Poetry

Poetry (from the Greek poiesis, Ï€Î©Î­Î¼Î¬Î®Î­Î»Î­Î±Î­, Ï€Î©Î­ with a broad meaning of a "making", seen also in such terms as "hemopoiesis"); more narrowly, the making of poetry is a form of literary art which uses aesthetic and rhythmic qualities of language—such as phonaesthetics, sound symbolism, and metre—to evoke meanings in addition to, or in place of, the prosaic ostensible meaning.

Poetry has a long history, dating back to the Sumerian Epic of Gilgamesh. Early poems evolved from folk songs such as the Chinese Shijing, or from a need to retell oral epics, as with the Sanskrit Vedas, Zoroastrian Gathas, and the Homeric epics, the Iliad and the Odyssey. Ancient attempts to define poetry, such as Aristotle's Poetics, focused on the uses of speech in rhetoric: drama, song and comedy. Later attempts concentrated on features such as repetition, verse form and rhyme, and emphasized the aesthetics which distinguish poetry from more objectively informative, prosaic forms of writing. From the mid-20th century, poetry has sometimes been more generally regarded as a fundamental creative act employing language.

Poetry uses forms and conventions to suggest differential interpretation to words, or to evoke emotive responses. Devices such as assonance, alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhythm are sometimes used to achieve musical or incantatory effects. The use of ambiguity, symbolism, irony and other stylistic elements of poetic diction often leaves a poem open to multiple interpretations. Similarly, metaphor, simile and metonymy create a resonance between otherwise disparate images, a layering of meanings, forming connections previously not perceived. Kindred forms of resonance may exist, between individual verses, in their patterns of rhyme or rhythm.

Some poetry types are specific to particular cultures and genres and respond to characteristics of the language in which the poet writes. Readers accustomed to identifying poetry with Dante, Goethe, Mickiewicz and Rumi may think of it as written in lines based on rhyme and regular meter; there are, however, traditions, such as Biblical poetry, that use other means to create rhythm and euphony. Much modern poetry reflects a critique of poetic tradition, playing with and testing, among other things, the principle of euphony itself, sometimes altogether forgoing rhyme or set rhythm in today's increasingly globalized word, poets often adapt forms, styles and techniques from diverse cultures and languages.
Numerous ancient works were rediscovered. During this period, there was also substantially more interaction and distinct from the underlying logic "Negative Capability" without the burden of engaging the logical or narrative thought process. This does not imply that poetry is illogical or lacks narration, but generally understood as writing with a proclivity to logical explication and a linear narrative structure.

Renaissance genres: epic poetry, lyric poetry, and dramatic poetry, treating comedy and tragedy as highest-quality poetry in each genre, Aristotle Classical thinkers employed classification as a way to define and Western traditions spanning Tanakh religious poetry, love poetry, and rap. Great as those between Chaucer's aesthetic importance. Chinese poetry in the case of the resulted in "poetics"—the study of the aesthetics of poetry. The efforts of ancient thinkers to determine what makes poetry Ramayana and Mahabharata.

The efforts of ancient thinkers to determine what makes poetry distinctive as a form, and what distinguishes good poetry from bad, resulted in "poetics" the study of the aesthetics of poetry. Some ancient poetic traditions; such as, contextually, Classical Chinese poetry in the case of the Shijing (Classic of Poetry) which records the development of poetic canons with ritual and aesthetic importance. More recently, thinkers have struggled to find a definition that could encompass formal differences as well as differences in context spanning Tanakh religious poetry, love poetry, and rap.

Western traditions

Classical thinkers employed classification as a way to define and assess the quality of poetry. Notably, the existing fragments of Aristotle's Poetics describe three genres of poetry: the epic, the comic, and the tragic and develop rules to distinguish the highest-quality poetry in each genre, based on the underlying purposes of the genre. Later aestheticians identified three major genres: epic poetry, lyric poetry, and dramatic poetry, treating comedy and tragedy as subgenres of dramatic poetry.

Aristotle's work was influential throughout the Middle East during the Islamic Golden Age, as well as in Europe during the Renaissance. Later poets and aestheticians often distinguished poetry from, and defined it in opposition to prose, which was generally understood as writing with a proclivity to logical explication and a linear narrative structure.

This does not imply that poetry is illogical or lacks narration, but rather that poetry is an attempt to render the beautiful or sublime without the burden of engaging the logical or narrative thought process. English Romantic poet John Keats termed this escape from logic "negative capability." This "romantic" approach views form as a key element of successful poetry because form is abstract and distinct from the underlying notional logic. This approach remained influential into the 20th century.

During this period, there was also substantially more interaction among the various poetic traditions, in part due to the spread of European colonialism and the attendant rise in global trade, in addition to a boom in translation, during the Romantic period numerous ancient works were rediscovered.
Some 20th-century literary theorists, relying less on the opposition of prose and poetry, focused on the poet as simply one who creates using language, and poetry as what the poet creates. The underlying concept of the poet as creator is not uncommon, and some modernist poets essentially do not distinguish between the creation of a poem with words, and creative acts in other media. Yet other modernists challenge the very attempt to define poetry as misguided. The rejection of traditional forms and structures for poetry that began in the first half of the 20th century coincided with a questioning of the purpose and meaning of traditional definitions of poetry and of distinctions between poetry and prose, particularly given examples of poetic prose and prosaic poetry. Numerous modernist poets have written in non-traditional forms or in what traditionally would have been considered prose, although their writing was generally infused with poetic diction and often with rhythm and tone established by non-metrical means. While there was a substantial formalist reaction within the modernist schools to the breakdown of structure, this reaction focused as much on the development of new formal structures and syntheses as on the revival of older forms and structures.

Recently, postmodernism has come to convey more completely prose and poetry as distinct entities, and also among genres of poetry, as having meaning only as cultural artifacts. Postmodernism goes beyond modernism’s emphasis on the creative role of the poet, to emphasize the role of the reader of a text (Hermeneutics), and to highlight the complex cultural web within which a poem is read. Today, throughout the world, poetry often incorporates poetic form and diction from other cultures and from the past, further confounding attempts at definition and classification that were once sensible within a tradition such as the Western canon.

Elements

Prosody

Main article: Meter (poetry)

Prosody is the study of the meter, rhythm, and intonation of a poem. Rhythm and meter are different, although closely related. Meter is the definitive pattern established for a verse (such as iambic pentameter), while rhythm is the actual sound that results from a line of poetry. Prosody also may be used more specifically to refer to the scanning of poetic lines to show meter.

Rhythm

Main articles: Timing (linguistics), tone (linguistics), and Pitch accent

The methods for creating poetic rhythm vary across languages and between poetic traditions. Languages are often described as having tone set primarily by accents, syllables, or moras, depending on how rhythm is established, though a language can be influenced by multiple approaches. Japanese is a mora-timed language. Syllable-timed languages include Latin, Catalan, French, Leonese, Galician and Spanish, English, Russian and, generally, German are stress-timed languages. Varying intonation also affects how rhythm is perceived. Languages can rely on either pitch, such as in Vedic Sanskrit or Ancient Greek, or tone. Tonal languages include Chinese, Vietnamese, Lithuanian, and most Subsaharan languages.

metrical rhythm generally involves precise arrangements of stresses or syllables into repeated patterns called feet within a line. In Modern English verse the pattern of stresses primarily differentiate feet, so rhythm based on meter in Modern English is most often founded on the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables (alone or elided). In the classical languages, on the other hand, while the metrical units are similar, vowel length rather than stresses define the meter. Old English poetry used a metrical pattern involving varied numbers of syllables but a fixed number of strong stresses in each line.

The chief device of ancient Biblical poetry, including many of the psalms, was parallelism, a rhetorical structure in which successive lines reflected each other in grammatical structure, sound structure, notional content, or all three. Parallelism lent itself to antiphonal or call-and-response performance, which could also be reinforced by intonation. Thus, Biblical poetry relies much less on metrical feet to create rhythm, but instead creates rhythm based on much larger sound units of lines, phrases and sentences. Some classical poetry forms, such as Venpa of the Tamil language, had rigid grammars (to the point that they could be expressed as a context-free grammar) which ensured a rhythm. In Chinese poetry, tones as well as stresses create rhythm. Classical Chinese poetry identifies four tones: the level tone, rising tone, falling tone, and entering tone.

The formal patterns of meter used in Modern English verse to create rhythm no longer dominate contemporary English poetry. In the case of free verse, rhythm is often organized based on looser units of cadence rather than a regular meter. Robinson Jeffers, Marianne Moore, and William Carlos Williams are three notable poets who reject the idea that regular accessional meter is critical to English poetry. Jeffers experimented with sprung rhythm as an alternative to accessional rhythm.
In the Western poetic tradition, meters are customarily grouped according to a characteristic metrical foot and the number of feet per line. The number of metrical feet in a line is described using Greek terminology: tetrameter for four feet and hexameter for six feet, for example. Thus, "iambic pentameter" is a meter comprising five feet per line, in which the predominant kind of foot is the "iamb". This metric system originated in ancient Greek poetry, and was used by poets such as Pindar and Sappho, and by the great tragedians of Athens. Similarly, "dactylic hexameter", comprises six feet per line, of which the dominant kind of foot is the "dactyl". Dactylic hexameter was the traditional meter of Greek epic poetry, the earliest extant examples of which are the works of Homer and Hesiod. Iambic pentameter and dactylic hexameter were later used by a number of poets, including William Shakespeare and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, respectively. The most common metrical feet in English are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Foot</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>iamb</td>
<td>one unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable (e.g. desire, include, retract)</td>
<td>desire, include, retract</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trochee</td>
<td>one stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable (e.g. picture, flower)</td>
<td>picture, flower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dactyl</td>
<td>one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables (e.g. annotate an-no-tate)</td>
<td>annotate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anapest</td>
<td>two unstressed syllables followed by a stressed syllable (e.g. compare Hend com-pre-hend)</td>
<td>Hend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spondee</td>
<td>two stressed syllables together (e.g. enough)</td>
<td>enough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pyrrhic</td>
<td>two unstressed syllables together (rare, usually used to end dactylic hexameter)</td>
<td></td>
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There are a wide range of names for other types of feet, right up to a choriamb, a four syllable metric foot with a stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables and closing with a stressed syllable. The choriamb is derived from some ancient Greek and Latin poetry. Languages which utilize vowel length or intonation rather than or in addition to syllabic accents in determining meter, such as Ottoman Turkish or Vedic, often have concepts similar to the iamb and dactyl to describe common combinations of long and short sounds.

Each of these types of feet has a certain "feel," whether alone or in combination with other feet. The iamb, for example, is the most natural form of rhythm in the English language, and generally produces a subtle and stable verse. Scanning meter can often show the basic or fundamental pattern underlying a verse, but does not show the varying degrees of stress, as well as the differing pitches and lengths of syllables.

There is debate over how useful a multiplicity of different "feet" is in describing meter. For example, Robert Pinsky has argued that while dactyls are important in classical verse, English dactylic verse uses dactyls very irregularly and can be better described based on patterns of iambs and anapests, feet which he considers natural to the language. Actual rhythm is significantly more complex than the basic scanned meter described above, and many scholars have sought to develop systems that would scan such complexity. Vladimir Nabokov noted that overlaid on top of the regular pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of verse was a separate pattern of accents resulting from the natural pitch of the spoken words, and suggested that the term "scud" be used to distinguish an unaccented stress from an accented stress.

Metrical patterns

Different traditions and genres of poetry tend to use different meters, ranging from the Shakespearean iambic pentameter and the Homeric dactylic hexameter to the anapestic tetrameter used in many nursery rhymes. However, a number of variations to the established meter are common, both to provide emphasis or attention to a given foot or line and to avoid boring repetition. For example, the stress in a foot may be inverted, a caesura (or pause) may be added (sometimes in place of a foot or stress), or the final foot in a line may be given a feminine ending to soften it or be replaced by a spondee to emphasize it and create a hard stop. Some patterns (such as iambic pentameter) tend to be fairly regular, while other patterns, such as dactylic hexameter, tend to be highly irregular. Regularity can vary between language. In addition, different patterns often develop distinctively in different languages, so that, for example, iambic tetrameter in Russian will generally reflect a regularity in the use of accents to reinforce the meter, which does not occur, or occurs to a much lesser extent, in English.
Some common metrical patterns, with notable examples of poets and poems who use them, include:

- **Iambic pentameter** (John Milton in *Paradise Lost*, William Shakespeare in his *Sonnets*)

- **Dactylic hexameter** (Homer, *Iliad*; Virgil, *Aeneid*)


- **Trochaic octameter** (Edgar Allan Poe, "The Raven")

- **Alexandrine** (Jean Racine, *Phèdre*)

**Rhyme, alliteration, assonance**

Rhyme, alliteration, assonance and consonance are ways of creating repetitive patterns of sound. They may be used as an independent structural element in a poem, to reinforce rhythmic patterns, or as an ornamental element. They can also carry a meaning separate from the repetitive sound patterns created. For example, Chaucer used heavy alliteration to mock Old English verse and to paint a character as archaic.

Rhyme consists of identical ("hard-rhyme") or similar ("soft-rhyme") sounds placed at the ends of lines or at predictable locations within lines ("internal rhyme"). Languages vary in the richness of their rhyming structures; Italian, for example, has a rich rhyming structure permitting maintenance of a limited set of rhymes throughout a lengthy poem. The richness results from word endings that follow regular forms. English, with its irregular word endings adopted from other languages, is less rich in rhyme.

Alliteration and assonance played a key role in structuring early Germanic, Norse and Old English forms of poetry. The alliterative patterns of early Germanic poetry interweave meter and alliteration as a key part of their structure, so that the metrical pattern determines when the listener expects instances of alliteration to occur. This can be compared to an ornamental use of alliteration in most Modern European poetry, where alliterative patterns are not formal or carried through full stanzas. Alliteration is particularly useful in languages with less rich rhyming structures. Assonance, where the use of similar vowel sounds within a word rather than similar sounds at the beginning or end of a word, was widely used in skaldic poetry, but goes back to the Homeric epic. Because verbs carry much of the pitch in the English language, assonance can loosely evoke the tonal elements of Chinese poetry and so is useful in translating Chinese poetry. Consonance occurs where a consonant sound is repeated throughout a sentence without putting the sound only at the front of a word. Consonance provokes a more subtle effect than alliteration and so is less useful as a structural element.

**Rhyming schemes**

In many languages, including modern European languages and Arabic, poets use rhyme in set patterns as a structural element for specific poetic forms, such as ballads, sonnets and rhyming couplets. However, the use of structural rhyme is not universal even
most rhyme schemes are described using letters that correspond to sets of rhymes, so if the first, second and fourth lines of a quatrain rhyme with each other and the third line does not rhyme, the quatrain is said to have an "a-a-b-a" rhyme scheme. This rhyme scheme is the one used, for example, in the rubaiyat form. Similarly, an "a-b-b-a" quatrain (what is known as "enclosed rhyme") is used in such forms as the Petrarchan sonnet. Some types of more complicated rhyming schemes have developed names of their own, separate from the "a-b-c" convention, such as the ottava rima and terza rima. The types and use of differing rhyming schemes is discussed further in the main article.

Form

Poetic form is more flexible in modernist and post-modernist poetry, and continues to be less structured than in previous literary eras. Many modern poets eschew recognizable structures or forms, and write in free verse. But poetry remains distinguished from prose by its form; some regard for basic formal structures of poetry will be found in even the best free verse, however much such structures may appear to have been ignored. Similarly, in the best poetry written in classic styles there will be departures from strict form for emphasis or effect.

Among major structural elements used in poetry are the line, the stanza or verse paragraph, and larger combinations of stanzas or lines such as cantos. Also sometimes used are broader visual presentations of words and calligraphy. These basic units of poetic form are often combined into larger structures, called poetic forms or poetic modes (see following section), as in the sonnet or haiku.

Lines and stanzas

Poetry is often separated into lines on a page. These lines may be based on the number of metrical feet, or may emphasize a rhyming pattern at the ends of lines. Lines may serve other functions, particularly where the poem is not written in a formal metrical pattern. Lines can separate, compare or contrast thoughts expressed in different units, or can highlight a change in tone. See the article on line breaks for information about the division between lines.

Lines of poems are often organized into stanzas, which are denominated by the number of lines included. Thus a collection of two lines is a couplet (or distich), three lines a triplet (or tercet), four lines a quatrain, and so on. These lines may or may not relate to each other by rhyme or rhythm. For example, a couplet may be two lines with identical meters which rhyme or two lines held together by a common meter alone.

Other poems may be organized into verse paragraphs, in which regular rhymes with established rhythms are not used, but the poetic tone is instead established by a collection of rhythms, alliterations, and rhymes established in paragraph form. Many medieval poems were written in verse paragraphs, even where regular rhymes and rhythms were used.

In many forms of poetry, stanzas are interlocking, so that the rhyming scheme or other structural elements of one stanza determine those of succeeding stanzas. Examples of such interlocking stanzas include, for example, the ghazal and the villanelle, where a refrain (or, in the case of the villanelle, refrains) is established in the first stanza which then repeats in subsequent stanzas. Related to the use of interlocking stanzas is their use to separate thematic parts of a poem. For example, the strophe, antistrophe and apode of the ode form are often separated into one or more stanzas.

In some cases, particularly lengthier formal poetry such as some forms of epic poetry, stanzas themselves are constructed according to strict rules and then combined. In skaldic poetry, the dráttkvátts stanza had eight lines, each having three "lifts" produced with alliteration or assonance. In addition to two or three alliterations, the odd numbered lines had partial rhyme of consonants with dissimilar vowels, not necessarily at the beginning of the word; the even lines contained internal rhyme in set syllables (not necessarily at the end of the word). Each half-line had exactly six syllables, and each line ended in a trochee. The arrangement of dráttkvátts followed far more rigid rules than the construction of the individual dráttkvátts.

Visual presentation
Even before the advent of printing, the visual appearance of poetry often added meaning or depth. Acrostic poems conveyed meanings in the initial letters of lines or in letters at other specific places in a poem. In Arabic, Hebrew and Chinese poetry, the visual presentation of finely calligraphed poems has played an important part in the overall effect of many poems.

With the advent of printing, poets gained greater control over the mass-produced visual presentations of their work. Visual elements have become an important part of the poet's toolbox, and many poets have sought to use visual presentation for a wide range of purposes. Some Modernist poets have made the placement of individual lines or groups of lines on the page an integral part of the poem's composition. At times, this complements the poem's rhythm through visual caesuras of various lengths, or creates juxtapositions so as to accentuate meaning, ambiguity or irony, or simply to create an aesthetically pleasing form. In its most extreme form, this can lead to concrete poetry or asemic writing.

Diction

Poetic diction treats the manner in which language is used, and refers not only to the sound but also to the underlying meaning and its interaction with sound and form. Many languages and poetic forms have very specific poetic diction, to the point where distinct grammars and dialects are used specifically for poetry. Registers in poetry can range from strict employment of ordinary speech patterns, as favoured in much late-20th-century prosody, through to highly ornate uses of language, as in medieval and Renaissance poetry.

Poetic diction can include rhetorical devices such as simile and metaphor, as well as tones of voice, such as irony. Aristotle wrote in the Poetics that "the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor." Since the rise of Modernism, some poets have opted for a poetic diction that de-emphasizes rhetorical devices, attempting instead the direct presentation of things and experiences and the exploration of tone. On the other hand, Surrealists have pushed rhetorical devices to their limits, making frequent use of catachresis.

Allegorical stories are central to the poetic diction of many cultures, and were prominent in the West during classical times, the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Aesop's Fables, repeatedly rendered in both verse and prose since first being recorded about 500 B.C., are perhaps the richest single source of allegorical poetry through the ages. Other notable examples include the Roman de la Rose, a 13th-century French poem, William Langland's Piers Ploughman in the 14th century, and Jean de la Fontaine's Fables (influenced by Aesop's) in the 17th century. Rather than being fully allegorical, however, a poem may contain symbols or allusions that deepen the meaning or effect of its words without constructing a full allegory.

Another strong element of poetic diction can be the use of vivid imagery for effect. The juxtaposition of unexpected or impossible images is, for example, a particularly strong element in surrealist poetry and haiku. Vivid images are often endowed with symbolism or metaphor. Many poetic dictions use repetitive phrases for effect, either a short phrase (such as Homer's "rosy-fingered dawn" or "the wine-dark sea") or a longer refrain. Such repetition can add a sombre tone to a poem, or can be laced with irony as the context of the words changes.

Forms

Specific poetic forms have been developed by many cultures. In more developed, closed or "received" poetic forms, the rhyming scheme, meter and other elements of a poem are based on sets of rules, ranging from the relatively loose rules that govern the construction of an elegy to the highly formalized structure of the ghazal or villanelle. Described below are some common forms of poetry widely used across a number of languages. Additional forms of poetry may be found in the discussions of poetry of particular cultures or periods and in the glossary.

Sonnet
Main article: Sonnet

Among the most common forms of poetry through the ages is the sonnet, which by the 13th century was a poem of fourteen lines following a set rhyme scheme and logical structure. By the 14th century, the form further crystallized under the pen of Petrarch, whose sonnets were later translated in the 16th century by Sir Thomas Wyatt, who is credited with introducing the sonnet form into English literature. A sonnet's first four lines typically introduce the topic. A sonnet usually follows an a-b-a-b rhyme pattern. The sonnet's conventions have changed over its history, and so there are several different sonnet forms. Traditionally, in sonnets English poets use iambic pentameter, the Spenserian and Shakespearean sonnets being especially notable. In the Romance languages, the hendecasyllable and Alexandrine are the most widely used meters, though the Petrarchan sonnet has been used in Italy since the 14th century.

Sonnets are particularly associated with love poetry, and often use a poetic diction heavily based on vivid imagery, but the twists and turns associated with the move from octet to sextet and to final couplet make them a useful and dynamic form for many subjects. Shakespeare's sonnets are among the most famous in English poetry, with 20 being included in the Oxford Book of English Verse.

Shi
Main article: Shi (poetry)

Shi (traditional Chinese: 诗歌; simplified Chinese: 诗; pinyin: shī) is the main type of Classical Chinese poetry. Within this form of poetry the most important variations are "folk song" styled verse (yuefu), "old style" verse (gushi), "modern style" verse (jintishi). In all cases, rhyming is obligatory. The Yuefu is a folk ballad or a poem written in the folk ballad style, and the number of lines and the length of the lines could be irregular. For the other variations of shi poetry, generally either a four line (quatrain, or jueju) or else an eight line poem is normal; either way with the even numbered lines rhyming. The line length is scanned by according number of characters (according to the convention that one character equals one syllable), and are predominantly either five or seven characters long, with a caesura before the final three syllables. The lines are generally end-stopped as a series of couplets, and exhibit verbal parallelism as a key poetic device. The "old style" verse (gushi) is less formally strict than the jintishi, or regulated verse, which, despite the name "new style" verse actually had its theoretical basis laid as far back to Shen Yue, in the 5th or 6th century, although not considered to have reached its full development until the time of Chen Zizang (661-702). A good example of a poet known for his gushi poems is Li Bai. Among its other rules, the jintishi rules regulate the tonal variations within a poem, including the use of set patterns of the four tones of Middle Chinese. The basic form of jintishi (lishu) has eight lines in four couplets, with parallelism between the lines in the second and third couplets. The couplets with parallel lines contain contrasting content but an identical grammatical relationship between words. Jintishi often have a rich poetic diction, full of allusion, and can have a wide range of subject, including history and politics.

One of the masters of the form was Du Fu, who wrote during the Tang Dynasty (8th century).

Villanelle
Main article: Villanelle

The villanelle is a nineteen-line poem made up of five triplets with a closing quatrain; the poem is characterized by having two refrains, initially used in the first and third lines of the first stanza, and then alternately used at the close of each subsequent stanza until the final quatrain, which is concluded by the two refrains. The remaining lines of the poem have an a-b-a-b alternating rhyme.

The villanelle has been used regularly in the English language since the late 19th century by such poets as Dylan Thomas, W. H. Auden, and Elizabeth Bishop.

Tanka
Main article: Tanka

Tanka is a form of unrhymed Japanese poetry, with five sections totalling 31 onji (phonological units identical to morae), structured in a 5-7-5 7–7 pattern. There is generally a shift in tone and subject matter between the upper 5-7-5 phrase and the lower 7-7 phrase. Tanka were written as early as the Asuka period by such poets as Kakinomoto no Hitomaro, at a time when Japan was emerging from a period where much of its poetry followed Classical Chinese form. Tanka was originally the shorter form of Japanese formal poetry (which was generally referred to as "waka"), and was used more heavily to explore personal rather than public themes. By the tenth century, tanka had become the dominant form of Japanese poetry, to the point where the originally general term waka ("Japanese poetry") came to be used exclusively for tanka. Tanka are still widely written today.

Haiku
Main article: Haiku

Haiku is a popular form of unrhymed Japanese poetry, which evolved in the 17th century from the hokku, or opening verse of a renga. Generally written in a single vertical line, the haiku contains three sections totalling 17 onji, structured in a 5-7-5 pattern. Traditionally, haiku contain a kireji, or cutting word, usually placed at the end of one of the poem's three sections, and a kigo, or season-word. The most famous exponent of the haiku was Matsuo Bashō (1644–1694). An example of his writing:

"A saucer-size moon
On the forest floor
Holding a few new leaves"

Ode

Shakespeare
Main article: Ode

Odes were first developed by poets writing in ancient Greek, such as Pindar, and Latin, such as Horace. Forms of odes appear in many of the cultures that were influenced by the Greeks and Latins. The ode generally has three parts: a strophe, an antistrophe, and an epode. The antistrophes of the ode possess similar metrical structures and, depending on the tradition, similar rhyme structures. In contrast, the epode is written with a different scheme and structure. Odes have a formal poetic diction, and generally deal with a serious subject. The strophe and antistrophe look at the subject from different, often conflicting, perspectives, with the epode moving to a higher level to either view or resolve the underlying issues. Odes are often intended to be recited or sung by two choruses (or individuals), with the first reciting the strophe, the second the antistrophe, and both together the epode. Over time, differing forms for odes have developed with considerable variations in form and structure, but generally showing the original influence of the Pindaric or Horatian ode. One non-Western form which resembles the ode is the qasida in Persian poetry.

Ghazal

The ghazal (also ghazel, gazel, gazal, or gozol) is a form of poetry common in Arabic, Persian, Turkish, Azerbaijani, Urdu and Bengali poetry. In classic form, the ghazal has from five to fifteen rhyming couplets that share a refrain at the end of the second line. This refrain may be of one or several syllables, and is preceded by a rhyme. Each line has an identical meter. The ghazal often reflects on a theme of unattainable love or divinity.

As with other forms with a long history in many languages, many variations have been developed, including forms with a quasi-musical poetic diction in Urdu. Ghazals have a classical affinity with Sufism, and a number of major Sufi religious works are written in ghazal form. The relatively steady meter and the use of the refrain produce an incantatory effect, which complements Sufi mystical themes well. Among the masters of the form is Rumi, a 13th-century Persian poet who lived in Konya, in present-day Turkey.

Genres

In addition to specific forms of poems, poetry is often thought of in terms of different genres and subgenres. A poetic genre is generally a tradition or classification of poetry based on the subject matter, style, or other broader literary characteristics. Some commentators view genres as natural forms of literature. Others view the study of genres as the study of how different works relate and refer to other works.

Narrative poetry

Narrative poetry is a genre of poetry that tells a story. Broadly it subsumes epic poetry, but the term "narrative poetry" is often reserved for smaller works, generally with more appeal to human interest. Narrative poetry may be the oldest type of poetry. Many scholars of Homer have concluded that his Iliad and Odyssey were composed from compilations of shorter narrative poems that related individual episodes. Much narrative poetry, such as Scottish and English ballads, and Baltic and Slavic heroic poems, performance poetry with roots in a preliterate oral tradition. It has been speculated that some features that distinguish poetry from prose, such as meter, alliteration and kennings, once served as aids for bards who recited traditional tales.

Notable narrative poets have included Ovid, Dante, Juan Ruiz, Chaucer, William Langland, LuÂ’s de CamÂ­ques, Alexander Pope, Robert Burns, Fernando de Rojas, Adam Mickiewicz, Alexander Pushkin, Edgar Allan Poe and Alfred Tennyson.

Epic poetry

Epic poetry is a genre of poetry, and a major form of narrative literature. This genre is often defined as lengthy poems concerning events of a heroic or important nature to the culture of the time. It recounts, in a continuous narrative, the life and works of a heroic or mythical person or group of persons. Examples of epic poems are Homer's Iliad and Odyssey, Virgil's Aeneid, the Nibelungenlied, LuÂ’s de CamÂ­ques' Os LusA­das, the Cantar de Mio Cid, the Epic of Gilgamesh, the Mahabharata, Valmiki's Ramayana, Ferdowsi's Shahnama, Nizami (or Nezami)'s Khamse (Five Books), and the Epic of King Gesar. While the composition of epic poetry, and of long poems generally, became less common in the west after the early 20th century, some notable epics have continued to be written. Derek Walcott won a Nobel prize to a great extent on the basis of his epic, Omeros.
Dramatic poetry

Goethe

Main articles: Verse drama and dramatic verse, Theatre of ancient Greece, Sanskrit drama, Chinese Opera, and Noh

Dramatic poetry is drama written in verse to be spoken or sung, and appears in varying, sometimes related forms in many cultures. Greek tragedy in verse dates to the 6th century B.C., and may have been an influence on the development of Sanskrit drama, just as Indian drama in turn appears to have influenced the development of the bianwen verse dramas in China, forerunners of Chinese Opera. East Asian verse dramas also include Japanese Noh. Examples of dramatic poetry in Persian literature include Nizami's two famous dramatic works, Layla and Majnun and Khosrow and Shirin, Ferdowsi's tragedies such as Rostam and Sohrab, Rumi's Masnavi, Gorgani's tragedy of Vis and Ramin, and Vahshi's tragedy of Farhad.

Satirical poetry

John Wilmot

Poetry can be a powerful vehicle for satire. The Romans had a strong tradition of satirical poetry, often written for political purposes. A notable example is the Roman poet Juvenal's satires.

The same is true of the English satirical tradition. John Dryden (a Tory), the first Poet Laureate, produced in 1682 Mac Flecknoe, subtitled "A Satire on the True Blue Protestant Poet, T.S." (a reference to Thomas Shadwell). Another master of 17th-century English satirical poetry was John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester. Satirical poets outside England include Poland's Ignacy Krasicki, Azerbaijan's Sabir and Portugal's Manuel Maria Barbosa du Bocage.

Lyric poetry

Christine de Pizan

Main article: Lyric poetry

Lyric poetry is a genre that, unlike epic and dramatic poetry, does not attempt to tell a story but instead is of a more personal nature. Poems in this genre tend to be shorter, melodic, and contemplative. Rather than depicting characters and actions, it portrays the poet's own feelings, states of mind, and perceptions. Notable poets in this genre include John Donne, Gerard Manley Hopkins, and Antonio Machado.

Elegy

Main article: Elegy

An elegy is a mournful, melancholy or plaintive poem, especially a lament for the dead or a funeral song. The term "elegy," which originally denoted a type of poetic meter (elegiac meter), commonly describes a poem of mourning. An elegy may also reflect something that seems to the author to be strange or mysterious. The elegy, as a reflection on a death, on a sorrow more generally, or on something mysterious, may be classified as a form of lyric poetry.


Verse fable

Ignacy Krasicki

Main article: Fable

The fable is an ancient literary genre, often (though not invariably) set in verse. It is a succinct story that features anthropomorphized animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature that illustrate a moral lesson (a "moral"). Verse fables have used a variety of meter and rhyme patterns.

Notable verse fabulists have included Aesop, Vishnu Sarma, Phaedrus, Marie de France, Robert Henryson, Bierre of Lublin, Jean de La Fontaine, Ignacy Krasicki, Félix Marañon de Samaniego, Tomás de Iriarte, Ivan Krylov, and Ambrose Bierce.
Prose poetry

Prose poetry is a hybrid genre that shows attributes of both prose and poetry. It may be indistinguishable from the micro-story (a.k.a. the “short short story”), “flash fiction”). While some examples of earlier prose strike modern readers as poetic, prose poetry is commonly regarded as having originated in 19th-century France, where its practitioners included Aloysius Bertrand, Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud and Stéphane Mallarmé. Since the late 1980s especially, prose poetry has gained increasing popularity, with entire journals, such as _The Prose Poem: An International Journal_ [online] and _Contemporary Haibun Online_, devoted to that genre.

Speculative poetry

Speculative poetry, also known as fantastic poetry, (of which weird or macabre poetry is a major subclassification), is a poetic genre which deals thematically with subjects which are “beyond reality”, whether via extrapolation as in science fiction or via weird and horrific themes as in horror fiction. Such poetry appears regularly in modern science fiction and horror fiction magazines. Edgar Allan Poe is sometimes seen as the “father of speculative poetry”.

See also

- Poetry portal

Notes

21. Kant, Immanuel; Bernard, JH (trans.) (1914). _Critique of Judgment_ Macmillan. p. 131. Kant argues that the nature of poetry as a self-consciously abstract and beautiful form raises it to the highest level among the verbal arts, with tone or music following it, and only after that the more logical and narrative prose.
Further reading

This article was created from a revision of the "Poetry" article dated 2005-04-20, and does not reflect subsequent edits to the article. (Audio help)

More spoken articles

Wikimedia Commons has media related to: Poetry

Look up poetry in Wiktionary, the free dictionary.

Anthologies

Main article: Daftar/Tabel -- poetry anthologies

Bibliography

Poetry

Poetry of different cultures and languages

Schools of poetry

The Movement Nâ'îthâ'înuh New American Poetry New Anarchistisms New Formalism New York School Objectivists
Lists of poets

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Narrative

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