ear. But she heard me and stepped back so that I faced her reflection, still lingering there in the glass.
Recognition

I was with a group
but now find myself alone,
suddenly, among meandering
pines and patches of sky
on this winding snowy road.

I pause for a good deep breath,
listening
to the birds singing from their white nests
hung from the green.

A place of recognition, I think to myself,
is a place like here—
where lungfuls of crisp air
root in, and breath shoots out
like the branches of the sun
from the chest of the forest—
a place where one could
find her soul—

Then, suddenly out of the blue,
I see her
with me.

Her feet, although not like mine in snowshoes,
have left deep marks on the track.
Her eyes are dark amber,
calm and mindful,
her fur reddish brown.
Her tail, solemn, risen towards the sky.

We let silence
shape the landscape;
no words
between us,
only a conspiracy

of recognition—
I am as indigenous
as she is, and she is
as immigrant as
I am.
II: Biographics

Prelude: Autography of my Name

The story of my life starts the way a Persian fairy tale begins: There is one and there isn’t one. There is no one besides God.

Once upon a time, I was thrown into life. I was born. But my name was not born with me. Names cannot be thrown; they are chosen. My parents had a strange way of choosing my name. They did not decide my name by themselves. Instead, they put the burden of decision on another person. The task was given to a man at the birth-registration office—a man, to whom, names meant nothing but statistics.

Twenty days after my birth, on the day my parents decided to give me a name and register it, they wrote three names on three pieces of paper and folded the papers. Whether the paper was completely white or lined is one of those details that no one remembers. The “nameless I” could bear any of those three names my parents carried with them to the birth registration office. She could be three different women. The decision as to who I would be was left to the man who happened to be recording the new-borns names that day. So, the decision was left to the chance.

I was thrown into the world by circumstance, but my name was chosen by chance. However, there were numerous other ways necessity and chance could play their parts in bringing me forth. If it were up to me, I would desire to be born out of a different circumstance; I would desire my name to be born out of a different play of chance.

It is said that God first created earth and everything on it including trees and animals, and then gave his creatures each a name. It was then that God’s will to create and God’s will to bring to existence coincided. Only after God’s creatures received their proper names, they came to existence. In this way God put his signature on his act of creation. By giving what he had created a name, he affirmed his presence in the act of creation. Only then, the axis of necessity and chance became one.

My name is Nilofar: water lily by translation, if a name could be translated to a different language than the language of names and the language of chance. I could easily be a Sepideh—a Dawn—or a Shabnam—a Dew. If the man at the birth-registration office had picked a different paper out of my father’s cupped hand. Whether the man made the draw with his right hand or left
hand and whether it was my father’s right hand or a left hand in which my possible future names were nestled is a detail that nobody remembers.

Dawn and Dew have a relationship with light. The time when the first rays of light break out of darkness is dawn. Dews form at dawn and are transparent. Dawn and dew both let the light reveal itself to the eye. Unlike dawn and dew, Nilofar is opaque. It is a mysterious flower. Water lilies grow on swamps, on stagnant deep water which does not let light pass through it. Nilofars do not reveal their roots to the eye. Their roots branch out in the enigmatic space below the surface and grasp to the dark body of water.

The man at the office—whose name nobody remembers, nor his hand—picked a paper from my father’s cupped hand held before him. He opened the fold and read out my name: Nilofar. My mother cheered, and for a passing moment before dying out, the light shimmered in her tears. My father closed his palm to Dawn and Dew and threw them into the emptiness of a bin by his hand. This is the way, by chance, which I came into existence.

But I was already born, twenty days before the day my name was chosen. What had pushed me out into life was a mysterious force called necessity. The same force will one day push me out to my death. This is the force which always already remains obscure to us as it holds powers intangible to our consciousness. The story of my being born, therefore, is not a part of my autobiography. It belongs to the autobiography of necessity—as the story of my naming belongs to the autobiography of chance.

Most people are named just once, but not others. For instance me, I was named twice—once when I was born and once I came to this country as an immigrant. This was because my given name meant little or rather nothing to people. Like birth and death, emigration is also a journey to a foreign place. This is true that the émigré comes to the borderline with her own feet, but the force that pushes the feet over the line does not come from within. Nobody knows the nature of this mysterious force. It remains opaque to the senses as to what lifts up the foot, moves the body, and pushes it to cross the border.

Passing the border is like being born again. But one still needs a name to come to social existence. I knew that I could not choose my name by myself. I imagined there are those, as there were my parents, who picked names for me. The society, however, drew my new name. By chance.
Chance, however, could play differently. If I were the society, I would pick a different name from the cupped hand of emigration. I would write my auto-graphy differently.

I would let the forces of desire which act out of the emptiness and fullness of a woman’s womb act from mine and write my names. I would make my daughter present at my birth. The force of necessity could make this possible. It could make my daughter be born before I am. She would come out of my womb only a fraction of second earlier than I’d come out of my mother’s. In this way, like connected vessels, my mother, my daughter, and I would be linked together and present at my birth. My daughter would be a crossroad through which I make a journey to my mother’s land.

Then I would put a pen in my daughter’s hand as she would come to life and declare her presence with her cries. Dipped in my blood, her hand would run against my skin and make three graphs, one of which would be my name.

There is one of those names which both my mother and my daughter can read. Like a dew, this name is transparent. There is a second name which my daughter can read, but not my mother. This name is transparent to its writer, but not to its reader. This name is like dawn, which is transparent to the light but not to the darkness. There is, however, a third name, which, neither my mother nor my daughter can read. It is opaque like the roots of a Nilofar are to its petals. It is opaque like poetry is to its story.

It is a name illegible to its writer. I am this third name. And this is how the story of my life begins: there is one and there isn’t one. There is no one besides me.
Small Sighs

Like a duckling, this fourteen-year-old girl
swims alongside her young mother in the pool.
I follow them to the sauna where they lay
beside one another. They are
goddamn beautiful,
both tall, fit, and exuberant, with long hair
tied in pony tails. Like a horse,
the mother flanks her naked daughter
in the changing room, listens to her chatter,
attentive to her moves and small sighs.

Then they disappear and before my eyes,
the image of my own daughter
appears with her back to me.
I am back to my mother’s land
to visit her again after a few years
and she, holding her towel tightly around
her fragile body,
tries to change into her clothes,
shy of me—
the woman who once held her
naked in her womb.
Yellow

No, sun is not
yellow enough in this country,
nothing is: blonds and apricots,
autumn, and even the skin
of bananas from overseas.

Rice pudding dishes
my grandmother cooked
every year for Imam Hassan
memorial were Zard, so Zard
that they brought family back

in touch. Even from under a thick
chador of cinnamon
with almonds and pistachio filigree,
their saffron ringlets
warmed up our hearts.

Granny’s hair was the same,
like Tehran’s hot sun, Zard,
so glowing that I would want
to dip my hands
in it and color them

yellow.
Zyprexa

These pills are happiness:
they work by separation
and embody protection.

My thoughts still race, my guts churn
though not inside me
but beside me.

These pills, the doctor says,
don’t kill pain, don’t make life
other than nasty, short, and brutal.

They only make your experience
of misery mean nothing
to your sick mind.

Happiness still arises
within, it’s protection
from the burden of the flesh.

It is the quarantine of senses
outside the body
the contiguity of sound and fury

of safety and suffering
of the world
and me.

The body is not shut down,
the doctor assures me,
it is just not experiencing

what is experienced.
Low rise

Those hopeful women across the street
in their headscarves
and with their many kids
who run wildly up and down Drake Street
are temporarily settled
in that fading low building
of the Immigration Services Society
that once welcomed me
as a refugee.

They lean against the brick wall
and from time to time, look up
at this concrete high rise,
with its many well-behaved dogs,
that also includes me,
until I’ll be again
like a refugee—
but not quite—
for this time, there won’t be
a hope, even half-risen
in me, for another place
that welcomes me.
**Few and Far Between**

As in a Persian saying, “their elephant is longing for Hindustan,”
my husband and I—a Czech and an Iranian—
each has an elephant, here in Vancouver.
However, my dear elephant,
from time to time, for no good reason,
longs for Iran instead.

A thousand years ago,
at the time of Rumi, India
was the farthest place to travel to;
only merchants could go that far.
It might have taken them seven years;
on their return, they brought
souvenirs: silks, perfumes,
colorful parrots and elephants
who did not feel at home
in Persia, with its legendary
rose gardens, warm climate, good food,
and the kindness showered on them
from the merchants’ children.
Only those in exile, few and far between,
who also longed for their Hindustan,
plus poets whom elephants
confided to, could understand
how these foreigners
really felt. This brings me
to my husband, who for the last seven years
has been spending every other Friday night
with his friend Vit at the sauna, chatting in Czech,
leaving me at home, alone.
These are the times, my elephant
really gets going,
longing for her Hindustan
where she could pal around, speaking Farsi,
and it becomes extremely difficult
to stop her, but then,
at the very last moment
she comes back, thinking
of the Czech elephant,
of his late night arrival—
of the same longing—if not for him,
whose first language is not akin
to hers, she would have left Canada
a long time ago. After all, there is
a third language, our elephants’ “English”—
“La langue de même cœur”—and as Rumi says,

The language of hearts

surpasses the language of tongues.
At New West Cemetery

During the funeral of I. Razmara—
“The Indestructible Warrior” by his Persian name—
a friend, a refugee
and a poet, I became obsessed
with removing moss from the engraving

on another tomb that belonged
to Jane—a non-immigrant woman,
who was born fifty years before me
but on the same day
as I was.

I did not attend to Ibrahim’s grave,
or my mourning friends
with their overtly Iranian squints,
nods, lip-biting, and occasional coughing,
hinting at my behaviour,
disrespectful of such loss.

I needed to clear the moss,
needed to know the date
of Jane’s death, the indestructible
date etched insistently
onto the mouth of stone.
**Parvaana in three Movements**

(1)

The first time, I met her only a few hours after her husband’s cardiac arrest in the Royal Hospital of New West, which happened when she was still sitting in an ESL class—the same class he’d abandoned because of new comers’ cultural shock turned into depression.

She was surrounded by people like me who knew only him, gathered at her in-law’s flat to share our shock from the sudden news. We all talked, cried, and read his poetry, flinging our arms in a tragic Persian way.

Only her, this new face to us, new as he was in Vancouver, arrived after three years of waiting in Turkey as a UN refugee, was sitting silent, with the palms of her hands pushed against each other and fluttering from time to time, the same way as the wings of a living butterfly does, arrested between some invisible fingers, holding her and not letting leave us there with her in-laws.

(2)

On the day of her moving to a new room I found her to be moving again among chaotic furniture and communicating to us about which piece goes to the storage in another friend’s house,
which to the garbage bin behind the building, and which with her.

She dusted the mirror, removed his picture tagged to the frame, and sighed, *garbage*; she removed a tag with his name on it from a traveling bag she had loaded with his clothes and sighed, *storage*; she removed his books carried in suitcases through several countries to settle in those desperate shelves, fit them back into his luggage again and sighed, *with me*.

I was not concerned about those objects or the deceased, but about her, moving in a way that reminded me of a confused butterfly, going from flower to flower but not resting on any.

(3)

Months passed and she could neither get past him nor past the English test for nurses with a foreign degree who wanted to validate their licenses in Canada, nor past her illegal job as a dishwasher, nor past filling citizenship forms, nor past everyday life without the man she promised many times to divorce once they fully settled in this new country.

The times I dropped by for a visit, her roommate shook her head and led me in her little room to find my way among the messy floor among a crowd of clothes, papers, and cigarette buts to her, sitting by the wall,
as if abandoned, and a letter waiting
to be mailed to the Canada Revenue Agency,
including his death certificate, by her hand;
her gaze still stuck to the edge
of the open envelope as if it were
a caught butterfly.
Where Are You From?

It hurts so much, no matter that
a million times before I have been asked
this same question in my own country Canada—
this question: Where are you from?

Is it because my face reminds
the questioners of women, veiled,
on the front page of newspapers, though I am
in my shorts and tank top?

Or is it because my face reminds
them of the ever-increasing price
of gas, even though I do not drive?

Or is it because my face reminds
them of the sad faces of Canadian soldiers’ wives
whose husbands are sent back home from the Middle East
in coffins, even though I look cheerful?

Or is it the fear,
not of my face—but of my motherland
which, perhaps, to them,
looks like a blood stain
on the world map, or a scorch on skin—

skin I’ve tried so hard to shed
not to be asked
this same question, again.
Community

I never knew we were one
before the day after the murder
when we were addressed
as such by the police.

To me, we were a bunch
of detached individuals—
individuals who happened to ride
the same elevator,

hear the same noise
from the same nightclub
across the street, park our cars
under the same ground.

Then it came: a note from the police
posted on the elevator, calling on us
to report what we knew
about a young man

shot last night
close to the lamppost
where a bunch of flowers
left there before we woke up

to go for our morning walk,
and, not knowing a thing,
stepped out
onto our street.
III: Ironics

Prelude: Lost in My Name

Not a rainy or stormy day. Neither is there full sunshine. This is an ordinary day, with no distinguishing mark. There is absolutely nothing about this day that would make you remember it later. But I wake up remembering everything, every futile piece of information and every unnecessary name I knew at some point and time in my life history. I mean I wake up fully conscious to the full knowledge of the world, except that I do not remember my own name—the thing that binds my consciousness with everything I know and everyone who knows me. So everything and everyone fall apart. It takes me some time to recognize this. But once I identify my situation, I feel the nausea, the vertigo I woke up with—so I have to lie down again.

A few days before this incident, I woke up in the middle of the night, also an ordinary night—without a distinguishing mark, damn it—and I did not remember anything. I guess this was because my senses no longer had a common language to talk among each other, the language that consisted in one and only one word—my name. But at that moment I did not know this; I only came upon this knowledge this morning when I rose and my name escaped me. That night, too, I remember, I felt the vertigo and lay down to this sleepless nauseated state of non-remembering.

Perhaps my name remains somewhere on a clean piece of animal skin buried deep beneath the earth, which seems so empty, so vast, and so littered it gives me perpetual vertigo. Or perhaps it is written on a grain of sand, one among many, moving across some vast and empty desert. Perhaps it is frozen into the heart of this small iceberg melting in my “drink of the day” as I sit at this freezing bar, perspiring, and furiously stirring the ice cube around, and, in this vertiginous state, trying to remember my name.

And I don’t. No matter how much I stir my drink with this drinking straw—which looks like a hollowed umbilical cord and continuously clicks in the same rhythm my temples pound. This click-click aggravates my nausea and echoes in my head as the ice hits the glass bouncing around its foamy mouth.

And what’s the purpose of stirring? I am all wasted—I’ve stirred everything I could think of—for long and for nothing. Stop stirring now, and forever, and forget about your name, I command myself.
But I don’t stop. And I think through my perpetual vertigo that perhaps if only I could get my hands to my mind, literally, and stir it, something would come up. I need to rummage through my mind, through this nausea. No, rummaging doesn’t help. What I need to do is to excavate my mind. That’s the thing: to dig deep under my mindful vertigo—my bastard mindfulness. But where can I find my buried mindfulness? Under the earth of my mind? Which is perhaps buried under another earth? So vast, empty, and littered that nothing could be found in it—even something as familiar as my name.

Perhaps I should search inside my navel for my name. Search inside this entangled poor lost thing that keeps me together. No, it doesn’t—the virtual bastard. That’s the reason I am so dispersed, so drowning like grain of sand in the drops of water in this straw in this glass filled with ice cubes for the drink of the day, which I am sucking. Perhaps I could be grafted again to my navel, to its puckered mouth. But the length of the umbilical cord has long lost its grasp. Someone has severed the cord and thrown it out in the dirt as if it was something superfluous—something I can survive without. And I can’t—without my name.

That is why I dig into phonebooks—confused, asking which one my name is: Jennifer, Fatima, Mina, Denis, Ahamd, and—and—and. No name stirs a sense in me. I search the Internet, which somehow reminds me of my navel, because when you wake up one ordinary day with a perpetual vertigo you suddenly find yourself absorbed in digging crap from a little hole with its many tunnels where so much dirt has gathered that it is enough for you to spend all your life, all your ordinary days of nausea, digging—digging.

But none of the names I dig out stirs a sense in me. Only my name does, which has dropped off by itself, just like the dried umbilical cord, which drops off a few days after birth, leaving the navel—a little entanglement with no distinguishing mark except for its tedious folds where dirt gathers.

I wake, looking down at my navel and the dirt that has gathered in its folds for what could be centuries, which I have forgotten about. But today—since it is an ordinary day and since I have a virtual vertigo—as soon as I get up I get absorbed in digging my nail into my navel and pulling out the dirt, I continue digging using a small pin, and later a toothpick, as I continuously interrogate myself about my identity. Who was it? I ask. That girl who went on hunger strike for three days to resist revealing the name of their neighbor’s teenage boy who dropped love letter into their backyard? The woman who changed her last name to her maiden name when she
divorced her husband? The other woman who changed her name when she migrated to this
country? Or this woman who is digging deep into her navel. I want to know her name. I need to
know who the doer behind the deed is.

But I don’t know—because perhaps it is such an ordinary day that the doer continues
refusing to tell her name to me. And as long as she continues, my story, my web of deeds, cannot
be grafted to me as their doer. Nevertheless, I, too, continue questioning her until my mouth, as
frothy as this drink of the day, is shaped up, like my navel—

until the story goes on and I furiously stir my nausea until the doer is lost in the doing of
her deeds. Until I am buried under this alien ground—until I am drawn in the vortex of this
virtual day—in the folds of my navel—until—
Smoothened

My day job has recently become
to smoothen up nightmares
in my mind—dream in which
I am constantly ironing:

my father’s wrinkled corpse
my mother’s face full of erratic lines
my daughter’s crinkled heart

the jagged Wall Street graphs
the folded bodies of war
the crumbled skin of the earth

and the lives of people
like me, who wake up everyday
with a scorching fear as though

the Immigration Minister who has promised
to straighten up their futures
has left the iron on
and resigned.
Your blue towel, just a piece of it, roughly scissored a few days ago, hangs from the tap over the sink in my kitchen.

I washed it a few times with my own dirty clothes after you left. Your smell didn’t go away. It was an old towel you had when you were a prisoner of war in Iraq, a UN refugee in Turkey, an immigrant in Canada, then a Canadian citizen in my home. First it hung on the bar in the bathroom and I dried myself with it, my own towel untouched for months. Then it lived in the laundry basket, always coming back home after a new wash, though the fluff was thinning away, like your image in my mind.

I offered it all in one piece to this Caucasian man who stayed over last night at my home for the first time. You can use this towel, I yelled and slipped it in through the bathroom door.

If you don’t mind, he yelled back, I brought my own towel and will leave it here for future use.

So I moved your blue towel to the kitchen and cut a piece, a square of ragged lines, to rub off the dirt from the floor.
where this new man now stands.
I will keep it only until
it is worn and coarse, I promised myself,
with the pungent smell of dirt—
only until it reminds me of a history
that cannot happen twice
in my new home.
Odorless Ode

(I)

I could never write poetry
for my lovers or for flowers.

To do that seemed not like me,
but like some old dead
English poet with a rosy perception
of his unlived life.

But today, I am going to give away
my verse for these blushing roses,
which are just imitations,
these fragrant-less beauties
that I bought from a pale
man with a wrinkled mouth,
skinnier than the stalks
of my flowers wearing dead
leaves to protect them
from a mouthful of my thorny praise.

(II)

I gave the man in tatters two dollars
and fifty cents and he thanked me
through his browning teeth
for my imitation of courtesy.

His roses are each different
in their replication:
some die buds,
with white petals
and browning rims;
but some open up
petal by petal, rosy
in their “fool” bloom.

These ones I sniff
close, the dull smell
of my anxiety
on the edge of their
distressed unfolding.
Exilic Insomnia

Were your eyes shut,
you’d be an agent
in your other life,
amidst the Koran parties and flat roofs,
secret dates and Revolutionary Guards,
plane trees and birds in a cage that pick up for you
a Hafiz’s fortune telling poem,
summer heat and lingerie for sale
behind curtains at the back of posh boutiques.

But now, steeped
in this outlandish wakefulness, you are
only a bystander
while before your wide open eyes
a flock of sheep,
foreign and terrified,
is crowding, yet none
dares jump.
Crossing

Will you still be in exile
if, to you, these others will become
as familiar as this little white pedestrian,
who, when the lights go green,
comes alive and signals
that it’s safe to cross the street?

Will you still be in exile
if, to the whites, you will become
as familiar as a squirrel that leaps
among their balconies,
or a sea gull that swoops close to their heads,
or a crow that slowly, in front of speeding cars,
hops across the street?
Alone

I don’t know why
since I have heard about that fast
execution of Saddam,
I pity him so much,
I have never felt so bad
for any other murderer.

The young boys from my family
twisted the lizards’ heads off for fun,
the way our teachers
did with our ears in school
in order to teach us
to remember their lessons.

My virgin eighty-year-old aunt
always spoke of how
she metaphorically had buried her heart
alive under a slab of stone.

I myself killed a cockroach at nine;
I was a serial killer by the time
I had my first menstruation.

I don’t know which friend of mine
secretly guillotined all my dolls,
who were kept so tidy and untouched,
or which of our neighbors,
in order to kill her husband’s overwhelming desires
for young girls, as a psychic had suggested,
watered her orchid everyday

with a blend of her under-age daughter’s urine
and the wings from three dead flies,
turned into powder, mixed
with honey from Khansar.

The coffee-net shops in Iran swarm
with school boys who practice for hours
shelling foreign soldiers
on the internet after school.

I know an immigrant man
who drowns mice
in his bath and a little girl
who liked to scissor her own dolls’ hair
and cut their breasts off,
but I still don’t take pity on the girl

who is a woman now
and is very lonely
without her dolls,
just like the man,

who, coming back with a new mousetrap
every night, shakes with excitement
when he hears the squeaking from his kitchen.
I still can’t take pity on any of us

only on Saadam,
and I do not know why.
Perhaps because he was

put to death so fast
that he did not even have a chance
to look into those eyes
pulsing life inside the two round openings
in black masks,
while the hands
fixed the rope

around his throat.
Citizenship

I saw my family physician two years after I arrived in Vancouver. He said I was fine, had strong muscles, good bones, heart pumping along. The pain doesn’t leave a trace in X-rays and blood tests.

A few years later, at the acupuncturist I failed again, couldn’t pin-point any specific spot. It hurts all over and nowhere, I said. All his needles were beside the point.

The psychiatrist was defeated too, even though he said he might be able to do something about this unrest that had illegally crossed the borders, entered my body and was hiding some place nobody knew.

After a few sessions, he let me down, too. I am afraid, he said, your soul has given this pain asylum and even worse it has recently become a permanent resident.

This was when I finally became a citizen.
Emerging Poetic Inquiry

And suddenly, in the midst of my act as a researcher in the drama of academic inquiry, this intuition that I am an Iranian immigrant in Canada opens up the potentiality of transformation to my act of inquiry. A bud of inquiry blossoms and calls another to open up, and another one blossoms and calls a third to bloom. I am in a crossroad again—in a flowerbed of becoming, which emerges from an assemblage of petals and thorns of my diasporic being—in the crossroad of becoming a poetic inquirer.
Variation II-I: Response to Biographics
I disown my name, my language—and yours, too, says an Immigrant.

A Persian proverb describes how once the raven tried to mimic the partridge’s graceful way of walking, it also lost its own way of walking. My Persian friends remind me of this proverb every time they learn that I am writing poetry and fiction in English. The proverb expresses their belief that we Iranian immigrants could never authentically express ourselves in a foreign language. Our writing in English will be a false representation of our feelings and ways of being. It would be a mimicry that does not do us any good. The result of our attempt to write in the language of the masters is the loss of both tongues, theirs and ours.

In spite of the proverb, I continued writing in this false imitation of English—the language that embodies a movement of translation. I knew that the language I found myself writing in is neither Farsi nor English, but an in-between of languages. So my Iranian advisers were right: I have lost both languages. But instead actually I was writing in a new language which did not fit the territories of English or Farsi. The way this language works is that it performs a deterritorialization of cogito or “self-knowledge,” for “it can never install itself in an inalterable cogito” (de Certeau, 1975, p. 327). This language, therefore, always “remains a stranger to itself and forever deprived of an ontological ground, and therefore it is always the debtor of a death, indebted with respect to the disappearance of a genealogical and territorial ‘substance,’ linked to a name that cannot be owned.” This language expresses what Bhabha (1994) calls the “unhomely” condition of immigrants in physical and lingual territories of the host societies where they settle.

The narrator of the prelude to the second section of my poetry manuscript lives under the same condition. She disowns the name given to her by her parents and she disowns the name given to her by the society she has immigrated to. By disowning these two names, she comes to a
place of namelessness—a place in between the institutions of names—where her present and her past social existence evaporate into the air. This is the place where she let the forces in her body, in her womb, come alive and form her autograph, and hence, her new presence in the world. This presence, which resembles the new language I found myself writing in, hints at her unhomely condition in the world; however, this new presence cannot be simply envisaged as a break or a bonding with her past or the future in the society to which she has arrived. Unlike her former presence facilitated by her earlier names, this new presence is no longer synchronic. Her new name is no longer a noun; it is the performance of her autograph, as a result of which she comes to presence.

The narrator describes this new presence as a name that is illegible both to its writer and to her reader. This presence is a writing which comes to be revealed for its lingual discontinuities and impurities, and its cultural and historical minorities. It is an autography that undermines the validity and authority of autobiographies linked to it through the narrator’s given names. Through the performance of this new autography, a whole new history comes to presence in a future—a history which is not a part of the continuum of the past and present of the narrator, who happens to be an immigrant. This is because the autography introduces a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation to the narrator’s autobiography. As a result, her autobiographical writing does not merely recall the past as social cause or aesthetic precedent; it renews the past, refiguring it as a contingent ‘in-between’ space, that innovates and interrupts the performance of the present. The ‘past-present’ becomes part of the necessity, not the nostalgia, of living. (Bhabha, 1994, p. 7)

The new autography creates a new autobiography of its own, as a dislocated construction. Therefore, the narrator’s autobiography becomes a narrative of intervention in the here and now of its time—in the here and now of the arrangements set by Iranian and Canadian cultures and
languages. The autobiography represents a revisionary time, a return to the present to reinscribe both cultures and languages in an imaginary future. At the same time, the autography is the performance of reinscribing signs of the narrator’s past and present languages, historical and cultural memory, and sites of political agency.

Like the narrator’s new autography, my writing in English, as an example of immigrants’ writing, also captures something of the estranging sense of the relocation of the home and the world—the unhomeliness that “is the condition of extra-territorial and cross-cultural initiations” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 9). Two kinds of relocation occur in my writing: a relocating of English and Persian languages and a relocating of my autobiography, that brings about a relocation of my history of immigration. The two relocations hint at the unhomeliness of the Iranian/Canadian diaspora. To be unhomed, as Bhabha rightly puts it, “is not to be homeless.” Instead, the term describes the diasporic condition of all those with a home which cannot be placed in any already defined and established territories marked by the dominant forces of multiculturalism. Unhomeliness defines a presencing of cultures and tongues which is beyond multicultural accommodation. It embodies the full presence of diaspora.

The poems that follow the prelude in the second section of the manuscript all hint at this unhomeliness. For example in the poem “Yellow,” the color yellow loses its home in the English language and becomes unhomely. As the speaker cannot find “yellowness” in things which are yellow, such as the sun, apricots, blonde hair, autumn, or the skin of bananas from overseas, she cannot find a place for “yellow” in the language she is speaking (English). As a result, she cannot find herself a place in English language to inhabit. She carves this place out of the Farsi word “Zard” in which she dwells. “Zard” here cannot simply be translated to “yellow.” “Zard” is an unhomely place which cannot be accommodated in the language that contains “yellow.” Yet
“Zard” cannot be entirely situated in Farsi language either. “Zard” is not “zard” enough in the context of the immigrant speaker’s in-between world.

The unhomely language of “Yellow” and other poems in the second section affects the territoriality of English language and culture. English, like any other language, defines a linguistic and epistemic territoriality, a limited space in which immigrants to Canada have to reside. In order to be fully accommodated in the host society and language, immigrants are supposed to shed all their cultural, epistemic, and linguistic ways of being upon their arrival to Canadian society. But this is an impossibility, as the poem “Where Are you From?” shows. Immigrants bring their own cultural, epistemic, and lingual ways of habituation to the place they inhabit in the host society and to its culture, knowledge, and language territories. These earlier ways, however, are become contagious by the language and culture they have entered and in which they now reside. The effect is often so enormous that the immigrants and their new ways of being can no longer be accommodated in the culture and language of their origin. The word “Zard” in the poem “Yellow” exhibits such affect. So does the Farsi line, a line from Rumi’s poetry, in the poem “Few and Far Between.” Not only is it unhomely in the English language, bracketed by its translation in English, it also becomes unhomely in Farsi. Not all Farsi words used in the poem lose both their homes, however. “Imam” and “Hassan” are names which have already found a place in the English language. Unlike them, “Zard” is a nomad in both English and Farsi, showing how immigrants experiencing a diasporic life and how they feel they belong neither to their country of origin nor to the host country while at the same time feeling they belong to both places.

“Zard” in my poem sets up a relation of proximity between the languages of Farsi and English—the language spoken in the country the speaker of the poem used to live in and the
language spoken in the country to which she immigrated. However, “Zard” cannot be situated in either of these languages. The same relation of proximity hinting at the diasporic space in which immigrants live, a space which is non-situatable, can be seen in other poems which follow. For example, in the poem “Isolation,” the whole poem is the performance of the idea of proximity—the proximity of the speaker and her racing thoughts and churning guts, of happiness and a life that is short, nasty, and brutal, of the body and its senses, of sound and fury, of safety and suffering, of experiencing and what is experienced. Immigrants live in a space in between these two—in a space formed by their dilemma of belonging/non-belonging. In the same way, the Rumi’s line of poetry sits in between its translation in English, divided into two lines in the poem “Few and Far Between.”

This dilemma creates the poem “Low rise” in which the speaker inhabits an in-between space of belonging/non-belonging. She demonstrates her feelings of uprootedness and of being hung up in the air by drawing a relation of proximity between the “welcome house” and the glassed skyscrapers across the street from her apartment building. In the poem “At New West Cemetery,” the speaker also draws a relation of proximity between Razmara’s grave and the other tombstone belonging to a non-immigrant woman named Jane. Moreover, she draws a relation of proximity between the pronoun “I” referring to herself and “I” as the first letter of “Ibrahim,” Razmara’s first name. Razmara’s being dead and no longer belonging to this world, hints at the speaker’s feeling of non-belonging to the society she immigrated to. However, her insistence to find out the date of Jane’s birth and see if it is the same as her own shows that she feels she belongs to the host society. The poem “In the image of my own” is another example demonstrating the speaker’s feeling of non-belonging to her motherland she left behind to immigrate to another country. She draws a relation of proximity between a woman and her
daughter at the pool. The daughter reminds the speaker of her own daughter she had left behind. The poem tells us that she has a double feeling: she feels both close to and far from her daughter.

These relations of proximity created by the poems hint at the unhomely situation of the immigrant speaker. Her uprootedness, her unhomeliness, her condition of being that seems beyond official multicultural accommodation are captured in the poem “Low rise” as she stands alone on the edge of her balcony with a towel wrapped around her fragile body. Similarly, the speakers of the poems “Small Sighs” and “Where Are You From?” are in the same uncertain place. These speakers are not homeless but desire to have a home in the society they have entered. They desire to be like non-immigrants but at the same time they know that assimilation is impossible. Imitating non-immigrants also does not quite work to remove the uncanny feeling given to them by the place they occupy because the cultural, epistemic, and lingual axes of their origin and the host society do not meet, and, as a result, they live in a place of discontinuity between the two worlds. This uncanniness is performed in the poem “Community” and is captured in what binds the people in the speaker’s apartment building to a community: their lack of knowledge about what happens in their neighborhood and in their street. This uncanniness recalls the uncanniness expressed in the prelude through the central image of the narrator’s autography, which is illegible to the speaker and to the readers.
Variation II-II: Response to Narratives
Immigration has no name. Nor do I have one, says an immigrant.

The prelude to the first part of my poetry manuscript entitled “Somebody is Calling My Name” performs the act of naming as the event of the birth of the speaker who tells us immediately that she does not know the meaning of her name. But she knows that that name is what she is—a constant becoming triggered by a vocation. Yet as a result of this becoming, the speaker does not become a being occupying a certain place, time, and value grid in the manifold of history. This is because the speaker’s being is never authorized by the place where the naming brings her to be. As soon as she comes to be, she knows that she has not yet earned the right to be in that particular place in history. And in this very moment when she knows her being is unjustified, somebody calls her to a new becoming. Consequently, she is again suspended in the present of time between different meanings and names, waiting to be born and to occupy a place in the world.

The poems that follow this prelude are all echoes of this suspended moment of the becoming that can never be owned by the nameless speaker who, we find, is an immigrant. As the speaker constantly violates her own proprietary authorship of her name, she pulls away the place of her being or the ground of her existence from under her feet. As a result, the process of naming becomes a battle site for the process of her becoming. The place she occupies in the here and now of the naming is not a place of being. It is a liminal space of becoming. The speaker’s entrance into this space is equivalent to her entrance into a relation of oneness with a community of names through which she comes to life anew. She becomes one with the chorus of voices which call her name.

The central images of the poems that follow the prelude resonate with the final image in the prelude in which the speaker, whose name is yet to be born, attached to the umbilical cord of
being, is “suspended between warmth and cold, question and answer, blood and color, freedom and slavery, and spins restlessly, waiting her new birth.” In “Lovers’ Applications,” the speaker, an immigrant, who desires to be united with her lover and the place where she had a proper name, sees that “the person who knits this world into a village has dropped the ball and it is rolling away from us.” The speaker who “is caught on the yarn of it” realizes that there is no place for her to be in the present, where she can have a certain name and a certain history. In another poem entitled “Until You Wave, There, my Flag,” the speaker is caught in the same impossibility of being positioned in history, in the here and now of being. As it is impossible for Mount Gross and Mount Zagros (in Iran) to meet, it is impossible for the speaker and her lover to climb a mountain together during the time when the poem is taking place. Yet the speaker, like the narrator of the prelude, is still waiting for this impossibility to happen. The whole poem is nothing but a performance of this impossibility.

Similarly, the speaker of the poem “Cover” is summoning an impossibility, namely the appearance of the missing prostitute who used to sleep on cardboard behind the back door of the Salvation Army. The “snow” in the poem, nevertheless, opens up a liminal space of possibility into this impossible place. During the lyrical performance of the poem, a missing bird that lived on a leafless maple tree returns. This event echoes with the possibility of reappearance of the prostitute. Like in the poem “Cover,” other poems in the first part of the manuscript also exhibit the characteristics of poetic inquiry which is “liminality, ineffability, metaphorical thinking, embodied understanding, personal evocation, domestic and local understanding, and an embrace of the eros of language” (Neilsen, 2008, p. 94). Some of the poems such as “Until You Wave, There, My Flag,” “Runners,” “Airplanes, Alone and Together, and I,” and “Recognition” particularly inquire into the lives of immigrants in Canada and the experience of immigration,
although they do not represent facts or information on immigrants’ lives and they do not embrace the hypostatic—“finding truths, laws, principles that we can count on that add up, perhaps, to a wholeness or summary of what [immigration] is” (Neilsen, 2008, p. 100). The poems do not provide any new information about the lives of immigrants one cannot possibly know. There is only a sensuous world of personal, direct, and unmediated interactions of the speaker with her surroundings. The poems are her responses to these ineffable particular interactions which address her in their particularity and ineffability. Her lyrical inquiry is “performing together” with the ineffable—with snow that is filling the nest of a missing bird, with the half-raised hands of Robert Dziekanski, with the electric current passing through his body, with a snowball rolling down a hill, or other moments as such, which endure in mind and create a feeling of epiphany in the reader.

What is highlighted in these ineffable moments mentioned above is not what the speakers’ experiences mean. Rather, the focus is on the experiences, performed through the lyrical expression of her experiences—through her specific responses to them. These responses form intense and highly concentrated emotion-full images such as that of a rolling ball, a shrunken shirt, braided hair, knitting work, a snow ball, mountain climbing, a lost internet connection, drizzling rain, airplanes flying in formation, a flag hoisted on the Tochal, a bin collector dashing down the street, a woman exercising on a Stairmaster, a restless mind, the muteness on accented lips, and the quivering legs on the white floor.
Variation II-III: Response to Ironics
It is not my name which is lost in me; rather it is me, who is lost in my name,

Says an immigrant.

Like the first and second sections of the manuscript, the third section also expresses the uncanniness associated with the unhomely condition of immigrants. The movement of expression is formed through the accumulation of lines of intensities in the poems. The lines of intensities create a relation of proximity to one another and accumulate throughout the section. The central image of the prelude “Lost in My Name” is that of vertigo that resembles a vortex in which the narrator is drowning. The vortex creates a circular motion carrying an abstract “line of escape” to the other poems that follow (Deleuze & Gauattri, 1987). The vortex creates the movement of expression in the poem and renders a “machinic assemblage” of expression from different element such as “navel” and “straw” in the prelude (Deleuze & Gauattri, 1986). As Deleuze (1977) explains “machine, machinism, machinic” in the following way:

[I]t is neither mechanical nor organic. The mechanical is a system of gradual connections between dependent terms. The machine, on the other hand, is a clustered ‘proximity’ between independent terms . . . A machinic assemblage is defined by the displacement of a center of gravity onto an abstract line. (pp. 125-126)

The prelude is a clustered proximity between independent images of vortex. The center of gravity, which is the narrator’s name, is displaced as a result of poetic expression and is lost in the vortex of namelessness. The ironic narrator, as she says in the end, is drawn into this vortex.

Most sentences of the prelude are blocks in a series or assemblage. The blocks are placed contiguous to one another. Hence, the relationship between sentences is that of proximity. In the movement from one block to the next, a vortex forms and pulls the narrator deeper and deeper into its swirl. The prelude starts with a short sentence: “Not a rainy or stormy day” which is a block. The next sentence becomes slightly longer than the first one: “Neither is there a full sunshine.” As the writing continues, each block of the writing becomes longer and more
complicated. The number of punctuations in each block also increases in the course of this movement. The movement eventually sends the writing into a panic and unfolds it at a vertiginous pace.

The same movement can be seen in the relationship between the paragraphs. The first paragraph is made of several sentences, or in other words, of several blocks. This is the entrance to the vortex and has a large surface. The last paragraph, in contrast, is made of only one sentence, which is very long. This paragraph is a block with six parts, six clauses starting with the word “until” and connected together with an em dash “—”. This block is the bottom of a vortex with a narrow and tense surface. The narrator who is pulled into the vortex at the entrance is completely drowned at the bottom in the swirl of the word “until.”

The last paragraph or block is itself connected to the previous block in the previous paragraph with an em dash. The em dash here looks like the umbilical cord from which the narrator was one day severed—the day she was born and given a name. The whole prelude is about the narrator searching for her name or trying to remember it. She wakes up one ordinary day, not remembering her given name and feels vertigo. This is the vertigo that turns in to a vortex in which she is drowning in the end. This last moment when she is drowning is also the moment when she is completely lost in the name she cannot find. The moment of namelessness is the recurrence of the time when she was not yet born. It is the time of pre-consciousness and pre-intentionality, when she was still contentedly connected to an umbilical cord. In other words, the moment of complete loss of the narrator’s given name is the moment when she is once more connected to the umbilical cord of being.

This complete loss of name is the moment of pure singularity—the moment distinguished from ordinary days by a mark, which is an em dash here. This materially intense moment of
expression occurs when the narrator completely submits to her desire to be connected to herself, pre-birth. This desire performs itself through the proliferation of images such as the navel with its many folds, the turnings of the straw in the “drink of the day,” the movement of grains of sand in the desert, the foam forming in the narrator’s glass, a vast and littered earth, and the frothy mouth of the narrator, her umbilical cord thrown into a bin. Each of these images or elements presents a line of intensity in the writing. So do the names of things and people: Jennifer, Fatima, Mina, Denis, Ahmad. The names and lines of intensity accumulate into a vortex of namelessness that threatens to drown the narrator’s intentional consciousness, because the lines of intensity do not represent any name. Neither do they evoke an ordinary association of ideas or accumulate into a certain structure. For example, the narrator’s navel and her “drink of the day” do not connect in any ordinary or meaningful manner. They show an intertwining of the most heterogeneous orders of signs and names.

As the writing proceeds, the prelude becomes an accumulation of intensities. Words such as “digging,” “stirring,” “the straw,” “umbilical cord,” “sand,” “virtual,” “earth,” and “deed” accumulate through a relation of proximity and from an abstract line of expression, representing the narrator’s biography. As these lines gather together more and more, the line of contact or contiguity connecting them together becomes more active and makes a continuous “line of escape” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986, 1987). This line of escape renders the text into a virtual vertigo. Yet another major accumulation happens in the prelude, which is the accumulation of the words “name” and “and.” “Name” and “and” are the immanent presence of the narrator’s desire to be connected to the cord of being. As they accumulate, the narrator gets deeper and deeper into the vortex that is drowning her until she becomes one with her desire.
The vertigo is the expression of unsettledness of the narrator who is an immigrant. It is the presence of her unhomely condition. By losing her name, she has lost the language of her intentional consciousness—the language that works by giving things a name. As a result of the failure of intentionality, the narrator as a doer can no longer be connected to her deeds. The failure of intentional consciousness is the failure of what binds the narrator with meaning and subjectification. Without a name, she is no more the subject of any statement. That is why the prelude cannot be read as a statement in language. Instead, it is an assemblage made of lines of intensities which are presented as the navel, the foam in the motion of stirring, the swirling sands of desert. This assemblage cannot be reduced to a statement about the narrator.

The loss of the name and the loss of the nominal language are signs of a much greater loss. They show that the narrator can no longer be accommodated in the culture she once belonged to nor in the culture she immigrated to. Losing one’s place in a culture is equal to losing one’s place in the order of signs. In this situation, the narrator cannot be named as such and such and cannot be recognized as belonging to such and such group. Therefore, she cannot be placed in the institution of multiculturalism either. This institution is an institution of recognition which works by naming, categorizing, and grouping immigrants together in certain groups. Moreover, the narrator does not feel connected to the members of her cultural group, who are dispersed in diaspora. Diaspora here resembles the vortex in which the narrator is drowning. Finally, as the narrator is drowned in the vortex of namelessness, the whole institution of recognition collapses.

The prelude starts with the narrator waking up and feeling vertigo. It proceeds with vertigo getting worse and worse until the narrator is completely drowned. The whole prelude is the expression of a single event of drowning, and a single moment of being drowned. The poems
which follow the prelude are also the expression or performance of a single event. In the poem “Smoothened,” the speaker is constantly ironing her nightmares. In her nightmares, she is constantly ironing different things such as her father’s wrinkled corpse, her daughter’s crinkled heart, and her own crumbling life. Each of these things presents a line of intensity. As the poems unfold, these lines come together, accumulate, and make an intense space of expression so that in the end the whole poem becomes the expression of a singular act (ironing) and of a singular event (a nightmare).

In the poem “Odorless Ode,” the singular act is the narrator writing an ode for odourless roses and the singular event is the opening of roses to a “fool bloom.” The intensities accumulate as a result of replication of images and words throughout the poems. Each replication is an echo in the polyphony of forces joining to form the singular event of “blooming.” This event is the final expression of the narrator’s feeling of unsettlement: it is a “fool” bloom and the narrator can smell her anxiety on the edge of roses.

The last poem, “Citizenship,” is also the expression of the speaker’s unsettled and unsettling situation, which cannot be signified in the form of a particular disease. In search of a cure, she goes to different specialists: to a medical doctor, to an acupuncturist, and to a psychiatrist, none of whom can fit the speaker’s feeling of unrest that plagues her into the category of a certain disease. Throughout the poem, the speaker moves from one specialist to the other. Each stanza is dedicated to the encounter of the speaker with one of these doctors. The stanzas are placed next to one another and create a relation of proximity. During all encounters, the disease escapes signification. A line of expression binding the stanzas together forms as each specialist fails to identify the sickness. Throughout the poem, this line becomes an active and continuous line of escape, pushing the speaker in the direction of outsidedness toward feeling
more and more anxious and restless. This unrest exceeds the speaker’s psychological interiority and becomes a space of residency. It becomes a line of escape that wipes out all the tracks of an old topography of mind and thought.
Movement III: Poetic Inquiry and Responsiveness
Prelude III
Let us think of research as a play. As a poet, I know that poets are much too free to accept being tied down to the stage. In a theatrical production, where the stage is not only the play’s center of gravity but also its organizing principle, two groups are bound to the stage. The first are actors and the second is the audience, which is placed outside the stage although their awareness is mostly pinned to it. In a play of research, then, researchers are the actors enacting some narrative of inquiry and the research community is the audience. Poets do not wish to commit to either of these groups.

**Actors and the Poet as the Actor-Specter**

Yes, poets, like everybody else, have to act. To act is inescapable for a living being. Therefore, living is acting and acting necessarily involves inquiry. Nonetheless, poets are actors, and thus inquirers, of a different kind than actors placed on the stage of inquiry. They are performers of a different kind. Here I do not mean to set up a dichotomy between the actor and the chorus. All I am trying to emphasize is that, even though at times their performance might look like an actor’s acting (which in our case is inquiry), it is of a different kind—a sort of acting that is not meant to enact some narrative or a possible version of that narrative. The fundamental difference between the chorus performance of dancing and singing and the actors’ acting is that this performance cannot become a part of the narrative. This is a kind of performance that is not necessarily bound by any rule of inquiry, by any standard of validity, or by any criteria of legitimacy. This is a kind of performance not necessarily intended for any audience—for any research community as its spectators. Such a performance cannot be incorporated into the research narrative.

Poetry as acting is not known before, for it has no script, no narrative. It embodies an intuitive performance, a potentiality not known before the performance. That is why poetry often
leaves the poet herself awestricken as it emerges. It is as if poetry performs the poet rather than the opposite. Poetic performance is thus the act via which the poet submits herself to the emergent poem that may initially look foreign, or other, to the poet herself. It is the act via which the poet submits herself to her performance of the poem, which is independent of her active and conscious will. It is a giving of oneself to the act, rather than enacting a possible version of a script.

An actor’s performance does not always affect and change the actor herself. This is because actors know the rules of acting to a great degree and are trained to act, and because they more or less know the script and its enactment possibilities. Therefore, they can guess the audience expectations and reactions. For all these reasons, actors know to a great degree how they are going to act before their acts. Even the unexpected is almost within the scope of the actor’s possibility, and thus within their scope of linguistic and discursive consciousness even though they might not have thought of it before. Poetic performance, however, is an unexpected and spontaneous response that echoes in the rhythm of her breath, a rhythm which echoes back and potentially affects the poet in a way that changes her completely so that she can no longer be the same person she was before the emergence of the poem. Again, I would like to indicate once more that my intention is not to establish a dichotomy between the actor and the chorus; rather, the emphasis is on the qualitative difference between the enactment of the narrative by the actors and the choral performance. The chorus presents a performance of a different kind than that of the actors.

Poetic utterance or act in this respect is an ethical impulsion or utterance coming from pre-linguistic and pre-discursive consciousness. It is a sort of impulse that makes a poet desire to abandon “being” in favor of “becoming.” Such desire cannot be rendered into a re-presentation
of some discourse. It is the unexpected pulsating presence of a spark emerging from the poet’s body as the utterance of a dance, its radiance revealing the poet’s soul and its intensity.

In the play of research, poets, as actors of a different kind than academic inquirers, do not wish to have rules, procedures and guidelines, specific schedules, tasks with deadlines, or, in other words, disciplinary rules to conduct research. In general, poets do not like to conform to the kinds of discipline necessary for prose writers. Poets are natural or existential inquirers, meaning that they live their life inquiringly or that their lives embody an assemblage of the moments of an incessant existential inquiry. They usually have their own unique rituals for living in this manner. As each poet’s rituals are very different from another’s, these rituals cannot be defined as "disciplines." Discipline is stifling for poets because it can rob them of the existential itch which motivates them to live their lives fully, passionately, and inquiringly—lives embodied as unceasing attentiveness towards existence. If poets are positioned on the disciplinary stage of research, like other academic inquirers, they can no longer live and perform as poets do: out of an unrest that triggers their inquiry. Therefore, poets do not want to be situated in the place, time, and value grid of the play. They do not want to be the protagonists of research narratives. Even though they, like actors, must unavoidably act (unavoidably inquire in the context of research), they avoid any form of positionality and situatedness. Just as they are actor-specters in the drama of being, they are researcher-specters in the play of inquiry. The fundamental qualitative difference between the act of researchers as actor-specters and the act of researchers as actors is that the actor-specters’ performance presents “through an explicit reflexive self-accounting, [their] presence is also implied and ‘felt’; and, the research text clearly bears [their] signature or fingerprint” (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 215, emphasis in original).
Spectators and the Poet as the Spectators-Specter

Yes, poets are not on the stage of research, yet, like the audience, they are inside the play. Poets are spectators of a different kind because they are much too free to accept a position in relation to the stage and among the audience. Poets do not want to be restricted to any rule or expectation which corresponds to the stage, such as the relative silence expected from the audience during the show.

On the other hand, poets need absolute freedom of movement and utterance; the partial freedom of the audience is not enough for them. They do not want to be tied down to specific seats or specific locations designed for them in the space of the play. Moreover, their movement and utterance should not necessarily be about how the narrative is enacted on the stage by actors. Poets want to engage with everything within the play including the stage, actors, spectators, and themselves. Because it is unrestricted and unexpected, this engagement is of a different kind than audience interference with the actors. The audience response to the stage, including the enactment of narrative, is within the discursive range of possibility of the play and is thus predictable. This kind of response cannot affect the stage as the organizing principle of the play. Poets, however, can potentially affect the play by the charge of their free movement and utterance, and turn it into a spectacle of different kind.

It is essential for the poets in the play of research to move freely and to give responses whenever and from wherever and however they see fit. Poets must also feel free to express themselves in ways foreign to the language of the stage. The research community and the researchers in the play of inquiry speak the same language. Poets need not talk in that language, with its specific grammar, genres, and styles. Poets have their own way of expression which usually has a different rhythm than that of the stage as the center of gravity of the play.
It is true that the research community’s responses to the enactment of inquiry on the stage by the researchers can bring about a different enactment of narrative within the genres of research. Yet this difference is within the range of possibilities of inquiry. A poet’s response, with its different expression and rhythm, which is other to the possible ways of expression in research languages and genres, can potentially add something to the play of inquiry that is outside the range of its possibilities. It can give the research a different charge or energy so that brings about a “becoming of inquiry” and thus turns the play of inquiry into a spectacle. A poet’s expressive engagement with a researcher’s performance can potentialize the play of research by making it more or less intense, more or less concentrated, or more or less performative in a way that could possibly turn the whole play into something else—perhaps to something that could no longer be properly called academic research, that could not be reduced to something with the predefined name of research. The audience does not have this potentiality to add to the play.

Through its reflective response to the enactment of inquiry by the researchers, the research community can only expand the possibilities of research narratives and genres. Poets, who are in a sense spectators of the play, do not literally want to be the audience. They are spectator-specters.

The Stage and its Periphery (Actors and Spectators) and the Poet as the Chorus

Yes, poets are like the chorus in a drama. Choruses are a form of spectators. Yet, as I indicated, they are spectators of a different kind. Choruses are not only viewers and addressees but also active addressors. As a poet, I sense that, if invited to the play of research, poets want to be the chorus. The chorus is a form of spectator-specter because, unlike real spectators, it is not a real presence in the play, having an identity (face) and a specific position (a particular place and status in the play in relation to the stage). The chorus comes to presence when it responds in song
and dance, and loses its presence in the play when it is not responding. When the chorus comes to present, it becomes a kind of actor. The chorus sings and dances which means the chorus responds which means the chorus acts. Yet since unlike actors, the chorus is not situated in the play and it does not have the identity of actors, the chorus is a form of actor-specter, as well as being the spectator-specter.

The chorus is an example or parable of an inquiring presence. Through its responses to the stage and its periphery as audience, including the responses to the enactment of narrative by the actors on the stage and the responses to the audience’s interference with the stage, it endures the weight of the inquiry that the play embodies. Through enduring, the chorus enters the life of the play and becomes a presence in it. Otherwise, the chorus is a non-presence, just as the audience and the actors can never be a non-presence in any moment of the play.

Moreover, unlike the presence of the actors and the audience, the presence of the chorus is not and cannot be situated in the play, and depends on the stage. The chorus has no particular identity and no particular position in the narrative and it moves freely in the space of the play. Since the chorus is similar to both actors and audience—the chorus acts and is spectator—it thus interferes with and responds to the stage. Yet, it has no particular identity: the chorus is a potential specter—actor-specter and spectator-specter. The chorus presence is not predictable because its emergence in the play does not follow any rule. The emergence of the chorus is beyond the narrative possibilities of the play, occurring through the special way the actors enact the narrative or through the special way the audience interferes with the stage.

The only certainty is that whenever the chorus comes to presence in the play, it affects the play with its movement of dance and song. This is also what poets do when they become present in the drama of their own lives: they affect the drama of their own lives. They only
become poets when they become a responsive presence. In these moments, poets escape and refuse any positionality as beings in the drama of Being. Poets need to be free, not situated, in their movements expressed via language so that they can respond with commitment to their own acts as actors and spectators.

The virtual presence of the chorus, in this sense, corresponds to the moments poets become poets in the drama of their own lives. This happens when they endure their drama of being via their responsiveness which emerges from their breath in the form of poetry. During the process of poetic creation, when poetry emerges, poets no longer exist as the actual beings or socio-cultural and historical people they are in their everyday lives, situated in history (space-time-value manifold) and constrained by criteria of social difference such as class, race, gender, dis/ability, and language, which Arendt (1958) rightly calls the “human condition.”

Free of every constraint, that is, existing in a locus of non-being, poets are no longer historical beings, because to become present as a chorus in the drama of their own lives, they have given up all the power (pouvoir) of being as actors and spectators. Before relinquishing this power, they cannot gain the power (puissant) necessary to endure the drama of being the way a chorus does in its expression-full responsiveness embodied as dance and song. As non-beings, but presences, poets are like specters in the play of Being. Being present as a specter is equivalent to being present as an other to one’s own historical life. During the times when poets live as historical beings, when they have not appeared as poets, they incessantly desire becoming an other in their own drama of Being. They persistently wish “not-to-be,” historically. To reiterate my earlier comparison, this desire feels like an existential itch under the skin. It embodies an inner sense of freedom, regarding one’s own historical being as restrictive and wants to escape the human condition.
Poetic sensibility leads to a constant inquiry—not an inquiry into the otherness but an inquiry into becoming the other. This sensibility, that is a way of living intensely, emerges as poetry only during the time when the existential inquirer becomes present as a poet, when she gives up everything that signifies her Being as a being, as an ego with a mask for a face, a consciousness with a history, and a language aimed at communicating this history in the form of discourse. In the enduring and laborious moments of non-being, when the soul becomes so intense by the puissant of an emergent becoming that it constantly sweats, the inquirer becomes an other to herself—becomes the poet who is then suddenly, even though uninvited, present. Poetic inquiry therefore is nothing more than desiring otherness, thus desiring a becoming of the self via the movement of utterance as endurance, that takes place via one’s very breath.

Through this becoming, the inquirer who is a non-being delivers her self as a poet. This is perhaps the moment of natality Arendt introduces in *The Human Condition* (1958). During the delivery, the inquirer moves from a space of non-being through the threshold of birth, which is a liminal space of becoming, and becomes a presence in life as a poet—as an other to her historical self which can respond to the historical self, situated and acting in the present moment. Poetry embodies the force or intensity (puissant) of the passage through the liminal space between the space of non-being and the space of presence, through the threshold between death and life. It embodies the unique rhythm of natality as passage. Duration is this threshold, this liminal space: it is the space of potentiality, different from the space of actuality or possibility. Potentiality is an impossibility of actuality—it is delivering one’s self as the other.

But what happens when the poet becomes present as an other to researchers and a research community, as a chorus, in a play of research? The short answer is that the poet responds. Responding is a calling which addresses the actors and spectators and obliges them to
take responsibility for their acts as they are taking place. In a play of research, poets as chorus call the researchers and research community to be responsive to their act of inquiry. Since this act is “an account of Being” as research, poets oblige researchers to respond to the act of re/presentation whose criteria, rules of conduct, and morals are set by the research community. The obligation is an ethical obligation: poets call on the researchers and the research community, as the spectators of research, to sign their names under the texts or re-presentation they call research.

The response or calling that the chorus performs is an expression of ethical responsiveness towards the act of inquiry presented by the researchers under the supervision of their research community. Furthermore, the ethical responsiveness is towards the discursive literacy embodied by the researchers and their research community. Remember that literacy originally meant signing one’s own name, and only later came to include aspects of reading and writing. Since then, taking responsibility for signing one’s own name, inherent in the act of signing, faded. Yet this form of response-ability (uttering one’s own name as a literate person) remains a precondition to any form of discursive literacy, including research which involves reading and writing. Responsiveness to literacy includes responsiveness towards the self, the other, and the language as the medium of discursive communication. It is equivalent to being responsible or response-able to the acts of writing and reading (e.g. analysis, evaluation, estimation, prediction, interpretation, etc.) as they create research.

Such responsibility is ethical but different from the moral responsibility the research community requests. In their feedback, responses to, or interference with the enactment of the research by researchers, the research community as spectator indicates that the enactment of inquiry should be done ethically. For a traditional research community, being ethical is
equivalent to being moral, which means that the researcher, brandishing her norms of research, follows the norms closely and remains within research paradigms sanctioned by tradition. In other words, a researcher is responsible to master a specific, legitimate research language and genre, choose a valid methodology, and follow ethical guidelines to produce research as knowledge. These enable a researcher to execute the act of inquiry effectively.

For a critical research community that is committed to transformative forms of literacy, being moral means that the researcher needs to engage critically with the research context, for this context is not politically neutral. Researchers should carefully examine and critique the cultural and social context in which their research takes place. Culture here refers to systems of knowledge-power that make researchers consent to certain rules of research, to interpret the subject of research or the inquired in certain ways, and to trust and reproduce certain research discourses. For a research community oriented towards deconstructive practices, critical examinations should uncover the dominant structures within the research context. The responsibility of the researcher is to deconstruct these structures, potentially revealing research possibilities which have been suppressed, silenced, and undermined by the dominant research culture.

Poststructuralist and postmodernist research communities call on researchers to uncover and deconstruct previously accepted ways of using language, genres, methodologies, and paradigms of research that allow them to identify themselves as legitimate researchers. Hence, writing and reading as forms of research literacy, from the moral view of a critical and deconstructive research community, should become a strategy of critique, displacement, and avoidance to prevent language from submitting to the dominant discourses. Research literacy can thus become transformative, exercising a dynamic ability to relate to the social and cultural
contexts of the act of inquiry, including reading and writing, and critically calling them to question. By transforming or deconstructing these contexts, the suppressed, censored, and ignored texts can possibly become present.

As we see, the moral calling embodied in the critical and deconstructionist research community focuses on the “what” and “how” of research, raising issues about the researcher’s relation to languages, genres, methodologies, paradigms, ethics guidelines, and narratives of research. In general, research communities of any kind including the traditionalists focus on the operations of research and the results, which is the research document. Poets as the chorus in the play of research, however, entreat researchers and the research community to take responsibility for the act of inquiry as it takes place. This question precedes the questions that involve the how and what of inquiry. Figuratively, poets call researchers and the research community to sign their names under the act of inquiry.

If language consists of symbols of representation or ways of “naming the world,” the act of naming is the act through which we connect to the world. But in order to name the world, one has to have a name herself. In order to gain the right to a name, one is obliged to be responsible to her own name. This obligation, that appears as a call from one to the other, first urges one to acknowledge her place in being before she can name the other. In other words, responsibility towards one’s own name is a way of gaining the right to be in the world and to the name one gives herself during the act of signing her name, which makes her eligible to give names to others. Only after having gained the right to her name can one speak, read, and write. Research is an institutional act of naming the other or the inquired. The official institutions behind research are often universities. They are responsible for disciplining and training researchers to exercise
the act of research effectively, properly, and morally. Nevertheless, they do not get concerned about researchers’ ethical response-ability to their names as researchers.

If poets become present in the play of research, they address researchers and research communities to sign their names under the act of inquiry as it takes place. This signing provides ethical justification of the researchers’ place in the play of research. Poets call on them to justify their names, or their place in the act of research, before they can utter anything in the name of inquiry. The affirmation of one’s right to inquiry which comes in the form of an obligation to be response-able towards one’s own name as researcher during the act of inquiry lies in the performativity of this signing. The obligation is not to the what and how of inquiry; not to the “what” and “how” of naming the inquired as well as naming oneself as a conscious and autonomous subject who through her active will and means of language communicates her inquiry. Therefore this obligation is not a moral obligation which could possibly be voiced by the research community, but an ethical one. The responsiveness towards this obligation, or response-ability towards the inquired, emerges in the performativity of signing one’s own name. This performance is not a representation of responsibility for what one has inquired into and how one named it. In other words, it is not a representation of responsibility for the content of research. Rather, via performativity of her act of signing one’s own name, the inquirer expresses her responsibility for the other who has addressed her. This responsibility is the expression of a form of research literacy prior to any researching that involves reading and writing as forms of discursive literacy.

Poets, as the chorus of the play of inquiry, embody responsive literacy. This is a kind of literacy which can be brought to research only by poets. The research community puts a moral obligation on the researcher concerning the operations and content of research bearing the
researchers’ names. This is the moral obligation for being the researchers as the subjects of research and having autonomy that comes with the status of being a subject of research. And the chorus of research embodies a response-ability for becoming an inquirer. Ethically, it embodies an enduring of the act of inquiry. Endurance is the expression of the intense time in which the act of inquiry takes place. Ethical response-ability in research, or ethical responsibility for research literacy, is a responsibility to the future of inquiry. The intensity within the endurance of the act of inquiry affects the act of inquiry as it takes place and renders it differently, in a way that brings about an unexpected emergent future that was not within the possibilities of inquiry. Moral responsibility embodied by the research community always refers to a past, to an established discourse, to something already being read or written, or to a content in which one addresses herself to the other. Ethical responsibility imagined by poets as the ethical voice of literacy, however, points to a possible future in which one, the inquirer, can inquire and thus say/read/write to bear the proper name of the other as her own name. Poets, as the chorus of the play of inquiry, call the researchers and the research community in the play by their proper names and oblige them to sign their names under their act of inquiry.
Variation III-I
[The] moral presence in the act is one side of its answerability whereas the specific content of the act is the other. (Nielsen, 2002, p. 44)

The capacity “to fear injustice more than death. (Levinas, 1989a, p. 84)

Poetic inquiry is a form of research in which at the same time as the discursive activity of inquiry takes place, lyrical mode of inquiry in the form of poetry becomes present. The proper act for the lyrical mode of inquiry is to respond ethically to the discursive act of inquiry. In this response, the inquirer as the poet endures the act of inquiry in her response expressed in poetic form. Her response affects the discursive act of inquiry so that, desiring completeness, it folds back on itself in anticipation of a response from itself. It is important to note that the discursive research then responds to its own utterance of inquiry and actively participates in the act of inquiry and in its consummation.

Poetic inquiry confirms Bakhtin’s idea (1986/1993) that the performed act and deed have yet to be achieved. In our ethical responsiveness, we not only participate in our own acts and those of the other, but we also consummate them with what we intuit they ought to be (Bakhtin, 1986/1993). To elaborate on the idea of poetic inquiry embodying ethical responsiveness towards the discursive act of inquiry, I draw on the theorization of responsiveness by both Levinas (1961/1979, 1974/1981) and Bakhtin (1986/1993). I employ the Greek chorus as a simile for presenting the activity of responsiveness. The theories and notions such as conspiracy (Barone, 1990) and ideal spectator (Prendergast, 2004) inform my use of this simile.

In poetic inquiry, as in other research activities, the inquirer participates in the epistemological activity of constructing a research narrative. However, from time to time she also becomes present as a poet. As I discussed earlier, poetry is a form of inquiry characterized by attentiveness towards the other. If we consider research as a play or drama of inquiry, the poetry that becomes present during the play assumes the role of the chorus. The chorus,
according to Phillips (2000), “was one of the most important components of the play” in Greek drama (para. 7). Rabinowitz (2008) confirms that the singing and dancing of the chorus were “integral parts of the performance tradition” (p. 26). Poetry, as the lyric voice of poetic inquiry, is the echo of the immanence of inquiry which the inquirer utters as she endures her own act of discursive inquiry or research. In this way, she responds ethically to her research activity. The researcher who is also a poet performs this response because she desires to make her act of inquiry just. She desires to consummate her act through her responsiveness, the way the poet thinks it ought to be.

As a poet, the inquirer is no longer concerned with re-presenting a research narrative; rather she focuses on the answerability of the act of inquiry. In this way, through enduring her own activity of inquiry, the inquirer-poet recognizes the uniqueness of her inquiry and consummates it to the degree she responds to her act of inquiry. As a poet, the inquirer thus asserts her “non-alibi” in research (Bakhtin, 1986/1993). The act of inquiry, however, is always already un-finalized, hence un-consummated, for it always anticipates another response from itself via the inquirer-poet. With another poetic response, the inquirer-poet again introduces a disjunction into her discursive act of inquiry that takes place in chronological time. In this way, she suspends her act of inquiry for a brief time. Yet again, as the discursive inquirer, she resumes her research. Therefore, the act of inquiry redoubles again and again after each pause, and finally results in a research text with a singular mapping, with a unique rhythm of inquiry which non-poetic ways of research lack. This research text cannot be properly called research.

**Greek Chorus and Ethical Responsiveness**

The ancient Greek chorus consisted of a group of nameless individuals, initially people from a carnival crowd and later professional dancers and singers, known for its function as the
collective lyrical voice that provided responses to the events of the play. The chorus “used movement and song, lyric and spectacle, stillness and silence, and occasionally monologues and dialogues with other characters in order to fulfill their function” (Prendergast, 2004, p. 142).

The role of the chorus is thus an essential element of the drama, not merely an appendage. While the actors act and react in response to the action/reaction of other actors and to the way the narrative unfolds, the chorus acts and reacts to the whole performance of the play—to the event of the play which circumscribes actors as well as the audience. As Rehm (1992) indicates, “By providing a different mode from the rhetoric of the actors, the chorus engages the play with an ongoing dialogue with itself” (p. 52). In this way the chorus’ performance is more than dialogic (Bakhtin, 1930/1981, 1990)—it becomes what I call a “performative” dialogic as the surplus of dialogue. The form of the chorus’ expression, as the lyrical responsiveness towards the event of the play, introduces a disjunction to the expression of the narrative that remains merely dialogic so that it is always already discursive. The chorus “is usually iconic in that they crystallize a set of values or concretize an observation in an autonomous, detached manner” (Beckerman, 1990, p. 123, emphasis added). Such iconic expression, as a disjunction to the expression of narrative which is enacted on the stage and as independent and heterogeneous in relation to the expression of the narrative, undercuts or “deterritorializes” the form of the play (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987).

Even though the Greek chorus always dressed like the chief actor (except in Antigone), its voice and expression set a contrast to the actors’ voice and expression, which remained in the service of the narrative. In Rehm’s words (1992), “Perhaps the most important function of the chorus is to open up the drama to a variety of non-linear influences that a strict narrative can deny or inhibit” (p. 56). The chorus, hence, due to its appearance, usually resembles/represents
the main actor, but removed from his/her position in the narrative grid and placed in the position of a witness viewing his/her own action.

Yet this is a special kind of witness who responds to her actions as they are happening in the hope that they can become what they ethically ought to be—a hope which represents an impossibility. Only from this position, can the main actor confirm her “non-alibi” (Bakhtin, 1986/1993) in the play. The main actor then, as the witness to her own act, is given the opportunity to respond to her own actions—to oppose or support, ignore or question her performance in the play to respond to the expression of the narrative and its discursive language. The chorus is the presence of a potentiality—the potentiality of performative responsiveness not only to the action of the main character but also to the narrative and its enactment. Through its performance, the chorus problematizes and questions the unfolding of the narrative, its discursive language, and the inevitability and assertiveness of its form. It inserts a disjunction into the discursive part “which is guided . . . by the shape of the story which is being enacted” (Lattimore, 1964, pp. 14-15).

The place where the Greek chorus stood is also highly significant to the form of its expression as performative responsiveness. The chorus stood in a middle space owned by neither actors nor the audience. In this place, “[the chorus was] not removed from or alienated by the action of the play” (Prendergast, 2004, p. 141). Unlike the actors, the chorus was not caught in the action or in the narrative grid. Neither was the chorus tied among the audience. This shows that even though the chorus is still within the play, it is outside the narrative and thus outside the stage and its periphery (audience) as the discursive space where the narrative is enacted. The chorus occupies an “active space” across which it can move and set a dynamic relationship to both actors and the audience. This space, nevertheless, is not present in the play as an actuality or
possibility of enactment, but “emerges only by and through [her] performances” (Rehm, 2003, p. 10). The actors and the audience, however, exist by “‘staging’ or ‘acting out’” the narrative, thus existing through discursivity (p. 13). The performance of the actors and the audience represents mimesis, “understood as ‘enacting,’ ‘impersonating …, ‘acting out,’ or ‘being like’” (p. 15). It can include “staging resistance” to some particular narrative, thus it does not always conform to narrative patterns (p. 19). The form of speech in mimesis is “Ionic” (p. 91). The form of the chorus performance, however, is “Doric,” that is also the form for lyric. Doric relates to “the verb dran, ‘to do’ from which also the words drama is derived (Walton, 1984, p. 17).

Rabinowitz (2008) confirms that the drama’s form “is named after its chorus” (p.11). He cites Aristotle who maintained that “the word for ‘drama’ has its origins in their word for doing, dran” (p. 18). Walton (1984) explains that Aristotle in his Poetics uses dran to refer to “the form of action, not of narrative” (p. 24). Walton then describes the physical arrangement of a Greek drama performance. He writes, “For the most part the actor was seen against a vertical background and the chorus against a circular floor” (p. 70) Furthermore, “action was placed against a background. The actor was mobile, the background static. Moreover the foreground was highly animated by the chorus” (p. 50).

Because of this animation, the chorus can potentially introduce a disjunction into the space of the narrative from without—something the audience cannot do because of its relation to the narrative. Unlike the chorus, the audience is not free because it is never outside the field of narrative enactment which defines the discursive possibilities of the play. The chorus thus belongs to the performance as a potentiality so that it can evoke a potential becoming of the play. It can evoke in the play a realization of its own potentialities that exceed its narrative possibilities. Appearing similar to the main actor, but occupying a special place outside the
narrative in what is effectively a locus of non-being, the chorus can give the narrative a
completely different expression and turn the play into a different event. The form of being of the
chorus, we need to note, is virtual. Neither actors nor the audience, via their actions, can entice
the potentiality of the play to show itself; only the chorus can invite such “narrative
impossibility” to emerge.

The chorus “exists” virtually in a dialogical excessive space and acts dynamically in
relation to the narrative, to the audience, and to the actors whose existence means the enactment
of narrative and its possibilities. This form of existing is a narrative non-being—a narrative
impossibility. As mentioned earlier, the chorus was originally the crowd that accompanied the
ritualistic carnival. When later participants had become professional dancers and part of the ritual
of the play, they still had no fixed place and no fixed and determinate pattern of movement. The
flexibility of their movement and their dynamic relationship to the play is suggested by the
multiple roles performed by the chorus. Among other roles, the chorus was expected to:

1. Provide spectacle; 2. Indicate changing moods and shifting fortunes; 3. Focus
   attention by supporting / denouncing others; 4. Serve as the “ideal spectator”; 5.
   Establish /embody the ethical system / moral universe of the characters / play; 6.
   Participate directly in the action; 7. Provide information; 8. Make discoveries and
decisions. (Cameron & Gillespie, 1996, pp. 227-228)

As we see, these are performances which create a special kind of responsiveness or
attentiveness. Brockett (1991), also asserting that the chorus serves multiple functions in Greek
Drama, writes:

First, it is a character in the play; it gives advice, expresses opinions, asks questions, and
sometimes takes an active part in action. Second, it often establishes the ethical or social
framework of the events and sets up a standard against which the action may be judged.
Third, it frequently serves as an ideal spectator, reacting to the events and characters as
the dramatist might hope the audience would. Fourth, the chorus helps to set the overall
mood of the play and of individual scenes and to heighten dramatic effects. Fifth, it adds
movement, spectacle, song and dance, and thus contributes much to theatrical
effectiveness. Sixth, it serves an important rhythmical function, creating pauses or
retardations during which the audience may reflect upon what has happened and what is to come. (p. 26)

In total, the chorus is the embodiment of the play’s response to itself. The chorus is both the play’s self and the play’s other.

Another important aspect of the chorus is the collective character of its voice and its response. The voice of the chorus can be best described by what Bakhtin (1930/1981, 1990) terms polyphony which refers to the simultaneity of two or more voices in one society or community. Nevertheless, “the chorus frequently makes use of the first person singular in both dialogue and lyric,” and this points out the singularity of its voice (Walton, 1984, p. 69). Here, “[s]ingular and plural would appear to be interchangeable except when a chorus member is speaking as an individual as opposed to part of his group.” This shows that in a chorus, every member is given an equal chance to respond. Yet no individual response is privileged over the other. Often, however, no individual voice can be identified in a choral response.

Choral voice embodies a collective body of heterogeneous voices, an assemblage of voices, with a harmonious/cacophonous modality. This collective body or assemblage, nevertheless, does not add together to represent as the unity of an individual consciousness. Nor can it be aggregated as the totality of one’s being in present. The chorus does not signify any particular identity and cannot be seen in terms of “the Same” (Levinas, 1989a). This is the reason why the chorus is the play’s self and other.

Prendergast (2004) proposes that the choral voice be understood as “conspectus” and “conspiracy.” The term conspectus suggests that the choral voice cannot be reduced to the voice of consensus. Instead it “conveys the sense of a synopsis of opinions, in other words there may be a wide range of opinions (and differences) reflected in [it]” (Neelands, cited in Norris, 1996, p. 15). Here diversity and polyphony are key, demonstrating that the chorus’ voice cannot be
collapsed into a unified voice of consensus. There is simultaneity within multiplicity in the voices in a chorus. Also, no dissonant or dissident voices can be censured, because their erasure removes the voice of the chorus as “conspectus” (Prendergast, 2004). The choral voice makes a polyphony of voice, a breathing together of voices—a “conspiracy” between the actor and the ideal spectator (a witness who can respond).

This is because the chorus is the actor who is witnessing her own act and responding to it. The chorus embodies the potentiality of the actors committing to their actions as they are acting—the potentiality of them asserting their “non-alibi in Being” (Baktin, 1986/1993). Boal (1995) argues that the chorus is where actors and spectators meet one another and become “spect-actors” (p. 13). It is in this very meeting that the chorus embodies a potentiality—the excess of being as being able to observe oneself and to respond to oneself in action. This breathing together of the actor and the spectator as conspiracy “can be [a] profoundly ethical . . . undertaking” (Barone, 1990, p. 313).

**Levinas and Bakhtin and Ethics of Responsiveness**

According to Levinas (1989a), in both epistemology and hermeneutics alike, a correlation between knowledge and being is established. Consequently, the very site of intelligibility is the site where meaning or sense occur. This correlation originates in a thematics of contemplation (Platonic) and that of capture/mastery (Modernity). The known (what is achieved as a result of the activity of intentionality) indicates that there was a difference which was “overcome in the true” (p. 76, emphasis in original). The known is taken to be freed of its otherness in the process of knowledge acquisition. Phenomenology identifies past and future as the modalities of the present, so the knowledge of past and present is the knowledge of “being,” seized and wrenched away by an active reasoning will from its difference—from its otherness—and appropriated for
presentation to thought (or self-consciousness) in the present. Knowledge is a present-ation or a re-present-ation, and the known is the presence which is gripped and appropriated. Knowledge refers to “the embodiment of seizure.” The act of inquiry via which knowledge is actualized is the act of capturing and appropriating—the act of claiming oneself as the master or the subject of the phenomenon under the inquiry.

As prefaced above, this view goes through the whole of Western philosophy from Plato’s realism in which knowing means contemplation of being to modern epistemologies in which knowing is an unconditioned activity of objectification and of mastery over “Being” through identification, that results in sovereignty of self-consciousness. As Levinas writes, “Modernity will subsequently be distinguished by the attempt to develop from the identification and appropriation of being by knowledge toward the identification of being and knowledge” (pp. 77-78). The modern man’s ontological program of being—as epistemology—consists in maintaining sovereignty by maintaining “the powers of his sovereignty” (p. 78, emphasis in original).

To maintain the powers of sovereignty, therefore, means to maintain consciousness as absolute self-consciousness, as absolute will. Here, since consciousness is always consciousness of something, that something—the other—must be objectified, must be reduced to an object, not to another consciousness, so that the consciousness can become absolute self-consciousness. As Levinas (1989a) explains, “within consciousness—which is consciousness of something—knowledge is, by the same token, a relation to an other of consciousness and almost the aim or the will of that other which is an object” (p. 78). The act of inquiry that involves reducing the other to representation is thus an objectivizing act, where object is marked by its finitude and by its totality being contained in this finitude. Once one fully grasps this totality, from a
phenomenological point of view, one has the knowledge of the object so that the object becomes the known and the consciousness containing the knowledge or the object becomes self-consciousness.

But as Levinas (1989a) shows, this view of consciousness as an active will or rationality is a reduced view of consciousness. For there “remains a non-intentional consciousness of itself, as though it were a surplus somehow devoid of any wilful aim” (p. 78). This is a passive consciousness devoid of philosophical reflection, “passive like time passing and aging me without my intervening (sans moi)” (p. 79). This is a flow, as pure duration, outside the activity of the ego, without a name, as being without insistence, an agency without the insistence of the ego. Such consciousness has no status in “Being” and no attributes. It cannot be situated or invested in the grids of life (including social grids) and, therefore, it cannot be identified. In other words, this kind of consciousness cannot contemplate in the mirror of the world its own image as knowledge. In Delueze’s and Guattari’s words (1994), this consciousness expresses “the plane of immanence” of Being.

With no identity, the existence of this other consciousness (my term), its “Being” cannot be justified either. As a result, its very presence is unjustified; the other consciousness is accused. Not because it is guilty of any crime, but because it is “responsible for its very presence” (Levinas, 1989a, p. 81). Consequently it always already must affirm its “right to be.” As Levinas explains, “it is in the passivity of the non-intentional, in the way it is spontaneous and preceded the formulation of any metaphysical idea on the subject, that the very justice of the position within being is questioned, a position which asserts itself with intentional thought, knowledge and a grasp of the here and now” (p. 82). The “being” of this other consciousness consists in responding to what it is accused of in order to affirm its “right to be”—for other
consciousness to be, it has to respond. Other consciousness, stated differently, exists only to the degree that it responds to “its right to be.” Levinas believes that language is born in this response-ability. He writes, “One has to speak, to say I, to be in the first person, precisely to be me (moi).” But from that point, in affirming this me being, I have to respond to “my right to be.”

The irony is that there is no universal law or judicial system to which one can appeal in order to gain one’s “right to be.” Each person has to respond to her “right to be” because of the other who constantly calls one into question and demands one’s response-ability. The other, for Levinas (1989a), is the neighbour and is distinguished by her proximity to the self and by her face and its expression—its nakedness, extreme exposure, defenselessness, and vulnerability. As Levinas writes, “The proximity of the other is the face’s meaning” (p. 82). This meaning is the expression of the self’s mortality—it is the self’s exposure to its invisible death.

The self here is accused of occupying the other’s place in a way that it precedes “Being.” By responding to this accusation, the self affirms that it is devoted to the other before being devoted to oneself. In its response to the other, the self (moi) gives up one’s logical and ontological privilege and lays down one’s intention of sovereignty. As a result, responding to the other shows the other consciousness’ capacity “to fear injustice more than death” (p. 84), to fear occupying the other’s place in “Being” more than one’s non-being.

This capacity is the surplus of our living to fear injustice (non-living of the other) more than we fear the death of our beings as subjects—more than we fear the death of the illusion of ourselves as autonomous subjects. Response-ability “is the question of the meaning of being: not the ontology of the understanding of that extraordinary verb, but the ethics of its justice” (p. 86). In response-ability there is a shift from ontology to ethics, not from ontology to epistemology. The question is not a “how and what” of being (questions of epistemology aimed
at capturing and mastering the totality of the other’s being in its presumed finitude; instead the question is, “how being justifies itself.” Through the idea of responsiveness, Levinas not only prioritizes ethics over epistemology but also sets up a reversal of the direction of inquiry.

Bakhtin (1986/1993) has a similar view on the notion of responsiveness as Levinas. To him, as human beings we have no-alibi for our existence. The only way to confirm what Bakhtin calls our “non-alibi in Being” is to constantly engage in a dialogue with the world to give meaning to our being. This is because we are constantly addressed by the world beyond our borders, and we must answer this call, because our consciousness has the responsibility, the obligation, to do so. Through this responsiveness, Bakhtin maintains, we hope to complete ourselves in what he calls the “absolute future of meaning.” This future is a place (outside the grids of existence) where our being is absolutely justified.

For Bakhtin, firstly, being is always co-being because it always implies that the being of the self is with the being of the other. This necessitates their interaction. Secondly, an “I” cannot become an “I-for-myself” without first becoming an “I-for-the-other.” However the other is posited, meaning that the other’s being is given from my point of view, “I” from this point of view is not posited. This is because from my perspective the other’s being is closed, because logically I can be present both at that other’s birth and death. In other words, the other’s birth and death exists for me in space and time. In contradistinction, and from my own vantage point, my being for me is open-ended, because logically I cannot be consciously present at my birth and death. That is why I have an obligation to affirm my “I-for-myself.”

This is similar to Levinas’ (1989a) suggestion that one has to affirm one’s “right to be.” To Bakhtin, I can only affirm my “I-for-myself” when I become an “I-for-the-other.” In this way, my being can potentially transform to an “event of Being.” Only then is my being given to me in
space and time, and thus can be justified. As such, being in its eventness “implies both (spatially)
community and (temporally) continuity” (Roberts, 1994, p. 246). Levinas (1989b) calls this
event “substitution”—a substitution of me for the other, “as being-in-one’s-skin, having-the-
other-in-one’s-skin” (p. 104).

To Bakhtin, however, such an event is never completely achieved. In other words, such
complete achievement of being-one-for-the-other is an impossibility. Yet this impossibility is a
space charged by desire. Its charge is our potentiality for responsiveness. Bakhtin emphasizes
that even though the self, in its responsiveness, opts for its completion through consummation
with (becoming one community with) or substitution for the other—an event of co-being when
self enters the consciousness of the other without retreating back to itself—it never reaches this
co-being. In this co-being, as Bakhtin (1986/1993) means it, there is no dialogue. The dialogue
as an attempt to make meaning of one’s being, to affirm one’s “right to be”—is always a failed
attempt. This is because even though “I” attempts to become “I-for-the-other,” it eventually
retreats to the self where it appears incomplete and unconsummated, the place from which it
cannot perceive its special and temporal limits (the body’s borders as birth and death).

From this place, however, the other seems complete in its “otherness.” That is why a
desire arises again to leave the self and substitute the other so that “I” can be completed—so that
it can become subjectivity. That desire calls on me that “I must appropriate the other’s perception
of me in order to consummate my perception of myself as a subject” (Roberts, 1994, p. 247). The
calling desire constantly addresses the self and appears in the form of an ethical obligation. This
means that I can only justify my subjectivity—affirm my “right to be”—from the position of the
other. Here, as Roberts notices:
There is a certain ambiguity surrounding the question of consummation; the other’s gaze seeks to finalize me, yet I must remain unfinalized if I am to continue to take part in the endless dialogue between my self and the outside world. (p. 247)

**The Chorus and the Dynamics of Addressivity and Answerability**

The chorus as a simile best embodies the dynamic of addressivity and responsiveness, as Bakhtin (1986/1993) and Levinas (1961/1979, 1974/1981) discuss it. This is partly due to the positionality of the chorus in relation to the play and to the narrative, and partly due to the way the chorus is dressed. Even though the chorus is within the play, it is outside the narrative, hence outside the time-space-value manifold that embeds the actors and the story, which involves the protagonist actions and conscious presence. In this way, the chorus stands outside the realm of intentional consciousness of the narrative and the main actor. Even though the chorus sometimes enters the stage and even engages in dialogue with the actors, it is not situated in the grid of the narrative where the protagonist represents the active intentional conscious self of the story.

Still, the chorus appears dressed like the protagonist as if it were the very self of the main character. The chorus, therefore, is the *other consciousness* of the play and of the protagonist. Here the protagonist represents the active consciousness of the narrative, and the narrative represents the active consciousness of the play. Being outside the narrative grids, being nameless and non-situated, the chorus is outside the narrative’s space, time, and value or discourse system—the narrative’s arche. The chorus is this *other consciousness*. Time as duration occurs only to the chorus. The chorus cannot assert herself and its place in the narrative through will or intentionality. In Heidegger’s language, the chorus is the “Dasien” which cannot assert and thus justify its being in “Da” (there of the narrative) (1927 / 1962).

To affirm its being, the chorus *has to respond* to her “right to be.” But its “right to be,” its response, involves the existence of the protagonist (similar in dress to chorus) and the
protagonist’s story, the knowledge of which is given to the chorus as the *other consciousness* of the narrative even before the presence of the chorus is known. In her responsiveness, the chorus endures the otherness of the protagonist and her act as if it were her own act. In this enduring, the chorus introduces [a] duration to the play, which is different than chronological narrative time, and thus inserts an anachronism into narrative time. Therefore, the chorus by its presence introduces a disjunction into the order of time and thus into the action in the play.

Since the chorus wears a mask similar to the protagonist’s, it is as if the chorus encounters with or responds to her own self, situated in the narrative. The narrative self is mortal and vulnerable. The self that the chorus presents addresses this mortality and vulnerability. It demands responsiveness from the narrative self. The relation between the chorus and the protagonist embodying the chorus as a self is that of proximity. As Walton (1984) writes, “the performances of actor and dancer come together with the mask” (p. 58).

The chorus un-situatedness in the narrative is embodied in its outside status. Outsidedness is a Bakhtinian term, which, as Roberts (1994) writes in the glossary of terms to Bakhtin’s book, is “that quality which I as a ‘self’ bring to my perception of the ‘other’, and which enables me to complete the other as an existence, by completing the other’s perception of his or her ‘self’” (p. 250). The chorus, with its mask similar to the protagonist’s, provides this perception for her—the perception which is not passive because it demands and obliges the self to respond. The active charge of this perception, when emerges, embodies a demanding voice or utterance. The chorus’ response to the enactment of the narrative makes the narrative to take a flight from its limits or territories of situatedness in space/time/value system of the play.

As the self of the protagonist which is othered, the chorus presents the plane of immanence of the protagonist’s “consciousness.” Through the response of the chorus, therefore,
the protagonist can glimpse the knowledge of herself as subjectivity and become the hero of her own “Being.” In this way, the protagonist affirms her “right to be” or her “non-alibi in “Being” and takes responsibility for her knowledge. The important point to consider here is that the kind of reflectiveness that the chorus shows in its response is not an intentional and conscious reflection that involves a subject-object relationship, aimed at seizing the object and establishing contemplation of or mastery over it as a representation of knowledge. This reflectiveness is a pre-reflection or as immanence of reflection. The method of such reflectiveness is reflecting on one’s own reflexivity.

The narrative’s or the protagonist’s “subjective life in the form of consciousness [consists] in being itself losing itself and finding itself again so as to possess itself by showing itself, proposing itself as a theme, exposing itself in truth” (Levinas, 1989b, p. 89). The subjectivity of the chorus, however, is not reducible to intentional consciousness and its thematization. Neither does the chorus knowledge consist in self-possession and sovereignty, or a knowing that embodies a conscious, thematic exposition of being. The chorus voice and movement (singing and dancing) is what Levinas (1981) calls “Saying.” Levinas distinguishes between “Said” (le dit) and “Saying” (le dire). For him, “Saying” precedes and never coincides with “Said.” As Peperzak (1993), writes, “Whereas the Saying breaks all the limits of […] language, the Said belongs to the dimension of things that are objectifiable” (p. 29). To Levinas, the ethical obligation posed to the self is that of “Saying,” not that of “Said.” Levinas insists on the absolute irreducibility and incomprehensibility of the other according to which something or someone comes to the fore “before” their “Said” is understood. Speaking itself cannot be defined or determined in terms of content (“Said”) within the framework of conceptual discourse. Peperzak further asserts that “it is surely possible to talk to a speaker in order to reach him/her
through language, but that by which the other is someone evaporates as soon as my language thematizes the utterance of a speech” (p. 29).

The voice and movement of the chorus, as those of other consciousness’s, are “Saying” of the play not “Said” of the play. “Said” of the play is the narrative. This is because chorus responsiveness to the other is the expression of the immanence of “Being” and cannot be thematized. The chorus performance, unlike that of actors, is not invested in representation and expression of the narrative so it does not belong to the system of language or “Said” of the play. Even though the protagonist and the narrative are affected by the response of the chorus (displayed through dancing and singing), the source of affection (the chorus) never becomes a theme of representation in the narrative.

The relationship of the chorus to the play, as its other consciousness, is that of proximity. The chorus is always close by but never inside the active consciousness of the play, which is the narrative. This proximity “cannot be reduced to any modality of distance or geometrical contiguity, nor to the simple ‘representation’ of a neighbour; it is already an assignation—an extremely urgent assignation—an obligation, anachronously prior to any commitment” (Levinas, 1989b, p. 90). In this way the chorus as the proximate other sets up a relation of anarchy to the being and consciousness of the play, which is the narrative’s field including its possibilities (narrative enactment on the stage with audience as its periphery).

This is because the chorus shows that not everything that is within the play can be identified, possessed, and posited through narrative articulation. The chorus is within the play but unsituated in the narrative as its active consciousness. Being outside the structure and grids of the play’s arches, the chorus performance is the presence of anarchy. This anarchy emerges from the impossibility of presentation and embodies a potentiality. The anarchy brings a halt to the play as
the expression of an ontological account of an action and opens it to the horizons of ethics. The chorus is a paradox: it is within the play yet exterior to narrative. As such the performance of the chorus cannot fall under the orders and logos of narrative—under the play’s “arches” (Levinas, 1989a). Moreover the response of the chorus, as responsibility for the other, as expressed through its voice/movement, is over and beyond logos of “Said.”

The voice/movement of the chorus, in this sense, is a recurrence. It is an immanent assignation to answer to the play (to the unfolding of the narrative and to what happens to the protagonist) without evasion. The chorus responds to the narrative without being situated, and without being consciously present in it. This means that the chorus is virtually and immanently present in the play. As a result, the singing of the chorus cannot be weaved into the narrative and made part of its themes, joining “Said” of the play. The chorus’ voice/movement always remains as a singing/dancing—a “Saying.”

In the voice/movement of the chorus, we see a refusal to be objectified, tamed, or domesticated by a theme and to be captured in the narrative. Therefore the chorus performance affects the presence of the play without allowing its performativity to be invested in the theme, narration, and action of the play. The voice/movement of the chorus is irreplaceable in responsibility for the play and for the other. What happens in the narrative, in “Said,” is that the presence or being of the play is successively and progressively enacted or disclosed to itself. So some kind of knowledge which relates to the logos and orders of narrative is gained by the consciousness of the play. The voice/movement of the chorus does not fall into this logos-formed-knowledge. It never discloses itself to itself in such a subject/object relationship: the chorus performativity bears no marks of identity, and so it always opens itself up to the emerging of future narrative impossibilities.
The chorus by the virtue of its voice/movement stands for a “singular unlike” within the play. That is why the choral songs were called “stasima (singular=stasimon)” (AbleMedia, n.d., para. 16). The singular is an identity unjustifiable to itself—a non-identity. The singular “is a withdrawal-in-oneself which is an exile in oneself, without a foundation in anything else, a non-condition” (Levinas, 1989b, p. 96). This singular—the chorus performance—inverts into a recurrence “in which the expulsion of self outside of itself is its substitution for the other” (p. 100). The chorus’ voice/movement is like the echo of the play; it precedes the resonance of the play’s voice and action.

Historically, the Greek chorus entered the stage before the play started while chanting “an entrance song called a *parodos*” (AbleMedia, n.d., para. 16). This shows that the voice of the chorus, as an echo of the voice of the play, is “Being” there immanently, even before the voice of the play becomes present through the narrative. Here, as an echo preceding its sound, the voice/movement of the chorus prevents its own representation. As a result, through its performativity, the chorus makes itself singular because its voice lacks recourse to the narrative reference system of the play. It does not follow any story patterns. Walton (1984) asserts, “Though it would be helpful to be able to discover some kind of pattern of speech, no convincing one has been forthcoming” (p. 69). Without a pattern, “the meter varied” in the chorus’ lyric (Rabinowitz, 2008, p. 26).

Since the chorus voice/movement does not add anything to the narrative, it is a recurrence—a being-for-the-other. And, since its virtual and immanent presence questions all affirmation as a singular self, the very presence of the chorus in the play is an inspiration. The chorus is not alienated in its being-for-the-other; it is inspired. The lyrical voice/movement manifests this very inspiration, setting forth the plane of immanence of “Saying” and pro-duces
the lyrical “I” in this “Saying.” As the chorus enters the play, its voice/ movement as inspiration arouses the respiration of the play, and thus the play becomes alive and begins.

According to many sources on Greek theatre, the chorus voice/ movement is a polyphony of voices/movements. Polyphony refers to the simultaneity of two or more voices (Bakhtin, 1984, 1990). Even though it consisted of multiple voices and movements, the chorus embodies the voice or movement of one community, of one singularity. This voice or body in movement expresses what Bakhtin (1994) calls a unified viable value judgment (p. 165). This is not, however, a discursive value judgment but a specific value judgment which Bakhtin calls “living intonation.” Such a value judgment cannot be incorporated into narrative content and be enacted on the stage.

Bakhtin (1994) argues that living intonation is what makes sociological poetics. He explains:

A healthy social value judgment remains within life and from that position organizes the very form of an utterance and its intonation, but it does not at all aim to find suitable expression in the content side of discourse. Once a value judgment shifts from formal factors to content, we may be sure that a reevaluation is in the offing. Thus, a viable value judgment exists wholly without incorporation into the content of discourse and is not derivable therefrom; instead it determines the very selection of the verbal material and the form of the verbal whole. It finds its purest expression in intonation. Intonation establishes a firm link between verbal discourse and the extra verbal context—genuine, living intonation moves verbal discourse beyond the border of the verbal, so to speak. (p. 165)

I suggest that, since the chorus voice/movement does not aim at finding expression in the content or narrative of the play, we can consider it as living intonation. The chorus voice/movement neither derives from the narrative, nor incorporates with it. The voice/movement is “Saying” of the play, while the narrative is “Said” of the play. Bakhtin maintains, “Intonation always lies on the border of the verbal and the nonverbal, the said and the unsaid” (Bakhtin, 1994, p. 165, emphasis in original). This is “Saying” that lies on the threshold between the said and the unsaid.
At this threshold, the “arches,” the play’s narrative discourse comes directly into contact with its other—with “anarchy.” Thus, the chorus voice/movement brings out the potentiality of the play as opening up to a future beyond of the narrative territories of “Said.”

Due to being singular and polyphonical, the chorus voice/movement has a certain weight or intensity which does not allow it to be reduced to that of the narrative. Yet the narrative is the text or territory that it affects. As Bakhtin (1994) asserts:

A creatively productive, assured, and rich intonation is possible only on the basis of presupposed ‘choral support’. Where such support is lacking, the voice falters and its intonational richness is reduced, as happens, for instance, when a person laughing suddenly realizes that he is laughing alone—his laughter either ceases or degenerates, becomes forced, loses its assurance and clarity and its ability to generate joking and amusing talk. The commonness of assumed basic value judgments constitutes the canvas upon which living human speech embroiders the designs of intonation. (p. 166)

The chorus, through its intonational voice/movement, addresses the audience. The first participant in the context of Greek drama is the actor and the second participant is the audience, called by the chorus voice/movement to stand as a witness or ally. But this is just one side of its addressivity—the side turned towards affecting the listener. Another side to this addressivity, however, is its responsiveness addressed to a different listener—to a “third participant”:

The third participant—the hero of this verbal production—has not yet assumed full and definitive shape; the intonation has demarcated a definite place for the hero but his semantic equivalent has not been supplied and he remains nameless. Intonation has established an active attitude toward the referent, toward the object of the reference, an attitude of a kind verging on apostrophe to that object as the incarnate, living culprit, while the listener—the second participant—is as it were, called in as witness and ally. (Bakhtin, 1994, p. 166; emphases in original)

The third participant, the hero of the play as a whole, is the chorus herself. The chorus, in this respect, is the other consciousness of the play, nameless and without identity, without a definite place in the here-and-now of the play, who nevertheless endures the responsibility for the play. This is the consciousness accused before coming to the play. The choral voice in its addressivity,
in its “Saying” accuses the chorus as a singular entity for “Said” of the play, as if it were the living culprit in the production of this “Said.” This addressivity echoes a response given prior to the address. The chorus’ response is a recurrence, a respiration of the narrative.

The event of intonation is oriented in two directions: towards the second participant, the audience or listener as an ally or witness, and towards the first participant or the protagonist who enacts the narrative. Intonation affects them by obliging them to respond. The chorus brings in the “pragmatic side of the utterance” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987), which undercuts the verbal discourse of the play—the narrative. Nevertheless, the chorus introduces to the play a plane of the imminence of living intonation and, through its pragmatic utterance, obliges the first and second participants to respond to their acts responsible for the verbal expression of the play. Unlike the response of the chorus, the responses of the first and second participants to their own acts coincide with the verbal composition of play, their own product, and transform it.

Bakhtin argues that “[i]ntonation lies on the border between life and the verbal aspects of the utterance; it, as it were, pumps energy from a life situation into the verbal discourse” (1994, p. 168). In the same fashion, the chorus voice/movement lies on the border between the audience, as the witness who embodies the social value judgment of the narrative, and the narrative itself. The chorus voice/movement pumps the surcharge of responsiveness into the play and in this way intensifies it. The audience cannot do that. This is because the audience, even the audience with the highest degree of freedom, is in the narrative field whereas the chorus is outside it—the chorus is outside the field of narrative enactment and evaluation—outside the field of actualities and possibilities of the play. Unlike the audience, the chorus is not a simple witness who may also represent a socio-moral evaluation of the narrative. The chorus, with its
ethical responsiveness, embodies the potentiality of the play for becoming something other than a discursive spectacle.
Variation III-II
Poetic inquiry is a form of qualitative research in the social sciences that incorporates poetry in some way as a component of an investigation.

Poetic inquiry is sometimes presented as a prose-based essay that includes poetry woven throughout.

Poetic inquiry is practiced on the margins of qualitative research by a small number of poet/scholars, a number of whom are also literary poets.

Poetic inquiry is philosophically aligned with the work of poets through literary history who were and are committed to using poetry as a means to communicate socio-political and cultural concerns, as an act of witness. (Prendergast, 2009, pp. xxxv-xxxvii)

Poetic inquiry, as I explained in Variation III-I, is figuratively like a “play” or “drama” of research in which poetry becomes present like a chorus. I call other, primarily discursive forms of research in the humanities, social sciences, and education “major research.” These forms lack the presence of poetry as a chorus to respond to the discursive act of inquiry as it takes place. Borrowing from Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of “minor literature” (1986, 1987), I call poetic inquiry minor research. In this variation, through Bakhtin’s notion of “answerability” (1919-1924/1990) and Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of and “body-without-organs,” I explain why poetic inquiry is minor research.

Briefly put, the concept of minor research refers to research in which the presence of the lyrical form of inquiry (poetry) makes the research document that is in the process of formation as the result of the discursive act of inquiry “stammer,” so as to “stretch tensors” throughout the research document and to draw a line of continuous variation through its hegemonic constants of genre and language (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). Poetic inquiry, unlike major research that, lacking poetry, is mainly discursive, is not defined by the power (pouvoir) of constants of descriptions, arguments, analyses, and interpretations which aspire to a narrative-discursive activity, but by the power (puissance) of the variations of responsiveness as an ethical activity or performance (Deleuze & Guattari).
Two tendencies mark poetic inquiry as minor research: first, a tendency to impoverish the discursive documentation of research—to disturb its purely descriptive, argumentative, analytic, narrative, and interpretative forms, or in other words, its guise of knowledge; and second, a tendency to shift the focus of the research from ontology to ethics, to disrupt truth, narrative, or interruption-making activities by the performativity of ethical responsiveness (Bakhtin, 1986/1993).

Minor research does not oppose the major forms of research and their genres—it deterritorializes them. It introduces a line of departure or flight (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) to the dominant territories of inquiry, thus transforming the inquiry itself into something else—the possibility of an event of responsiveness—to an answerability of inquiry (Bakhtin, 1919-1924/1990).

**Research as an Epistemological Activity and Research as an Ethical Activity**

The concept of research as knowledge production is traditionally associated with a view of knowledge as constructed intentionality in relation to concrete reality. The act of re-search, therefore, involves re-mastery over the other in the forms of technological mastery or contemplation. It asserts an intentional activity of consciousness aimed at grasping the totality of the finite other in order to dominate the other so as to increase the self-consciousness. As Levinas (1989a) writes, “Intentionality reduces wisdom to a notion of increasing self-consciousness, in which anything that is non-identical is absorbed by the identical. In this way, self-consciousness affirms itself as absolute being” (p. 75). Through showing the closed and circular nature of this knowledge based on self-conscious awareness, Levinas brings us to a different view of knowledge apart from traditions of research, which is grounded in ethical response-ability towards the other. Re-search, from the ethical point of view involves “re-
affirming one’s right” to inquire which consists in responding to the other (Levinas, 1989a). This is the minor research which poetic inquiry embodies.

Levinas (1989a) argues that the only knowledge “I” as subject can have in the world is that “I” am not alone by myself. This knowledge appears in the existence and proximity of the other. As for my existence or my “being”, however, I cannot assert it through my will or my intentionality. The only way to affirm my “being” is by responding to “my right to be.” But this “right to be” involves the existence of the other, given to consciousness as its knowledge by default. This means that “responsibility for the Other pre-exists any self-consciousness, so that from the beginning of any face to face, the question of being involves the right to be” (Hand, 1989, p. 75). This way of viewing knowledge as responsiveness towards the other diverts the intention of epistemology from ontology towards ethics. In this responsiveness, one re-justifies her being as she suspends the notion of totality and engages in displaying an infinite vigilance towards the other. In minor research, through her responsiveness, the inquirer affirms her right to “inquire.” This happens as the inquirer endures her act of discursive inquiry as it takes place. In this way, she takes responsibility for her act.

Discursive act of inquiry performed in major research involves narrative activity: it can involve re-presenting an account of the concrete reality re-grasped in its totality or it can involve revealing (in the form of a narrative) the structures underlying the act of grasping (or capturing) conducted by other researchers or revealing story patterns (also known as grand-narratives) underlying the re-presentation given as an account of knowledge by other researchers. Narrative inquiry involves three principal dynamics: “story, interpretation, and discourse” (Leggo, 2008, p. 1). Story is about “what happened.” Interpretation is about the “so what of what happened.” And discourse is about “how the story is told.” Clandinin and Connelly (2000) consider narrative
inquiry as “both phenomena under study and method of study” (p. 4). In a related way, Leggo (2008) maintains that “the story or experience is the phenomenon, and the discourse is the method” (pp. 9-10).

The “story” concerns realistic traditions of research. The inquiry is aimed at grasping the “who? / what? / when? / where? / why? / how?” of the concrete reality of the phenomenon in the world. The researcher here occupies an objective position outside the phenomenon under the research. It is assumed that s/he has grasped the phenomenon in its totality, once the researcher is able to answer the question of “who? / what? / when? / where? / why? / how?” She then has the knowledge of the phenomenon as it has become part of her self-consciousness. In other words, realists believe that knowledge involves constructing a true story of the phenomena in the world. For realists, the question of inquiry or knowledge boils down to the question of true storytelling. True realistic stories are ontological accounts of being or phenomena. The final product of inquiry (as an epistemological activity) is an ontological account—a story about a being. Truth in realist ideology signifies the intentionality of consciousness. Realists invented intentionality to “surpass any psychologism or naturalism” (Deleuze, 1986, p. 108). The myth of intentionality behind the realist inquiry is that “consciousness is directed toward the thing [inquired] and gains significance in the world.”

Interpretation or the “so what” question concerns hermeneutic traditions of research. They focus their inquiry on answering what the significance of a story is. Their focus, on one hand, is on revealing story patterns underlying researches given by previous researchers, and on the other hand, on presenting their research as stories about being through the interpretations of the revealed stories. Researchers with hermeneutic approach sometimes present multiple ontological accounts of being as their research. The activity of inquiry, as researchers with
realistic or positivist approaches perform, the same as researchers with hermeneutic approaches perform, is an epistemological activity involving narrative work, which means it is in the service of making stories of being.

The primary activity in postmodern research is also narrative work. Postmodernists, however, mostly concentrate on re-vealing the “discourses” underlying the research given by previous researchers from other traditions, mostly by realists and positivists. They also concentrate on re-vealing what assumptions and mechanisms underlie the act of inquiry as an epistemological act. However, the fact is that these revelations come as narrative documents themselves. Therefore, postmodern research also involves narrative work. The difference between postmodern researcher’s narrative work and the activity of constructing stories by other researchers is that their activity de-constructs dominant stories and disrupts their discourse or the ways in which these stories are told. The postmodern researcher’s goal of research is to expand the ways of storytelling by disrupting and debunking the dominant ways. As Leggo (2008) puts it:

The authors of postmodern narratives promote the view that behind every story is another story, and that to tell one story is to silence numerous others. Postmodernists are not seeking to undermine the concept, practice, and significance of narrative. Instead, postmodernists are eager to expand the possibilities of narrative. (p. 12)

Through deconstruction, researchers with postmodern approaches to epistemology put to question the legitimacy of dominant methodologies as well as the stories which are produced as a result of these methods, stories which have been claimed as accounts of “Truth.” Deconstruction thus opens up the possibility of unrecognized or underprivileged ways of storytelling and absent or undermined narratives to be called legitimate. In doing so, it brings about new possibilities of making meaning out of lived experience. Deconstruction helps to reveal discursive structures and the specific ways in which they “shape identity, memory, and hope” so as to contravene
conventions of research and culturally-conditioned ways of story-telling (Leggo, 2008, p. 16). Moreover, it challenges the idea that certain ways of discursive structuring are truer and more legitimate than others. Nevertheless, deconstruction itself also involves narrative activity. Therefore, at the same time as postmodern researchers disrupt the existing accounts and their significances through deconstruction, so that the hidden, censored, and oppressed ontologies can be brought to the fore and given significance, believing in endless possibilities of story-telling, they also seek “complex and artful and richly nuanced representations of lived experience” (Leggo, 2008, p. 17). Postmodern research expands the possibilities of narrative activity which is the primary activity of major research.

In poetic inquiry, the inquirer is also involved in narrative activity. However, at the same time as this activity takes place, the inquirer becomes present as the poet, and like a chorus, is involved in lyrical activity, which, as I explained in Variation III-I, involves ethical responsiveness to her discursive activity of inquiry as narrative activity. This responding is done through creating poetry. Poetic inquiry does not oppose other forms of inquiry as major research in which the act of inquiry is primarily a narrative activity, but a kind of research in which two kinds of activity are performed at the same time: narrative and lyrical activities. Here to demonstrate how these two activities relate to one another, I liken “narrative” and “poetry” to the “content” and the “expression” of research, in a similar way as Deleuze and Guattari (1986) theorize content and expression. We must note that expression is not a synonym for form. Deleuze and Guattari (1986) explain content and expression as follows:

Content is not opposed to form but has its own formal-ization: the hand-tool pole, or the lesson of things. It is, however, opposed to expression, inasmuch as expression also has its own formalization: the face-language pole, the lesson of signs. Precisely because content, like expression, has a form of its own, one can never assign the form of expression the function of simply representing, describing, or averring a corresponding
content: there is neither correspondence nor conformity. The two formalizations are not of the same nature; they are independent, heterogeneous. (pp. 85-86)

To elaborate on the relative forms of content and expression, Deleuze and Guattari (1986) give the example of “mouth, tongue and teeth” and their relations to eating and “the act of constructing language.” They write:

> Each language always implies a deterritorialization of the mouth, the tongue, and the teeth. The mouth, tongue, and teeth find their primitive territoriality in food. In giving themselves over to the articulation of sounds, the mouth, tongue, and teeth deterritorialize. Thus, there is a certain disjunction between eating and speaking, and even more, despite all appearances, between eating and writing. (p. 20)

Eating, as the primitive activity of ‘the mouth, tongue, and teeth,’ is the formal-ization of the content. While eating, ‘the mouth, tongue, and teeth’ express themselves through activities such as chewing, taking in, ripping, and churning the food. ‘The mouth, tongue, and teeth’, however, can express themselves differently through enunciating. Enunciating formal-izes itself in reading and writing, in articulation of sounds via speech and text. That is why when enunciating expresses itself through “the mouth, tongue, and teeth,” a disjunction is introduced to the content. This disjunction is so powerful that it deterritorializes the content and transforms it to a machine of expression. In other words, through enunciating, the warp of instantaneous transformation is inserted into the woof of the content and its formal-ization.

The same happens when the inquirer responds to her discursive act through expressing or enduring her inquiry as poetry. Her responsiveness affects the discursive act of inquiry as it takes place and thus turns the research into a machine of lyrical expression. She does this by introducing a disjunction, despite all appearances, to the form of the content of the research, to the “inquiry-narrative” pole of the research—to its lesson of things. To understand how this happens, let us investigate the concept of “inquiry” and its material form or the form of its content. John Dewey (1938) in his book *Logic: The Theory of Inquiry* presents an account of
traditional inquiry. “Inquiry,” he suggests, “is the controlled or directed transformation of an indeterminate situation into one that is so determinate in its constituent distinctions and relations as to convert the elements of the original situation into a unified whole” (pp. 104-105). This “unified whole” is what I call a narrative or an ontological account of the phenomena under inquiry. This narrative is the aim of the process of inquiry. Dewey’s definition of inquiry shows that inquiry is traditionally an intentional epistemological activity to provide a unified account as the solution to a problem defined as a determinate situation. The objective of this activity is to offer an ontological account of the situation so as to produce a lesson of inquiry.

In this definition of inquiry, “the inquiry’-narrative” presents the formal-ization of the content of inquiry which the self constructs through language as a story of the other—a story that the self is going to own as a part of its consciousness. “The inquiry” forms itself by grasping the other, dominating the other, bringing the knowledge of the other to the self, and making the other a part of its self-consciousness—a part of the narrative of the self.

“The inquiry’-poetic”, however, presents or formal-izes ethical responsiveness towards the formalization of narrative activity, incited by the lyrical endurance of the act of inquiry by the inquirer-poet. This presentation addresses the discursive act of inquiry and affects it, so that inquiry itself starts to act in a lyrical or responsive way. When the lyrical expression of inquiry introduces a disjunction to the narrative form of activity, the narrative expression responds. As a result, the narrative activity is suspended and rebooted as a performance of ethical responsiveness.

Answerability and Poetic Inquiry

In poetic inquiry, one relates one’s act of inquiry to oneself in being answerable to it. The researcher constitutes her position as the standpoint of an answerable inquirer or participant. This
position is not the same as the position of a researcher who takes herself as responsible for what comes out as the result of her inquiry. Being answerable is not the same as being responsible for one’s content or the results of inquiry. While moral responsibility has something to do with the meaning of an inquiry, or, in other words, with meanings made through the discursive act of narration, ethical responsibility or answerability has something to do with the discursive act of inquiry itself.

Moral responsibility is bound with a sense of morality. Morality is often presented as a rule or law to be obeyed or followed. The law of morality in modern epistemology is the Golden Rule, which says, “Treat others as you want to be treated.” The Golden Rule originates in ethics of reciprocity. The ethic of reciprocity is an ethical code which says: one has a right to just treatment and a responsibility to guarantee justice for others so that one has to equally treat everybody as he wants to be treated by them. In ethics of reciprocity, the “I-for-myself” and the “other-for-me” are perceived, both from an inner position of the “I”. Thereby, a person talks from her position or her chronotope (time/space/value position in the world) and decides as to how she is going to treat the other because it is the way she wants to be treated by the other who is bound to his/her chronotope. The horizon of expectation, in this case, is constructed from the subject positioned in a certain historical chronotope towards the other. Respectively, moral research is one whose content is judged from the historical position of the researcher. The researcher calls it moral, and thus legitimate, if it accords with historical rules of research and ethics guidelines proper to research at her time.

Poetic inquiry, however, is bound with an ethics of responsiveness. There is no single universal and transcendental Rule of conduct, such as the Golden Rule, underlying this ethics. Neither are there rules of research proper to the researcher’s historical time. There is only a
desire which performs—a desire towards “Justice.” And, there is a whole movement of desire to leave the subject position all together and substitute the other. Justice, as Deleuze and Guattari (1986) put it, “is desire not law” (p. 49). It eventualizes a “virtual” movement that makes the “I” perform in the following way: to vacate the ego, enter the skin of the other, and become the “I-for-the-other.” “I” talks from this locus, from outside itself, not from its inner self, that is from its own chronotope, and decides about what “I” must do.

The self, in an ethics of responsiveness, is included in the horizon of expectations of the other. This horizon is what Deleuze (1986) calls the fold of outsidedness, and following Blanchot, he names it an “interiority of expectation” (p. 104). Ethical action thus is about what is just to do to the other. Therefore, it is no longer what I decide from my interior position about how I must morally treat the other, which complies with the Golden Rule of morality: treat the other as you, from your own space-time-value position, decide you want to be treated by the other. Ethical action, however, “involves myself and the other within the unitary and unique event of being” (Bakhtin, 1919-1924/1990, p. 24). This event occurs in a future and the ethics is the expectation of this future—an expectation which is actually a memory of the future. Memory here is “the real name of the relation to oneself, or the affect on self by self” (Deleuze, 1986, p. 107).

In poetic inquiry, the inquirer becomes present as the poet turns the outsidedness of her inquiry into a relationship with herself. “It is as if the relations of the outside folded back to create a doubling, allow a relation to oneself to emerge, and constitute an inside which is hollowed out and develops its own unique dimension: ‘enkratieia’” (Deleuze, 1986, p. 100). In the ethics of responsiveness, however,

[d]ouble is never a projection of the interior; on the contrary, it is an interiorization of the outside. It is not a doubling of the One, but a redoubling of the Other. It is not a
reproduction of the Same, but a repetition of the Different. It is not the emanation of an ‘I’, but something that places in immanence an always other or Non-self. It is never the other who is double in the doubling process, it is a self that lives me as the double of the other: I do not encounter myself on the outside, I find the other in me. (Deleuze, 1986, p. 98)

As there is a reversal of the positioning of the “I” in poetic inquiry, there is also a reversal of the horizon of expectation, unlike what happens in major research that incorporates an ethic of reciprocity originating in the moral idea of responsibility. When the inquirer becomes present as a poet, the moral responsibility of the historical inquirer towards the inquired becomes an outsidedness and folds on itself. In this way it is no longer a rule of research but a duration of inquiry borne by the inquirer. In the folding of the horizon of expectation on itself, in poetic inquiry, “[t]he most distant point [of inquiry] becomes interior, by being converted into the nearest: *life within the folds*” (Deleuze, 1986, p. 123, emphasis in original).

In poetic inquiry, moreover, there is a polyvocality of the inquirer and the poet—of the inquirer and the inquired—a polyvocality of desire which creates an “immanent” field of erotic force towards Justice (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986). As Deleuze and Guattari write, “Justice is not Necessity [as it is in the realm of the historical moral responsibility], quite the contrary, Chance” (p. 49). Being an unpredictable event, Justice does not accept representation. Instead of becoming “an infinite of transcendence,” Justice always already remains an “unlimited field of immanence” opening up to inquiry as it is performed discursively and responded to lyrically. Justice, in the ethics of responsiveness, “is no more than the immanent process of desire” (p. 51). Becoming present as a poet to her act of discursive inquiry, the inquirer becomes a witness to her act—a special witness who responds to her act. The very being of the inquirer as the poet, therefore, fills in the horizon of her own being involved in the act of inquiry from outside the act.
This outsidedness creates an invocation for the act of inquiry as it takes place and causes the act to fold on itself, address itself, and respond to itself.

The act of inquiry, in poetic inquiry, thus includes both the planes of intersubjectivity and alterity, embodying “the power to affect (spontaneity) and to be affected by others (receptivity)” (Deleuze, 1986, p. 101). In other modes of research, the researcher usually seeks agreement between opposite positions according to research standards and ethics guidelines in order to shift to a higher level of generality. In poetic inquiry, however, this communicatory exchange between act of inquiry and its response is not always free of conflict. The inquiry happens as an event when the horizons of the inquiry for the inquirer and the poet coincide. The responsiveness in poetic inquiry constitutes the ethical moment of ought in the event. Thus answerability here should not be viewed as a principle, a law, a norm, or a right, but as a compulsion. As Bakhtin puts it, “it is not the content of an obligation that obligates me, but my signature below it” (Bakhtin, 1986/1993, p. 38). Inquiry includes not only giving an account of the inquired, which is a discursive act, but also undertaking an obligation that amounts to undersigning and acknowledging the inquirer’s non-alibi in inquiry. The unique nature of the act of inquiry that the inquirer asserts in her inquiry, not the content of the inquiry, is universal.

Poetic inquiry prevents the finalization of the inquiry through narration. It prevents the inquiry from becoming an ontological account in the form of a description, an interpretation, or a conclusion. Answerability turns the act of inquiry into a becoming of inquiry—into an event. In poetic inquiry, the inquirer, when she becomes present as the poet, transforms the rupture between the inquiry and its answerability into a continuum of becoming through her responsiveness and the invocation it inserts into the act of inquiry to address and respond to itself. By turning the inquiry into an event, poetic inquiry becomes a flight over and beyond the
conditions of inquiry. The concept of “flight” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987) makes reference to territories of research left behind before the flight—to their deterritorialization or reterritorialization as the result of “flight.” Because the inquirer as poet does not claim any ownership over the new territories emerged by her performance of responsiveness, they already expect and invite another rupture, another becoming. Each becoming is eventualized as the inquiry responds to itself again and again. More precisely, the inquiry responds to its “right-to-inquire,” or its “right-to-narrate” a story about the other. This transformation, this flight, and this ongoing inquiry all happen because of the inquirer’s presence as the poet amid the act of discursive inquiry, which is the same as saying that the inquirer endures the weight of her discursive act of inquiry.

Through her enduring, the poetic inquirer establishes lines of flight or transformation in the discursive act of inquiry and invokes the deterritorialization of the body of research consisting of the striated lines of signification, articulation, and subjectification that render the research a narrative whole. The forces of poetic expression empty the body of research, making it a “Body without Organs”—a “BwO” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987). The movements of expression or movements of BwO remove from the body of research its oneness and wholeness which form around its centers of gravity that constitute the research content. The BwO of research, however, remains, even though the form of the content and even that of the expression are removed. Movements of poetic inquiry tend to free the content of inquiry from its proper form (narrative) and free the poetic expression from its proper forms in such a way that the body of research can never be populated by such content or expression; instead, it can only be populated by narrative and lyrical “intensities.” Therefore, the body of research as “One,” aimed at reasonably accommodating the content in a language and genre proper to research and in a
way that makes the researcher the subject of the research statement, is delimited. Once this body is no longer whole, it becomes nothing more than a set of intensities of expression and collective voices of enunciation: a “peopling of the BwO”—a population of “pure intensities” (Deleuze & Guattari).

The BwO of research is not opposed to narrative content as its internal organs. Narrative is not its enemy. The enemy is the narrative organism that works to form the research into a unitary account of being, set around a pre-established and given center of inquiry. In order to extract useful labor from the body of research, the research genres impose upon the research organism certain forms, bonds, dominant and hierarchical organizations, and a transcendental unity. Narratives in the body of the research organism thus become a matter of knowing and acting out the content of research from the researcher’s place within a distinct, coherent, and continuous world of meaning. As the result of a particular accumulation, coagulation, and sedimentation of research content, the totality of narratives (or accounts of inquired under research) are made into a research document imbued with an internal unity of meaning, a unity that enforces certain significations, articulations, and subjectifications on the research.

The movements of address and response roused by the invocation of poetry in poetic inquiry desire to unhook the discursive act of inquiry from the points of subjectification and articulation that nail the research to dominant genres, paradigms, methods, and languages of inquiry. These movements are not, however, intended to destroy the entire body of research; instead, they are intended to open the research to connections that presuppose an entire collective assemblage of lyrical invocations. By tearing away the act of inquiry from its discursive form, these movements bring about a final research document as a “versatile production” of inquiry which cannot be properly called research (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986, 1987).
Minor Research

Because of this inviting and seeking a becoming, poetic inquiry becomes minor research. As Deleuze and Guattari (1987) put it:

[W]e must distinguish between: the majoritarian as [a] constant and homogeneous system; minorities as subsystems; and the minoritarian as a potential, creative and created, becoming. The problem is never to acquire majority, even in order to install a new constant. There is no becoming majoritarian; majority is never becoming. All becoming is minoritarian. (pp. 106-7)

Here the notion of minority is complex, because minor research does not exist in itself; it exists only in relation to major research. This means that, in poetic inquiry, poetry or lyrical forms of inquiry invest all its inquiry potential or power (puissance) to transform the discursive research which is being enacted into minor. Poetic inquiry becomes minoritarian because it does not perform inquiry towards its discursive crystallization, but towards a becoming of inquiry. Poetic inquiry does not qualitatively oppose major research; it becomes a “subsystem or outsystem” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, p. 105). The reason is that inquiry, in poetic inquiry, is an act which contains in itself the seeds of responsiveness to itself.

Deleuze and Guattari (1986) introduce the concept of minor literature and consider three characteristics of it. The first characteristic is that in minor literature “language is affected with a high coefficient of deterritorialization” (p. 16). The second characteristic is that “everything in it is political” (p. 17) such that no domain of the writing is left unpolluted by political contamination. And the third characteristic of minor literature is that in it “everything takes a collective value” (p. 17). This means that in minor literature no individual enunciation is privileged and separated from a collective enunciation. Minor literature does not leave any room for the literature of masters or of the elite.
Having introduced poetic inquiry as minor research, I would now like to map these three characteristics from minor literature to minor research. In minor research, as I explained earlier, the formal and dominant indicators of research (description, explanation, documentation, interpretation, and analysis) are deterritorialized by a “line of flight or escape” set in motion by a lyrical invocation introduced by the presence of poetry and its responsiveness towards the discursive act of inquiry. The way poetry affects discursive inquiry is that poetry makes it bend back and fold on itself at the same time as it unfolds. The act of inquiry thus becomes purely political because it sends the lines of affection (contamination) through its own working.

Through its activity of ethical responsiveness, poetic expression pollutes both ontological and epistemological territories of research. It renders the discursive act of inquiry as something else—as an ethical performance of inquiry. Therefore, the discursive activity does not produce the final product proper to research (ontological narratives labeled as knowledge). In poetic inquiry, no individual genre of research is privileged and separated from the movement of address and response set amidst the activity of research.

Poetic expression, as the response from a “chorus” of research towards the discursive act of inquiry, is a collective enunciation and cannot be considered an individual inquirer’s enunciation. That is why poetic inquiry “finds itself politically charged with the role and function of collective, and even revolutionary, enunciation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986, p. 17). The researcher as the poet locates herself at the margins or completely outside the community of researchers, the community of knowledge creators. This location allows her to “conspire” to a different consciousness and its sensibilities (Barone, 1990; Prendergast, 2004). In poetic inquiry, poetry which becomes present while the act of inquiry is conducted cannot be reduced to the voice of consensus of a research community. As such this voice is “conspectus” (Prendergast,
2004). It is a voice that conveys a synopsis of opinions and sensibilities that are not always in agreement. The polyphony of voices in poetic inquiry represents a “conspiracy” which originates in a profound ethical undertaking (Barone, 1990).

Deleuze and Guattari (1986) distinguish between “the subject of a statement” and “the subject of enunciation” of a statement (p. 30). They maintain that the subject of a statement is that of a literary text’s form of the content, while the subject of enunciation is that of the text’s form of expression. In poetic inquiry, there is a co-breathing between the subject of the discursive act of inquiry (the researcher) and the subject of the lyrical enunciation of inquiry (the poet). In major research, however, the researcher is present and conducts the act of inquiry and the poet is either non-present or is seldom present.

Nothing divides the subject of the statement and the subject of enunciation in minor research because the discursive act of inquiry “forms a unity with desire to respond to this act, a unity beyond laws, states, regimes” of research (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986, pp. 41-2). Poetic inquiry has a singular, heterogeneous, and polyphonic voice. A micropolitics of desire for the consummation of inquiry performs through this singular voice. The performance of desire embodies the inquirer enduring her act of inquiry, responsibly. This enduring creates a potentiality of transformation for the rigid forms into which contents will flow as they are about to congeal so that they “take flight along lines of escape or transformation” (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986, p. 85). The results are intense patterns of reterritorialization, distinct from the patterns of major research.

Poetry that becomes present in research and introduces the embodiment of a reterritorialization as the sign of an event of inquiry provides an “abstract machine” of inquiry inside the “machinic assemblage” of research (Deleuze & Guattari, 1986). As Deleuze and
Guattari maintain, “it is itself part of the machine that will form a machine in turn in order to make possible the functioning of the whole or to modify it or blow it up” (p. 82). Just as the chorus in Greek drama is outside the narrative yet inside the play, poetry which becomes present in research is outside the discursive territoriality of research yet inside the research. In this respect, poetry published in books and literary magazines does not qualify as poetic inquiry. Similarly, not every piece of research containing poetry qualifies as poetic inquiry. Only poetry that, by its presence, can invoke in research a movement of address-response that transforms research forms can be considered an abstract machine of inquiry. And only such poetry, as an adjunct to the discursive activity of inquiry, can create poetic inquiry from major research.

In her post-doctoral research, Monica Prendergast (2007) has gathered an annotated bibliography of poetic inquiry published in a wide variety of sources in the humanities, social sciences, and education. She maintains that “poetic inquiry tends to belong to one of the three following categories, distinguished by the voice that is engaged: VOX AUTOBIOGRAPHIA/AUTOETHNOGRAPHIA, VOX PARTICIPARE, and VOX THEORIA” (p. 2).

For Prendergast, VOX AUTOBIOGRAPHIA/AUTOETHNOGRAPHIA includes: researcher-voiced poems written from field notes, journal entries, or reflective/creative/autobiographical writing as the data source. This category is problematic in that it could conceivably encompass all poetry, if positioned as an essentially autobiographical art form, taking its data from the poet’s (researcher’s) life experience. Of course, poems must be framed in a research context in order to qualify here, but all poetry could also be argued to be a form of research, a re-searching of experience and sorting into expression and communication through language. (p. 2)

Although it is true that all poetry is a form of inquiry, not all research that includes poetry framed in the research context qualifies as poetic inquiry. The source of “poetry data” which become present in research can be any of those mentioned by Prendergast above, yet the only poetry that
can potentially create a movement of address and response in research is that which can invoke a movement of infolding and outfolding in discursive activity attempting to produce major research. Only poetry that can make the discursive activity of inquiry contagious with a desire for transformation, that can affect the research content with a high coefficient of deterritorialization, can bring about a reterritorialization of discursive inquiry.

The second “voice” described by Prendergast (2007) is VOX PARTICIPARE which includes:

[p]articipant-voiced poems written from interview transcripts or solicited directly from participants, sometimes in an action research model where the poems are co-created with the researcher. The voices in the poems may be singular or multiple. Also, inquiry poems may blend both the researcher’s and the participants’ voices. (p. 2)

The same as I said above, having participant-voiced poems in a research is not enough to make research poetic inquiry. The presence of these poems must affect the discursive activity of inquiry. Only then, the participant-voiced poems work as abstract machines of inquiry and have the potential to create poetic inquiry.

Finally, Prendergast (2007) describes her third voice, the VOX THEORIA as:

[l]iterature-voiced poems written from works of literature/theory in a discipline or field. Or, alternately, poems about poetry and/or inquiry itself. Some of these poems are overtly political and critical in their content (especially some poems written in the wake of Sept. 11th events); they are incorporated here, but are an offshoot. (p. 2)

Again, only if these literature-voiced poems can create an abstract machine of inquiry in the machinic assemblage of research, only if their off-shoot can become a line of flight along which the activity of inquiry escapes its discursive functioning as it takes place, then and only then can these poems politicize and contaminate the research and transform it into minor research. Otherwise, the research containing literature-voiced poems do not qualify for poetic inquiry.
Prendergast (2007) has gathered multiple terms used for poetic inquiry. Some of these are:

- research poetry or research poems (Cannon Poindexter, 2002; Faulkner, 2007; O’Connor, 2001)
- data poetry or data poems (Commeyras & Montsi, 2000; Ely et al., 1997; Neilsen, 2004)
- poetic transcription (Freeman, 2006; Glesne, 1997; Whitney, 2004)
- poetic narrative (Glesne, 1997)
- poetic resonance (Ward, 1986)
- anthropological poetry (Brady, 2000; Brummans, 2003)
- narrative poetry (Finley, 2000; Norum, 2000; Patai, 1988; Tedlock, 1972, 1983)
- aesthetic social science (M. Richardson, 1998)
- poetic, fictional narrative (P. Smith, 1999)
- ethno-poem (W.N. Smith, 2002)
- ethnopoetry (Kendall & Murray, 2005) / ethno-poetry (Smith, W.N., 2002)
- ethnopoetics (Rothenberg, 1994)
- transcript poems (Evelyn, 2004; Luce-Kapler, 2004; Santoro & Kamler, 2001)
- interview poems (Santoro & Kamler, 2001)
- map-poems (Hurren, 1998)
- poetic condensation of oral narratives (Öhlen, 2003)
- fieldnote poems (Cahnmann, 2003)
- field poetry (Flores, 1982)
- poetic analysis (Butler-Kisber et al., 2003)
- prose poems (Brady, 2004; Clarke et al., 2005; Saarnivaara, 2003)
- poetic texts (Dunlop, 2003)
- poetic reflection/resistance (Kinsella, 2006)
- poetic rumination (Leggo, 1999)
- research-generated poetry (Rath, 2001)
- autoethnographic verse (Ricci, 2003)
- performance poem (Finley, M., 2003; Richardson, L., 1999). (p. 3)

These compound terms all hint at the two aspects of poetic inquiry. The first is suggested by the terms often found in major research or procedures of discursive inquiry (e.g. data collection, data, ethno, transcript, field, analysis, transcript, interview, investigative, autobiographical). The second, which is the lyrical act or performance, is suggested by terms using the word poetic or poetry. This is the act or performance that affects the discursive activity as it is taking place so as to transform major research to minor—to poetic inquiry. Major research lacks the lyrical
performance of poetry which becomes present and acts as an abstract machine of inquiry, as a potentiality of discursive inquiry that can bring about its transformation. Poetry which acts in a lyrical way—which performs responsiveness towards the discursive activity of inquiry, a responsiveness that makes inquiry contagious with itself—extends and anticipates a whole field of immanence of inquiry where major research is given a potentiality to become the other to itself—to become poetic inquiry.
Variation III-III
**Like this Autumn, My Mind: A Poem by Nilofar Shidmehr**

is also full of leaves
some yellow, already lying
  subdued
  in the dirt
  under the feet

but some red, like fire
  still in the air,
  conspiring
with a passing wind
so that their downfall

be delayed a bit.

In this variation, informed by Massumi’s theory of affect (2002a), I briefly discuss how poetry appearing in major research as a chorus affects the discursive business of research and invokes sprouting deviations in discursive patterns of research so as to transform them. After this brief discussion, I show how my poems presented in Movement II transform major research informed by the discourse of the politics of recognition into poetic inquiry as minor research. My poems, I maintain, are uninvited and unexpected guests in this research. Upon their arrival, they present the intuition of something which cannot be accommodated and categorized by the usual concepts that inform the discursive inquiry into the politics of recognition and include such topics as multiculturalism, citizenship, identity formation, recognition, assimilation, integration, and others. Even though this something is “beyond recognition” (Oliver, 2001) and cannot be named, I call it the pathos of belonging/non-belonging for the purpose of expressing what my poetry can potentially invoke during a movement of address-response in the research informed by the discourse of recognition.

My poems are responsive towards the discourse of recognition and thus can invoke a response in the research informed by the politics of recognition towards its own discursive
categories. In other words, the responsiveness can divert research from its discursive line of inquiry, thus creating infoldings and outfoldings that eventually facilitate a transformation of research into poetic inquiry. I do not claim that my poetry is a critique of the politics of recognition. Nor do I suggest that the emerging snapshot of a poetic inquiry in Movement II represents research which deconstructs the dominant discourses of immigrants’ identity formation. The emerging poetic inquiry cannot properly be called research. Rather, it is an intense tapestry of inquiry embodying the power of my response to my life as an immigrant in diaspora under conditions of exile. What invokes this singular formation of patterns of intensity is, I believe, an intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging which my poetry has presented to my discursive inquiry into immigrants’ identity formation in Canada, informed by the key concepts in the politics of recognition. The poem in the beginning of this variation embodies this pathos: the speaker’s mind is full of leaves, some of which are already fallen, but some still hang in the air.

**Poetry as Uninvited Guests in the House**

Poetry is affective. When it enters research, imagined here as a house of discourse, it affects the research. In poetic inquiry, poetry suddenly appears in the house of research without notification and without invitation, like a dramatic chorus which becomes present in the play unexpectedly and uninvited. When poetry becomes present, the house of research includes both discourse as its permanent resident and poetry as an “uninvited guest” (Massumi, 2002a, p. 16). The uninvited guest affects the research by inviting discursive inquiry to sprout deviations in its otherwise stable narrative patterns. These deviations are openings of inquiry which bud across the research, contaminating and politicizing it. The surprising presence of poetry thus creates a potential in the research, which Massumi calls “contagion.” More precisely, in poetic inquiry,
lyric contagion takes hold of the research as a house of inquiry and directs it to something else: to an incipient budding system of inquiry, to a constellation of openness of inquiry.

In the same way that a chorus enters a play, poetry, in poetic inquiry, slips into the house of research surprisingly to become present, like an uninvited guest. Poetry’s presence cannot be compared to or associated with anything already in the house. Residing in the house permanently, of course, is discourse. Poetry’s presence in the house of research is therefore singular, for it does not belong to the house but to itself. This presence in relation to the house can be defined as “a disjunctive self-inclusion: a belonging to itself that is simultaneously and extendably to everything else with which it might be connected (one of all and all in itself). The presence of poetry in the house of research is an example of self-relation” (Massumi, 2002a, pp. 17-18). Yet poetry can serve and stand for researchers and the research community, and all others who permanently reside in the house of research. Poetry is one-for-the-other in the house of research, which, paradoxically, is another expression for becoming oneself, or another expression for belonging to oneself. This is the result of poetry’s presence as a singularity in the house of research it has entered uninvited.

A singularity is a becoming one-for-the-other via an affirmative and responsive relationship to oneself. Singular is a self that becomes extendable to the realm of otherness by means of intensity. Singularity is one which is all-for-the-other and, at the same time, all-in-itself. The singularity of poems in the house of research is manifested in details that constitute and partake of them. However, at each detail, a poem can become an invited guest in discourse of the research, can belong to the house of research and becomes a permanent resident in it; therefore in each detail, a poem “runs the risk of falling apart from its unity of self-relation” (Massumi, 2002a, p. 18).
Each detail of a poem that unexpectedly enters the house of research is itself another example of a singularity incipient in the womb of that poem. In other words, the genome of each detail is the same as that of the poem which appears surprisingly: one-for-all (which is discursive) and all-in-itself. The operating “AND” in the conjunction distinguishes poetic inquiry from other forms of research which are merely discursive. In poetic inquiry, discursive research is a permanent resident in the house of research and suddenly poetry appears as an uninvited guest.

By its sudden presence, poetry affects whatever and whoever is permanent in the house of research. This is because the permanent did not invite or expect poetry and as a result gets tense with poetry’s presence. Poetry expresses inquiry as a joy in affection which inspires digression. Digression is the place where the uninvited emerges, where poems are suddenly found in the discursive home of inquiry. This is the place where the potentiality of inquiry burgeons as buds throughout the research. The potentiality of inquiry is all turned into multiple heterogeneous openings as signs of the presence of multiple heterogeneous uninvited guests and of multiple unexpected digressions. Each unanticipated detail in a poem invites the unexpected so that discursive inquiry risks sprouting the deviant, that is the risk of its own total collapse. By the sudden appearance of poems and their details, as an example of singularity, discursive inquiry diverges to places not initially considered in the research as possible extensions. In this way, even the discursive aspect of inquiry becomes an uninvited guest in the house of research.

Poems in poetic inquiry, as uninvited guests in the house of research, evade all principles, all rules, and all narrative patterns of discourse of the house they have unexpectedly entered—they evade these structures altogether before they are even presented by the host. The reason is that poetry does not represent or stand for a concept from the discursive part of research. Evasion
amounts to the affirmation of poetry’s otherness that calls on the host for submission. Additionally, poems call on the host to submit her entire discursive house to them. Submission requires a performance of responsiveness to the uninvited guests’ call, creating tension as the host surrenders her house to the uninvited guests and, while leaving, reshapes the house of research as “a systematic openness” or “an open system” of inquiry (Massumi, 2002a, p. 18).

In poetic inquiry, poems or uninvited guests can look like discursive concepts—like neighbors from an adjacent discursive house. Yet in the house they have entered without invitation or expectation, they do not have the identity of concepts. Since they look like the residents of a nearby house who have left their house and migrated to one which does not belong to them, they exemplify concepts which are uprooted from their usual connections to other concepts in their discourses (their homes). The residents of the house they enter cannot situate these homeless people properly in their house. Yet they are already in and the host tries to accommodate them while their presence affects the host by altering the rules, patterns, and rituals of the house.

As a result, research discourse as the host’s house arrangements will start to deviate from its established configurations and create openness for the newcomers who, even though they might look familiar, are strangers in the house. The research host’s attempt to accommodate new guests causes another deviation of research discourse. Each deviation induced via the arrival of new poems resembles an opening. With each arrival of poetry, the inquirer surprisingly acquires a collection of openings or buds of inquiry which are not, however, the buds of the same burgeoning plant. This is a collection of openness, openings that do not necessarily accord with one another because each poem is singular and affects the host differently and unpredictably. What emerges as research is a heterogeneous incipient system of openness.
The openness spreads in the house of research by the continuation of lyrical inquiry that accompanies the uninvited arrival of poetry. The emergent open budding system cannot be properly called discursive research. It can only be called a creative contagion prompted by a throng of uninvited guests which arrived from time to time, unexpectedly and without invitation. It is as if their presence, their moving around the house, was contagious which they inflicted upon the house of research.

Conceptually, the method of poetic inquiry is the method of activating an operating “AND” in research. As a method, the “AND” relates the two different logics (discursive and lyric) to let lyric logic, as uninvited guest, as outsider who is suddenly found inside, take over the house of research in a contagious way. The presence of the lyrical as such is not real but virtual. As Massumi (2002a) argues, virtual is “a space that opens an outside perspective on the self-other, subject-object axis” (p. 51). This opening up is another expression for the emergence of the house of research as a house for the uninvited guests.

The “AND” reanimates inquiry again and again. It resembles the irreducible generative gap in the act of breathing—the gap between inhaling and exhaling. Saadi Shirazi, a classical Persian poet, says in his book Golestan or The Rose Garden (n. d.) that inhaling extends the life of the body while exhaling makes the body intense, thus buoyant (p. 3). Both actions reanimate the body, yet in different ways: inhaling reanimates the body through ex-tension and exhaling reanimates the body through in-tension. In each breath, therefore, in Saadi’s view, there are two blessings: life-extension and buoyancy. Buoyancy here is the expression of liveliness, resilience, and movement. Buoyancy is the expression of the body’s desire towards the other, felt affectively by the body when breath bursts forth from it while exhaling—a feeling that reverberates the body. Buoyancy, in other words, is “the act [expression] of instantaneous
recognition of self-as-other” (Massumi, 2002a, p. 54). It is the recognition of self as irretrievably changed by the other. The gap in breath or the generative “AND” which joins inhaling and exhaling sets in motion this recognition as a potentiality. In the context of our discussion about poetic inquiry, the generative “AND” is what makes the discursive part of research respond to poetry that has suddenly entered the house of research. The “AND” is the potentiality of such response, and every time it emerges it enables “a different connectivity and a redundancy of signification” in discursive part of research (Massumi, 2002a, p. 25).

Narrative is the constitutive principle of the discursive part of poetic inquiry. The logic of narrative is the logic of extension. Narrative extends the existing “search” done by previous inquirers and creates re-search. Narrative extends the stories previous researchers have told and molds them back into possible story patterns legitimized and validated by the research community. Story patterns represent the possible ways of extending a story or of unfolding its events. Extension is the mechanism for turning the potentiality of storytelling, or more generally the potentiality of utterance, into discursive patterns as patterns of actuality or possibility. Actuality is already a prosthesis of potentiality and thus implies limitations and rules of extension. Possibility indicates predictable patterns of extension in the future and limits potentiality to them only. Possibilities in discursive research are like invited guests who might come or not. If they come, then they should follow the order of the house they enter, which, in the case of research, is the order of unfolding. That is why discursive modality of research limits the act of inquiry to the act of unfolding according to either existing or possible narrative patterns of research.

The order of unfolding represents the moral order of research. Discursive order in general can be called the order of historicity. Research as a discursive act is a mimesis of inquiry, aimed
at approximating the performance of inquiry to represent a possible account of history. Through mimesis, the inquirer historicizes possibilities of inquiry and represents them as images of actuality—as research. If poetry suddenly enters the discursive research as an uninvited guest, it inserts the “AND.” The “AND” can potentially initiate a lyrical motion in research that disturbs the order of unfolding and thus the historicity of research which provides its order of morality—its validity and reliability. Poetry induces disturbance not because it directly confronts the actual-possible narrative patterns formed as the result of the mimesis of inquiry, but because it affects how these patterns enfold on themselves. The lyrical affects the actual-possible in the way that it responds to itself by doubling and redoubling and creating patterns of intensity—patterns of deformation of the mimesis of inquiry.

Poetry entering discursive research has no predictive value, meaning that one cannot tell how it might affect the research and what is going to happen because of its sudden appearance. This is because poems which unexpectedly appear do not actually reference any narrative outside themselves. They are singularities which are in-themselves and for-themselves, and not directly applicable to the narrative patterns of research. Neither are they generalizable to research narratives. The way poetry performs inquiry does not represent a mimesis of narrative inquiry. Poetry does not serve to extend any existing narrative pattern by unfolding it further. Poems in poetic inquiry appear as uninvited guests for no purpose. However, their sudden presence opens up the discourse of research or research narrative patterns to “a variety of non-linear influences that a strict narrative can deny or inhibit” (Massumi, 2002a, p. 56), whose results cannot be predicted.

Poems affect the research in such a way that the act of inquiry momentarily becomes unhooked from its discursive functioning, from its categorical destining, begins moving
autonomously. As a result, the seal of historicity or the space-time manifold in which the research is bound momentarily opens, and thus space and time are transmuted. In other words, the sudden appearance of poetry frees the research from its strict temporal order, its historicity, because the poem interrupts the unfolding of the research narrative and resets the act of inquiry to a potential path of infolding over itself—a potential path of recursion, creating intensities as infoldings and outfoldings in research, creating a new pattern of unfolding. Each new poem or constituent detail, when present, interrupts the new path that the last one helped to bring forth via inducement. The result of each interruption is a momentarily suspension of research—a suspension that is, paradoxically, also a re-animation of research. In fact, the research is animated by intensive inter-relating versions of itself. The “AND” is the potentiality which the unexpected presence of poetry inserts into research to respond to itself. The “AND” gives the act of inquiry a certain buoyancy lacking in other forms of research in which the lyrical remains absent. Infused by its own unique energy, poetic inquiry embodies an autonomy of openness.

Poetic inquiry is a form of research which, while the act of inquiry performs discursively, bends on itself and responds to itself. Poetic inquiry is also a form of research which, while the narrative patterns unfold, enfold, and create research as an assemblage of in-foldings and outfoldings, the “AND” urges the act of inquiry to respond to itself, prompting a sudden realization that it is pregnant with unexpected intensities. The “AND” is the incorporeal expression of a kind of relationship which Massumi (2002a, p. 98) calls “a pending-tending together” of action. The “AND” expresses a pending-tending together of the lyrical and discursive modalities of inquiry within poetic inquiry. Finally, the “AND” shows how these two modalities belong together as neighbors—as address and response in the act of utterance. The relation between the discursive and the lyrical is always a relation of neighboring or proximity. As explained earlier, poems
appearing in the house of research during poetic inquiry resemble concepts which are uprooted from their discourses. They resemble neighbors who no longer live in the neighboring house. In this sense, they look both familiar and strange. They look familiar because they still retain their connectivities to the discourses from which they were uprooted. These connectivities make them look like neighbors. However, because they do not reside in any neighboring house—in any discursive house—they look strange. As such they can potentially create a relation of pending-tending together with concepts that are residents of the house of research.

Poems as strangers who look like the previous residents of the neighboring house present the immanence of residency. With their immanence, they affect the permanent residents of the house of research and the invited guests which might arrive. These strangers affect the residents in a way that momentarily suspends their residency and causes them to consider leaving the house to them. When the residents return to themselves, they find themselves and their house changed by the presence of these strangers—these uninvited guests who have already left. The changes invite them to live their lives differently.

In poetic inquiry, the unexpected presence of the lyrical invites the discursive act of inquiry to bend back and enfold on itself during the discursive act of inquiry. As a result, the mimesis of inquiry momentarily suspends itself and looks like a stranger in her own house. Yet it is again animated through the “AND.” The “AND” itself cannot be embodied in the research; it remains as potentiality. It is the call or invitation which sets the movement of enfolding. It is the virtual motivator, prompting the discursive operation of inquiry to participate in its own emergence as something else. The “AND” presents a desire for completeness of inquiry—a completeness which is “complete only in its openness: its continuing” (Massumi, 2002a, p. 137). The “AND” is the multiplication of power (puissance) of inquiry.
The “AND” is the incorporeal operator which transforms the corporeality of research to a multiplicity of discursive inquiries that are present to one another in resonance and interference. After that, the immanence of the lyrical, the immanence of the uninvited guests of inquiry, becomes contingently embodied in the house of research. The variation of such contingency induces multiple infoldings and outfoldings. These infoldings and outfoldings (redoublings and reductions) can be called malformations or intensities of discourse. Intensities do not signify a meaningful sequencing of events called narration. They skew the rule or logic of extension as a heuristic of narration. Intensities are stammerings of discourse. When the lyrical appears in the house of research, it induces an order of connection from what discursive inquiry does and, as a result, the discursive patterns of research double each time. If poetic inquiry could be imaged depicted as an image, perhaps it would best be done by superposing the deformations resulting from the recurring performances of inquiry. That is, by superposing emerging infoldings/outfoldings on the patterns of unfolding. This is similar to creating an image of a topological figure, defined by Massumi (2002a, p. 134) “as the continuous transformation of one geometrical figure into another.”

In the continuous infoldings and outfoldings of narrative patterns which form as the discursive act of inquiry enfolds over itself in response to the invitation by the presence of lyrical as uninvited guest, the research transforms into a “self-referential encompassment” of inquiry (Massumi, 2002a, p. 133). It becomes an open system—a collection of openness that cannot be applied to anything. We can think of each openness as a bud of inquiry. The discursive research in poetic inquiry thus becomes a rhizomatic burgeoning of buds. The way buds burgeon is through contagion. What motivates this burgeoning is the “AND” as a call from the lyrical which unexpectedly becomes present. Poems entering the house of research as unexpected guests invite
sprouting deviations of the discourse by inducing a desire in discourse to bloom into an open incipient system of inquiry.

**The Politics of Recognition and the Pathos of Belonging/no-Belonging**

Contemporary major research on multiculturalism, as informed by the discourse of recognition, emphasizes such key concepts as the recognizer, the recognized, and the act of recognition as one that confers rights and respect. This research focuses on demands or struggles for recognition by marginalized and oppressed people, groups, or cultures. Formulated in this way, the concept of recognition leads to concepts of distributive or legal justice as remedies for injustices. Other concepts such as assimilation, integration, legal recognition, citizenship, social and cultural worth, and social solidarity are similarly bound with the key concepts. How these concepts are formulated corresponds to how the researcher inquires into immigrants’ identity formation or other related subjects.

Before examining the potentiality of my poetry to make the discourse of recognition “witness” something “beyond” its categories of recognition and thus to respond to it (Oliver, 2001), I will briefly look at the formulation of key concepts of recognition in the major theories of recognition enunciated by Honneth (1995), Taylor (1994), and Fraser (1997, 2003).

As Oliver (2001) argues, major theories of the politics of recognition draw on a Hegelian notion of a master-slave relationship that portrays recognition as something granted or conferred by the dominant societal group. The act of conferring creates the dialogic form of recognition which reinforces the dominant groups and their legislated rights, responsibilities, forms of conferring, and policies for distribution of recognition. The politics of recognition, in the Hegelian model, always need a recognizer and a recognized who replicate the master/slave or subject/object relationships. Since oppression creates the demands for recognition, then “the
need to demand recognition from the dominant culture or group is a symptom of the pathology of oppression” (p. 9).

The notion of conferring is central to theories of recognition. For Honneth (1996), recognition is something that we confer on others or others confer on us in the form of self-respect. He considers three types of recognition and maintains that struggles over worth or self-respect are moral struggles. A sense of reciprocity, also central to a Hegelian model of recognition, is built into Honneth’s theory so that if we want recognition from the other we need to give recognition to the other. For Honneth, love is the first and the most fundamental of the three forms of recognition. As he writes, “Recognition is the affirmation of independence supported by care (Honneth, 1996, p. 107). Without love, the sense of self-confidence and self-respect is destroyed. The assurance of care allows one to be an independent subject. In Honneth’s theory, “all types of recognition and self-respect are conditioned by the experience of love” (Oliver, 2001, p. 47). Love, however, unlike other forms of recognition, does not come as the result of historical development.

For Honneth (1996), legal recognition is the second form of recognition that is conferred on us by our participation in a system of law that recognizes certain individual rights. Legal recognition, unlike love, is cognitive, not affective. Nevertheless, Honneth still describes it as analogous to love in that just as loving care supports autonomy by transferring trust from the mother to the child, social respect leads to self-respect because subjects endowed with rights are trusted by law to make judgments and thereby come to trust themselves. (Oliver, 2001, p. 47)

Legal rights assure that all individuals have the same rights and thus the same respect given to them by law.

Honneth (1996) considers social solidarity as the third form of recognition conferred on us by the group. People gain a sense of self-esteem by belonging to a specific social group and
sharing in its accomplishments, which it doesn’t share with other groups. As Honneth explains, “Group identity becomes a source of self-esteem when groups are valued for certain particular characteristics that can carry over to individuals” (pp. 127-8). Oppression happens when there is an absence of social recognition either by law or by the society for a particular group identity. To Honneth, social solidarity, like legal recognition, is a historical development. Both of these forms of recognition, however, depend on love, which is not a historical development. Love is a symbiotic relation like that of infant and mother. After becoming independent from their mothers by a severe break, individuals then receive love from other individuals, by the law, and by the group to which they are bound by social solidarity.

Since Honneth thinks that the condition of social self-respect depends on an initial condition of disrespect, one can only achieve self-respect through and as a result of conflict and struggle for recognition. This to some degree undermines Honneth’s own theory of relations of positive recognition with others according to which “when others trust us, only then can we trust ourselves; when others respect us as capable of judgment and action, only then can we respect ourselves as autonomous agents” (Honneth, 1996, p 5).

Fraser (1997), another theorist of recognition, also thinks of recognition in discursive terms and in relation to the idea of conferring. She addresses the unjust social relations resulting from unjust subject positions and unjust conferring of rights, respect, and opportunities. She considers two remedies for unjust social relations and a lack of recognition or disrespect. One is affirmative and addresses the inequitable outcomes of injustice and tries to ameliorate them without addressing underlying structures that created these outcomes. The other remedy is transformative, although Fraser doesn’t say how transformative remedies of recognition deconstruct and destabilize identity and all subject positions in the social grid. What Fraser calls
affirmative remedies leaves intact subject/recognizer or object/recognized opposition and merely tries to bridge the gap between them.

Taylor (1994), another influential theorist of recognition, also sees recognition as something that we confer on others. He insists that there are always interlocutors ready to gain membership in dominant groups, seeking recognition of their worth from those whom they see as members of an intellectually and morally superior culture. Recognition, therefore, is a type of respect that is conferred or withheld depending on the worth of the individual or group in question. The judgment of worth is intellectual not moral, and is gained through comparative study of others’ cultures. Conferring respect is often granted by dominant social groups that judge others to determine cultural and individual worth. Taylor thinks that by conferring rights on others, the dominant group, as the recognizer, benefits from the resulting expansion of its cultural horizon. Recognition, for Taylor, is thus a type of market exchange; we give recognition in exchange for something of value to us. In this way, recognition is dialogical.

My Discursive Inquiry Transformed into Poetic Inquiry (Minor Research)

As we see, research into such topics as multiculturalism, citizenship, or immigrants’ identity formation that employs the discourse of recognition found in these accounts by major theorists will include the key concepts of recognizer, recognized, and the act of recognition as conferring acknowledgement on immigrants in the form of rights, responsibilities, respect, solidarity, etc. What my poems can unexpectedly bring to this metaphoric house of research, which they cannot accommodate via their key concepts, is an intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging. As Oliver (2001) rightly indicates, immigrants “bear witness to a pathos beyond recognition and to something other than the horror of their objectification” by the dominant culture in the society (p. 8).
Pathos lies hidden because the research relying on the discourse of recognition cannot situate and accommodate something beyond legal and formal cultural recognition in it. The dilemma is that the demand for recognition never stops because more recognition does not make immigrants fully “belong” to their current or former society. Moreover, membership in their globally dispersed cultural group also feels elusive and intangible. As a result, at the same time as immigrants feel they belong to their cultural group, they feel they do not belong to it. They also feel that they both belong to and do not belong to both the country of their origin and the host society. This pathos of belonging/non-belonging creates an intense feeling of being hung in the air, threatened with an eventual downfall, in the same way as my poem in the beginning of this variation depicts.

The intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging, at the same time, presents potentiality of recognition which my poems then present to the discourse of recognition formulated in politics of recognition theories. My poetry does not represent a critique of these theories. Neither does it reveal the structures that support the politics of recognition so as to deconstruct them. Rather, it presents an intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging by lyrically attending to the complexities of living in conditions of exile and diaspora. This lyrical attentiveness, which my poetry embodies, cannot be turned into discourse.

The intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging is the potentiality of the discourse of recognition. In other words, this intuition has the potential to call a research informed by the discourse of recognition to an act of responsive witnessing. It can potentially invoke an urge in this research to bear witness to what is beyond recognition to it. This witnessing requires a constant vigilance in self-reflection—a form of self-reflection that can make the research endure intensities that it cannot categorize through the theories of the politics of recognition. Such
witnessing is a form of reflexivity as being “vigilant and responsive to the metaphorical cues that lives offer” (Cole & Knowles, 2001, p. 212). Therefore, it provides “insight into individual lives and, more generally, the human condition” (p. 217).

Examples of the intensities in my poems which provide insight to immigrants’ living conditions are: the longing of two lovers, one an immigrant and one unable to immigrate to the country in which the first resides—a longing for which there can be no legal provision; the horror of shedding one’s own skin to become a member of the elusive club of the dominant group which, paradoxically, will never accept her as a member; the uncanniness of the feelings of an immigrant who suddenly feels she belongs to the same community as her neighbors when she reads a notice posted on the elevator by the police. By enduring these intensities, the discourse of recognition enacted by major research on immigrants can transform into poetic inquiry.

Enduring is invoked by the intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging presented in recognition of a multitude of complex adversities: the irony of assimilation and integration, the dilemma of “us” vs. “them,” the anomaly of citizenship, the emptiness of cultural and legal representation, the horror of officiality in the act of recognition performed by law or other social institutions in multicultural societies, the anxieties of membership, the impossibilities of communication, the outlandish wakefulness of one in exile, the unbearable lightness of being an eternal other in the host country to which one has immigrated, the pathology of immigration, the anguishes of exilic living, the stammering of accented English, the wounds of solidarity, the bleeding of identification, the haunting feeling of being from elsewhere. By enduring the intensities invoked by an awareness of complex situations or experience such as the ones mentioned above, the research informed by theories of recognition witnesses the insensitivity of
their theoretical categories, the emptiness and futility of their themes, the tyranny of their colonizing force of categorization, the horror of their ways of identity-making, and the injustice of their reductionist methods of constructing recognition as methods of conferring rights and general cultural acknowledgement on others.

The research informed by the discourse of recognition is thus exposed to the intensities formed by the intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging. These intensities form metaphorical open wounds from which the discourse of recognition informing the research constantly bleeds. The wounds are like the accusation levelled at the research during its responsive witnessing—accusations that the research cannot recognize itself. The infoldings and outfoldings of the research during such witnessing are the embodiments of a deeper sensibility at the edge of the nerves of inquiry that arise when faced with the trauma of its own accusation. What comes as a result of this process is not major research but poetic inquiry.

When my poems become present to the research informed by the politics of recognition, they enter a relation of proximity with the discourse, not a discursive relation of dialogicity. As Levinas (1981) puts it:

Proximity is not a state, a repose, but a restlessness, null site, outside of the place of rest. It overwhelms the calm of non-ubiquity of a being which becomes a rest in a site. No site then, is ever sufficiently a proximity, like an embrace. Never close enough, proximity does not congeal into a structure, save when represented in the demand for justice as reversible, and reveals into a simple relation. (p. 82)

A relation of proximity emerges because my poems cannot be situated in the discourse of recognition as can the concepts from the theories of recognition. Even though the poems might look like concepts from these theories, they are not. They look like uprooted concepts from the house of a neighboring discourse (for example, the discourse of multiculturalism) which still have the complex roots or connectivities attached to them. These roots cannot, however, be
planted in the discourse of recognition. Instead, they present the potentiality of becoming other-to-itself to the discourse of recognition. The presentation of my poems comes in the form of an immediate urge to respond to the intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging. The immediate urge is an invocation that calls for a movement—a movement of inquiry responsive to the discourse of recognition as it is taking place.

Unexpectedly exposed to a call for transformation from the intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging, major research informed by theories of recognition can burgeon as open systems of inquiry with multiple lyrical buds. This sudden growth is possible because the pathos of belonging/non-belonging, when presented to major research as their potentiality of inquiry, incites multiple deviant patterns of inquiry to sprout from the discursive paths. In a pending-tending relationship, these non-accommodated complexities stress major research until it creates multiple heterogeneous versions of itself at the points of symbiosis. These multiplicities are patterns of contagion, which, while spreading through the major research as they are in the process of formation, turn the research into something else—into poetic inquiry.

My poems have the potentiality to invoke a movement of deterritorialization in the researches who built their discursive territoriality on the key concepts of recognizer, recognized, and recognition, understood as the process of conferring rights on the recognized by the recognizer, and secondary concepts such as assimilation, integration, and enculturation. The potentiality of my poems consists in exposing these concepts to the intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging in order to sensitize the research to the vulnerabilities and experiences of immigrants living in diaspora and in exile, and thereby to affect the articulation of the research in process. The result is that the discourse of recognition becomes suspended, and when it resumes operation, it creates infoldings and outfoldings which can be called diachronics of
recognition. Diachronics of recognition have no recognizer to recognize the other, and no recognized to be recognized by the recognizer’s act of conferring rights and respect on her.

My poems present singularities of experience of living as an immigrant. As such, they neither represent the general experience of all immigrants in Canada nor do they represent the general experience of one generic immigrant or an immigrant group (e.g. Iranian immigrants). However, the intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging belongs to all general and specific cases examined by research informed by the theories of recognition. This intuition cannot be shaped as demands for legal rights or respect by immigrants and therefore cannot be accommodated in the discourse on, for example, assimilation, enculturation, and integration. The poetry thus resembles an uninvited guest who cannot be settled and is herself unsettling because she spreads her disturbing condition to the key concepts of recognition residing permanently in the house of major research informed by the politics of recognition.

The intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging makes the discourse of recognition contagious with its uncanniness as it is enacted in major research. As a result, the discursive act of inquiry is briefly suspended, and when it resumes, it diverts from its own discursive functioning and creates intense patterns which cannot be properly called research. My poems thus make the discourse of recognition witness and endure complexities that cannot be remedied through the solutions offered by the theories of the politics of recognition—remedies that involve the act of recognition as conferring legal rights or respect.

These complexities, for example the experience of language crisis, all correspond to the uncanny feeling immigrants have about belonging and at the same time not belonging to the societies they came from and to the societies in which they have settled and become a citizen. At the same time, they feel they belong and do not belong to their own diasporic cultural groups.
The uncanniness of this feeling hints at the fact that membership in a particular diasporic community may not bring about the second kind of recognition through solidarity with one’s own cultural group that Honneth talks about. Life in diaspora presents a situation of belonging/non-belonging that creates tense feelings such as those of being from elsewhere or being out of the place. These feelings defy Taylor’s notion that recognition by a dominant cultural group can endorse the cultural worth of diasporic groups. Fraser’s solution for just accommodation and upgrading of immigrants in multicultural societies also does not work, since the even distribution of rights and respect among the members of the society does not lift up the feelings associated with living in cultural exile and diaspora.

These complex feelings and the intensities of alienation, anxiety, hope, and others that accompany them cannot be formulated as a demand for visibility or for legal rights. As my poems suggest, many immigrants continue to experience the feelings of belonging/non-belonging even though they are respected by the members of their own cultural group and they enjoy the same legal rights as other citizens. By presenting the intuition of the pathos of belonging/non-belonging, my poems make the research grounded in the discourse of recognition witness exilic and diasporic intensities. These intensities demand a response from the research about its own discursive mode of inquiry and the concepts it has adopted from the politics of recognition. The response inserts a diversion into the unfolding patterns of the discourse of recognition and creates patterns of discursive stammering called poetic inquiry.
Epilogue
In this dissertation, I advocated for returning poets to the figurative play of research by setting my self as an example: I became present in my inquiry in the discourse of the politics of recognition as a chorus. I imagined research as a dramatic performance and indicated that a good drama has two dimensions: the lyrical and the discursive. I argued that since poets as the chorus of research are typically absent from the Western play of research, this play lacks the qualities of a good dramatic performance. The same problem exists in the dramatic play of Western education, if imagined as such. The absence of a chorus of inquiry in academic research and the absence of education for lyrical responsiveness or “educational poetics” in Western educational systems are related (Gitlin & Peck, 2005).

They both root back to Plato as the founder of the Western academy and of the Western “search-for-knowledge.” Plato, who marks the beginning of Western philosophy and the beginning of discursive literacy in West, was also the one who banished poets from the realm of inquiry. As the business of inquiry is considered one of the central businesses of education, the returning of poetry or the lyrical side of inquiry to education is indispensable in the integration of today’s education.

In this epilogue, in order to locate my advocacy for the return of the lyrical to our educational scene, I give a quick history of how the lyrical side of inquiry which was part of Pre-Socratic thought and education was severed from discourse by Plato and how poets were banished by him from the education scene. Then, I explain how Platonic tradition has persevered up to today in our education system. Critical theorists and postmodern scholars, however, have prepared us for the return of the lyrical. They are the precursors of my call for the re-inclusion of poetry in inquiry. Here, before describing how my educational doctoral journey took shape and
before saying my farewell, I am going to describe the implications of my call for re-including poetry in the dramatic play of inquiry for today’s education.

Yet, the last thing I want to add is that this epilogue is a crossroad I have arrived at the end of my doctoral journey. Since every crossroad presents the beginning of a new journey, as a crossroad, this epilogue is a prologue to another journey I am going to embark on after graduation to explore the potentialities that poetic inquiry can create in education.

**Implications of My Educational Journey for Education**

The exile of poets from the land of epistēmē (research and education) marks the removal of the lyrical side of discourse from philosophy which pre-Socratic thought welcomes. This separation, as Zwicky (1995) indicates, “seeks to establish the hegemony of the logico-mathematical intellect” (p. 76). Plato initiates this project by expelling poets from his Republic of epistemology. To him, poetry does not inform inquiry; even worse, it misdirects and contaminates the process of inquiry directed towards contemplating the “Real” (called the activity of epistēmē) and assigning it its correct name (called the activity of technē). Plato decrees that poets are dangerous for the business of knowledge and thus should be expelled from the scene of education.

It is important to note that, for Plato, poetry means Greek drama that had evolved from Greek Dionysian festivals as spectacles of dance and song. Participants in Dionysian festivals used dancing to respond to their own enactment of the narrative of their daily lives in the community. The Dionysian dancers, who at first were ordinary citizens, later transformed into the chorus as an essential part of Greek drama. Plato does not view the activity of the chorus as relevant to the “true intellectual activity” which he calls contemplation of Truth. To Plato, these dancing movements are considered neither intellectual acts nor acts pertaining to discursivity (or
the act of nominal utterance of language) and thus have nothing to do with the acts of
contemplating the “Real” and giving it its correct name. Plato maintains “that one judges the
correctness of words’ constitution by appeal to custom (ethos) and convention (sunthēkē)”
(Levin, 2001, p. 89, emphasis in original). Customs and conventions are “practices of particular
linguistic communities,” those of philosophers whose practices accord with “logos” that
represent “sklērotēs” or “hardness” of “the onomata of numbers.”

As we see, ethics, for Plato, is the equivalent of accordance with mathematical rules and
has nothing to do with duration which does not yield to numerical order. It thus has nothing to do
with the intuition of duration and with lyrical responsiveness that is the activity of the chorus.
Respectively, to Plato, choral dance and song do not qualify as a linguistic movement of intellect
in search for Truth because choral movement, emerging unexpectedly, cannot be shaped as
Socratic dialogues and set in written form. Even if they can be shaped in this way, Plato thinks
they misdirect students from obtaining knowledge of the “Real.” Choral songs, therefore, do not
qualify as argument building or as philosophizing, or even as consciously reflective and
intellectual activity enacted through the medium of language.

In Platonic epistemology, the process of knowledge-making involves three stages:
finding the “Real,” contemplating the “Real,” and giving the “Real” a proper “Name” in
language. As a result, thinking becomes both a reflective/contemplative and a nominative/
linguistic activity. Education, in turn, becomes an activity performed through a dialogue in which
the teacher who knows the way of correct thinking disciplines the student in the proper way of
thinking. The teacher helps the students to direct their intellect towards the “Real.” Poets, to
Plato, direct the students’ perception from its contemplative path towards misrecognition. The
movements of a chorus, in Plato’s opinion, are like the dancing shadows on the wall in his famous Allegory of the Cave, that the perceiver mistakenly takes for the “Real.”

To Plato, the end of epistemological activity as logical understanding of Forms is “human flourishing” (Levin, 2001, p. 130.). Human flourishing is the highest “techne” called arete (“virtue,” or “excellence”), preserved for philosophers as masters of knowledge (135, emphasis in original). Poets’ lyrical responses, to Plato, have the status of opinion not knowledge. He thus condemns “poets for their lack of understanding as evinced by their attempts at naming, which are judged to be products solely of opinion” (p. 134). Plato maintains that poets “are occupied not with ethical realities themselves, for example, the nature of justice or courage, but with semblances (or semblances of images) thereof.” As a result, lyrical responsiveness, to him, yields pleasure, not virtue; therefore, it cannot bring about human flourishing. For this reason, Plato decrees that poets should be exiled from the pedagogical scene.

Even though Plato banishes poetry (as dramatic play) from the realm of knowledge creation (research) and dissemination (education), he only expels the lyrical part. He preserves and adopts the narrative-discursive part and makes it central to his method of argumentation which he presents as the proper epistemic activity, and which he thinks has to be taught to students of philosophy. Pre-Socratics also use argument in their philosophizing, but do not employ a systematic method of argumentation and do not discipline their students in a specific way. As Zwicky (1995) writes, “Unlike Plato, they [pre-Socratics] were not in business to reorder and convince” (p. 71). Most importantly, their activity of philosophizing is mainly a verbal activity. Zwicky points out that the way in which the pre-Socratics practice philosophy has a lyrical form or lyrical coherence. Lyrical resonance, as Zwicky notes
is a function of the attunement of various distinct components. It thus requires an open structure with distinct elements or distinct axes of experience which stand in a non-linear relation to one another. Being drawn apart, it is brought together with itself. (p. 77)

That is why the philosophy of the pre-Socratics “may assume lyric form when thought whose eros is clarity is driven by profound intuitions of coherence” (Zwicky, 1995, p. 77). Plato, in contrast, establishes philosophy as a written text in the form of dialogues and drops the lyrical aspect of philosophizing. Discursivity, to him, also means a sort of educational midwifery. The teacher as the master of discourse is to help students to deliver the right perception of the “Real” through recollection. To Plato, however, the method of recollection has nothing to do with lyrical coherence and thus with the practice of attunement or intuition. That is why it has nothing to do with the dancing or singing performed by the chorus. Choral performance is a kind of dancing that Bringhurst (2008) calls “knowing in the purest form we know” (p. 15). He writes, “I would rather say that knowing freed from the agenda of possession and control—knowing in the sense of stepping in tune with being, hearing and echoing the music and heartbeat of being.” Poetry is lyrical knowing and as Zwicky (1995) indicates, “Within the domain of lyrically-expressed thought, the distinction between poetry and philosophy has no meaning” (p. 77).

Philosophers after Plato maintain the emphasis on discursive argumentation without lyrical form. Aristotle sets standards for “correct” education or, in other words, standards for disciplining epistemic activity. His method of analysis by deduction also has no place for lyrical expression of thought. As Zwicky (1995) writes about Aristotelian methodology, it is a methodology that, for the most part, appears to be analytic—that is, appears to proceed on the assumption that understanding is a function of breaking a whole into its component parts, plus the view that such a breaking, in the case of ideas, is not attended by any loss of meaning; a willingness to pursue apparently unintuitive taxonomies, apparently because they facilitate an analytic approach; a distrust, evinced as much in Aristotle’s style as in what he says, of intense emotion, and an insistence on the generic superiority of the rational intellect to emotions, desires, and ‘the body.’ (p. 75)
Descartes’ “Method of Analysis” seems to be similar. And so is the Kantian methodology which Kant defines as the way our rationality works. He states that analytical methodology is the Logic of Science. This way of conceptualizing methodology of knowledge-making “identifies the discipline with systematic logico-linguistic analysis” (Zwicky, 2005, p. 67).

This Aristotelian-Cartesian-Kantian methodology of analysis is manifested today in our systems of education as the proper way of disciplining the intellect. Technocratic culture has further narrowed the scope of true rational activity. According to this culture, genuine rational activity is instrumental and seeks a financial interest. As a result, “[w]hat we have left of European philosophy before Aristotle is, on the whole, lyric” and therefore has almost no place in academic disciplines and in our school systems (Zwicky, 1995, p. 76). Additionally, our current education system is rooted in a romantic attitude characterized fundamentally by the claim that there is an absolute distinction between an activity it calls ‘Art’ and another it calls ‘Science’, and that this distinction carries normative weight. (Whether it’s ‘Art’ that’s flaky (and ‘Science’ that’s true), or ‘Science’ that’s pernicious (and ‘Art’ that’s sublime) is irrelevant. (p. 74)

Romantics took for granted that poetry is an irrational activity. Such rejections do not call into question analysis or science, “but rather the institutionalization of the intellect in a way that excludes the possibility of its taking lyric form” (Zwicky, 1995, p. 78). In the same gesture, it “calls into question the institutionalization of poetry as an activity that excludes the possibility of conceptual content” (p. 79).

Neither Enlightenment scholars of education who established public and mass education nor moderns nor the technocrats of our time have invited the lyrical banished by Plato back to the realm of discourse. Romantics also had their reasons for extending the expulsion of the chorus: poetry was irrational, which to them was a value. Those who have recently questioned
the foundation of modernist epistemology, including critical theorists and poststructuralists, however, have prepared the scene for the return of the chorus to the dramatic play of inquiry.

Our ancient, enlightenment, and romantic inheritance constitute the foundation of our education today, in which “educational poetics” has no real place (Gitlin & Peck, 2002). As Zwicky (1995) points out, analysis, as the pinnacle of epistemological activity at the center of our education, “is not only different from lyric, it is at best structurally indifferent to its claims” (p. 78). I, however, see the lyrical as the responsive dimension of the epistemological activity. The lyrical is the aesthetic-ethical performance of understanding. Like Gitlin and Peck (2002), I also advocate returning the lyrical to our education after almost 2500 years of banishment.

Gitlin and Peck (2005) define educational poetics as a process engaging “the mind/body and soul to exploit the human potential to use imagination and a critical accounting of normative value systems to revision and remake commonsense” (p. 219). Educational poetics is “a process of inventing oneself” through inquiry (Anzaldua, 1990, p. xvi). This reinvention, to Gitlin and Peck (2005), means to allow “a self and relations with self, a cultural self, to emerge that were no longer fundamentally predicated on the ethos of commonsense” (p. 21). They call these relations “relations of freedom.” This reinvention involves a process of foreseeing as “potential to see anew, to look through and beyond the past in thinking about acting on the future” (p. 26). Throughout this dissertation, I have called this potential lyrical responsiveness. Like me, Gitlin and Peck think that this potential is complementary to customary forms of inquiry because it “allows [inquiry] to move beyond static forms of knowledge that primarily reinforce commonsense and an ‘is’ orientation” (p. 37). In other words, lyrical responsiveness “connects the ‘is’ with the ‘ought’.” The “ought” here is an ethical ought and by adding it to the process of knowledge-making in research and education, we add “critical dreaming to the process.” Critical
dreaming as such is indispensable to education because it enables us to “to act on the world in ways that move beyond habit and tradition”—in response-able thus responsible ways (p.38).

Including the lyrical in our education of discursivity thus makes education answerable. Poetry opens discourse into its potentiality and offers discursive activity an opportunity to be more than merely narrative-making activity. The time for the return of the lyrical to research and education is ripe. Critical theorists and postmodern thinkers have already challenged and deconstructed romantic and modern ideas such as the idea that because poetic language is metaphorical and thus ambiguous, and because poetry’s rhythm cannot be reduced to meaning, poetry has no place in the business of research and education. Throughout this dissertation, I showed why Poetry is indispensable for research to be answerable to itself. Here in the epilogue, I made a similar case for the indispensability of poetry in our education system. The lyrical is the responsive dimension of discourse, the dimension which can potentially incite movements of addressivity and answerability in our activity of inquiry, that is key in both research and education so as to transform them. Lyric education is that dimension of education that can give it back its coherence, its enactive complexity, its intensity, or in other words, its potentiality. It is this very potentiality that has been taken away from Western education since Plato. To conclude this dissertation, I would like to champion the return of the lyrical not only to the play of research but also to the figurative drama of education.

The Last Farewell

And here it goes my last farewell as a poet who has placed herself in the dramatic play of inquiry and who calls for the re-inclusion of the lyrical in the business of inquiry—in research and education.
My *Tempest*: A Poem by Nilofar Shidmehr

is all Master Shakespeare’s fault:
he set it upon the stage of my homeland—
an island, deserted, which is still drowning
in the outrageous
ocean of a revengeful revolution.

I could never think that I, too,
like five million other Iranians,
one day hurry up my separate exit way
the same way as Mina did
along with her beloved Mr. Bill.

He was the last Yankee in the country
who happened to be Mina’s supervisor
in the Ministry of Telecommunication,
sent by the Bell Company, his mission was to keep
us connected together and to the world.

Mina was my mother’s colleague and the mother
of my playmates, three girls
she left behind with the husband
she escaped from. Her daughters cursed her
that she could never go back or they’d take revenge.

Coming back from a still friendly Iraq,
we ran into Mina at Mehraabaad airport.
  The Shah was not gone
  and Khomeini had not yet arrived.
  Mr. Bill said that they had no time.

Mina whispered in our ears that she was going to change
her name to Miranda and kissed us and followed
her American gentleman down the hall,
our mouth open in amazement
like the mouth of the customs which swallowed her.

I could not believe that I, too,
one day before leaving the stage
would say the same thing to my friends,
would say that I was done,
with Taliban having his island back.

No one would cheer if you left the stage
in a hurry without a proper farewell. No one would cheer if you told them you saw the tempest approaching and if they stayed there, they, too, would drown.
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REVIEWS.


