

Metaphor and the Lyrical Self: A Cognitive–Semiotic Analysis of Vietnamese *Thơ Mới* and French Symbolism

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Abstract—This study offers a comparative analysis of Vietnamese *Thơ mới* (New Poetry, 1932–1945) and French Symbolism (late nineteenth to early twentieth century), exploring how both traditions construct the lyrical self through the symbolic languages of nature, light, sound, and space. While earlier research has largely focused on stylistic parallels, this study advances the field by integrating conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the poetics of space (Bachelard, 1994), and semiotic theory (Kristeva, 1980) into a unified interpretive framework. Through close textual and intertextual analysis, it demonstrates how *Thơ mới* transforms nostalgia and colonial dislocation into an introspective meditation on being, while French Symbolism reimagines perception through abstraction and musical rhythm, evoking a dreamlike consciousness. Despite their differing historical and cultural contexts, both traditions reveal poetry’s enduring capacity to reconcile fragmentation through symbolic imagination. The study’s transnational framework not only redefines the dialogue between local and global poetics but also proposes an inclusive methodology for comparative and world literature.

Index Terms—comparative poetics, Vietnamese *Thơ mới*, French Symbolism, lyrical self

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Symbolic Poetics Across Cultures

Comparative poetics offers a fertile framework for examining how lyrical expression negotiates the tension between individual subjectivity and collective symbolic systems. Vietnamese *Thơ mới* (New Poetry, 1932–1945) and French Symbolism (late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries) exemplify distinct yet convergent aesthetic trajectories. Each arises from its specific socio-historical milieu but turns inward to articulate a poetics of interiority through metaphysical abstraction.

French Symbolists such as Baudelaire, Verlaine, and Mallarmé conceived poetic language as a vessel of spiritual intensity in which image and rhythm transmute emotion into symbolic resonance. Vietnamese poets including Xuân Diệu, Hàn Mặc Tử, and Huy Cận, writing amid colonial modernity, situated the lyrical self within fragmented temporality and unstable ontology. Their convergence lies not in imitation but in a shared aspiration to transform private affect into ontological inquiry through form, symbol, and sound. This study explores how these cross-cultural lyricisms reveal the cognitive and affective dynamics of poetic creation.

B. Metaphor, Landscape, and the Affective Self

Both traditions employ metaphor as a mediating structure between perception and transcendence. Landscape, light, and sound act as semiotic thresholds through which affect and cognition interact. The analysis proceeds along three intersecting axes: the dialogue between the lyrical self and symbolic landscape, the dialectics of light and darkness, and the rhythmic articulation of emotion through musicality. Motifs such as moonlight, mist, echoes, and shadows form intricate constellations that translate emotion into reflection.

Here, metaphor does not embellish experience but organizes it. The shifting luminosities and acoustic textures of both Vietnamese and French lyricism form cognitive–affective schemas—structures through which consciousness apprehends its own movement. This perspective challenges the conventional division between emotion and intellect, presenting metaphor as a dynamic process that fuses perception, memory, and abstraction into a unified act of knowing.

C. Theoretical Lacunae and Research Innovation

Recent scholarship on *Thơ mới* (Phạm et al., 2021; Uyên, 2021) and French Symbolism (Fowlie, 2010; Balakian, 1977) has deepened historical understanding but has seldom integrated cognitive and affective approaches in a systematic manner. While emerging work in world poetics and affect studies (Nguyễn, 2019; Hogan, 2021; Hogan et al.,

2022) increasingly foregrounds emotion as a central dimension of literary meaning-making, cross-cultural comparative frameworks that combine affect theory with cognitive and semiotic analysis remain limited.

To address this gap, the present study applies Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory and Fauconnier and Turner's (2002) conceptual blending model to the symbolic vocabularies of both traditions. These frameworks elucidate how metaphysical imagery is cognitively structured and how poetic consciousness operates through mental integration. Kristeva's (1980) semiotic theory further illuminates the cultural sedimentation of signs and their surplus of meaning, while Caruth's (1996) trauma theory clarifies how poetic form encodes emotional latency and deferred signification, in line with recent affect-oriented accounts of literature as a cognitive–emotional system (Hogan et al., 2022).

Methodologically, the research combines close textual reading with comparative semiotic analysis to trace how metaphoric and affective motifs migrate, transform, and converge across cultural boundaries. This synthesis establishes lyricism not merely as an expressive mode but as a cognitive–affective system in which mind, emotion, and language are dynamically interdependent.

D. Research Aim and Contribution

The study elucidates how Vietnamese and French lyricism converge in articulating a metaphysical poetics of the self. In both traditions, light, sound, and landscape function not as ornament but as symbolic conduits to the ineffable. By integrating cognitive linguistics, affect theory, and comparative poetics, it proposes an interpretive model that situates metaphor as both an epistemic and cultural mechanism. This model extends the scope of comparative literary inquiry and contributes to affective poetics by demonstrating how metaphor encodes memory, rupture, and transcendence within dialogic cultural frameworks.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A. Research Overview

(a). Scholarship on Vietnamese *Thơ Mới*

Vietnamese *Thơ mới* (New Poetry, 1932–1945) signifies a decisive transformation in modern Vietnamese literary history—a turn toward individual lyricism and introspection within a colonial milieu. Foundational works by Đỗ (2012), Phan (1996), and Trần (2011) remain central, outlining the movement's aesthetic evolution, psychological depth, and theoretical foundations.

Đỗ (2012) interprets *Thơ mới* as a poetic liberation of instinct and emotion, marking a shift toward interiority and affective subjectivity. Phan (1996) situates the movement historically, viewing it as a negotiation between nationalist collectivity and modernist individualism. From a theoretical perspective, Trần (2011) demonstrates how *Thơ mới* redefines genre conventions, recalibrating the interplay of form, emotion, and meaning. Recent comparative studies extend these insights, positioning *Thơ mới* within wider Asian modernist currents (Nguyễn, 2019). Collectively, this scholarship establishes *Thơ mới* as both a localized articulation of modernism and a space where emotion and cognition reconfigure selfhood under colonial modernity.

(b). French Symbolism and the Poetics of Transcendence

French Symbolism, though arising from a distinct philosophical and historical context, shares with *Thơ mới* a commitment to exploring language's metaphysical potential. Seminal accounts by Balakian (1967), Fowlie (1990), and Richard (1961) define Symbolism as a reaction against realism and positivism, privileging inwardness, ambiguity, and transcendence.

Balakian (1967) presents Symbolism as a metaphysical revolt against materialism, linking its lyrical abstraction to the crisis of nineteenth-century empiricism. Fowlie (1990) refines this view, portraying Symbolism as a network of sensory correspondences in which sound, light, and rhythm become instruments of revelation. Richard's (1961) study of Mallarmé further reveals Symbolist language as striving toward the ineffable, transmuting perception into insight. Vietnamese poets of the *Thơ mới* generation, exposed to these European aesthetic models, selectively assimilated Symbolist techniques, adapting them to indigenous cosmologies and colonial experience. The result was a localized Symbolism—an aesthetic synthesis where Western metaphysical yearning converged with Vietnamese affective spirituality.

(c). Gaps in Cross-Cultural Poetic Studies

Despite substantial research on *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism, systematic cross-cultural analyses grounded in cognitive and affective frameworks remain scarce. Existing studies often emphasize surface parallels or influence rather than the symbolic binaries—light and darkness, sound and silence, movement and stillness—that shape both traditions' metaphysical imagination. These oppositions are essential for understanding how poetic language mediates between sensory perception and transcendence.

Addressing this lacuna, the present study interprets *Thơ mới* not as derivative but as a dialogic transformation of Western Symbolist poetics. Its theoretical foundation integrates Lakoff and Johnson's (1980) conceptual metaphor theory, Bachelard's (1971) poetics of reverie, and Kristeva's (1980) semiotic cosmology to illuminate how

metaphysical imagery becomes cognitively structured and symbolically embodied. In tandem, Bhabha's (1994) notion of hybridity and Said's (1978) critique of cultural translation interrogate how colonial contact generates new aesthetic and epistemic formations. Recent advances in affect theory and world poetics (Hogan, 2021) further underscore metaphor's dual cognitive and emotional function, enabling literature to articulate both universal and culturally specific experiences of transcendence.

Methodologically, the study employs comparative textual and semiotic analysis of selected poems by Xuân Diệu, Hàn Mặc Tử, Huy Cận, Baudelaire, and Mallarmé. It examines how metaphorical and affective structures migrate across languages and cultures, forming symbolic constellations that bridge the sensory, spiritual, and cognitive dimensions of modern poetic experience.

B. Theoretical Background

This study draws on five interrelated frameworks—conceptual metaphor theory, the poetics of reverie and transcendental space, intertextual semiotics, postcolonial hybridity, and sonic rhythm. Together, they offer a multidimensional lens for interpreting the spatial, emotional, and cultural dynamics of Vietnamese *Thơ mới* (New Poetry) and French Symbolism. Each illuminates a distinct dimension—cognitive, spatial, semiotic, hybrid, or affective—while forming an integrated foundation for comparative analysis.

(a). Conceptual Metaphor and Blended Cognition

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) redefine metaphor as a cognitive structure that organizes perception and renders the ineffable expressible (pp. 3–4, 19). Extending this view, Kövecses (2002) shows how metaphor reshapes perception and experience (p. xi), while Fauconnier and Turner (2002) introduce “blended spaces,” where distinct mental domains merge to create imaginative meaning (p. 40). In poetry, such blending generates symbolic constellations through which images of light, space, and sound transcend description, enabling the lyrical self to enact both cognitive and emotional agency.

(b). Poetics of Reverie and Ontological Space

If metaphor structures thought, Bachelard's (1994) *The Poetics of Space* situates that structure within reverie, where interiority and exteriority converge. His “oneiric space” reveals the reciprocity of material form and imagination, transforming poetic space into a reservoir of memory and reflection (pp. 3–4, 127). He writes that “poetry offers a shelter for the soul,” as motifs such as night, moonlight, or river become thresholds to transcendence (p. 201). This perspective clarifies how *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism transform landscape into a metaphysical terrain—an ontological structure through which consciousness moves between longing and cosmic communion.

(c). Intertextual Semiotics and Cultural Echo

Building from space to discourse, Kristeva (1980) conceives every text as a “mosaic of quotations,” where symbolic orders intersect (pp. 37, 66). Poetry thus becomes a “polyphonic field” in which prior discourses are re-voiced and reconfigured, allowing collective memory and individual identity to surface dialogically (p. 74). Within this framework, “influence” becomes transformation: Vietnamese poets engaging with Symbolist imagery did not imitate but re-embedded these motifs within indigenous cosmologies. The poem emerges as a cultural palimpsest layered with resonances that traverse the temporal and spatial dimensions of selfhood.

(d). Postcolonial Hybridity and Cultural Reconfiguration

Kristeva's intertextuality meets the politics of contact in Bhabha's (1994) notion of hybridity as an “interstitial space” where identity and meaning are renegotiated (pp. 2, 219). Hybridity operates not only as resistance but also as creation, generating “third spaces” of cultural production (p. 55). Viewed through this lens, *Thơ mới* becomes a dynamic dialogue with Western Symbolism under colonial pressure. Vietnamese poets rearticulated transcendental motifs through vernacular cosmologies, effectively “Vietnamizing” imported aesthetics. Said's (1978) theory of cultural translation further reveals that such hybridizations constitute symbolic contests over memory and authorship.

(e). Rhythm, Silence, and Sonic Imagery

From cultural reconfiguration to form, Barthes (1977) identifies rhythm as the structure through which poetry shapes emotion and time (pp. 179–180). Rhythm is cognitive rather than decorative, giving temporal form to affect through repetition, pause, and fragmentation. Jakobson (1960) likewise emphasizes the emotive power of musicality, where caesura and tonal shift heighten associative resonance. Working alongside conceptual metaphor, rhythm functions as a sensory counterpart—translating abstraction into embodied form. In both Vietnamese and French traditions, silence and fragmentation become expressive intervals—gestures of longing and metaphysical displacement—aligning with Kristeva's (1980) polyphonic model of overlapping sonic textures.

(f). Toward a Synthesis of Poetic Space

Taken together, these frameworks reveal how metaphor, rhythm, memory, and hybridity co-constitute poetic space, positioning poetry as a site where symbolic form and affective experience intersect. Recent affect-oriented scholarship further supports this view by conceptualizing emotion as an organizing force across cognitive, cultural, and formal

dimensions of literature (Hogan et al., 2022). From this perspective, poetic space functions not merely as a representational setting but as an affective–cognitive structure through which perception, memory, and meaning are dynamically configured.

Vietnamese *Thơ mới* thus emerges not as imitation but as a dialogic field of symbolic innovation—simultaneously local and global, shaped by colonial encounter yet rooted in vernacular imagination. As Friedman (2006) observes, “literature does not merely reflect but actively constructs cultural space” (p. 425). Accordingly, this study adopts a comparative strategy tracing recurrent metaphoric, rhythmic, and spatial motifs across Vietnamese and French texts. Poetry appears as a spatialized form of thought—traversing cognitive, emotional, and cosmological domains—and as both epistemological inquiry and cultural negotiation.

III. RESEARCH METHODS AND DATA

A. Research Design and Methodology

This study adopts a comparative–contrastive qualitative methodology grounded in literary theory and discourse analysis. As Culler (2011) observes, comparison must move beyond surface resemblance to reveal the structural logics shaping textual and cultural systems (p. 129). Accordingly, the framework privileges symbolic structure, spatial metaphor, and cultural reconfiguration rather than thematic similarity.

The approach draws on Fairclough’s (1992) conception of discourse as a site where power, ideology, and collective memory intersect. Poetic symbols are thus treated not as ornament but as semiotic traces of historical trauma, metaphysical longing, and cultural self-fashioning. This qualitative design favors interpretive depth over computational scale, allowing sensitivity to metaphorical nuance and cross-linguistic affect. By combining close reading with contextual interpretation, the method integrates textual precision with cultural reflexivity, enabling a multiscalar analysis of symbolic poetics.

B. Data Sources and Literary Corpus

The corpus comprises twenty-four poems—twelve from Vietnamese *Thơ mới* and twelve from French Symbolism—selected for canonical status, symbolic density, and thematic convergence around space, light, and transcendence. The Vietnamese texts include Huy Cận’s “Tràng giang,” Xuân Diệu’s “Đây mùa thu tới,” and Hàn Mặc Tử’s “Tôi tâm hồn”; the French corpus features Baudelaire’s “Correspondances,” Verlaine’s “Clair de lune,” and Mallarmé’s “L’Azur.”

All poems were examined using bilingual, annotated scholarly editions to ensure semantic accuracy and cultural fidelity. The theoretical corpus draws upon Lakoff and Johnson (1980), Kristeva (1980), Bachelard (1994), Bhabha (1994), and Friedman (2006), each informing one analytical dimension of the study’s interpretive framework.

C. Research Procedure

The analysis unfolded in three interrelated phases. First, primary and theoretical texts were compiled and contextualized. Second, open coding identified recurrent symbolic motifs—light, moon, shadow, silence, echo, and spatial markers—through thematic clustering. Manual coding ensured interpretive nuance and preserved the affective and metaphorical subtleties that algorithmic methods might overlook. Coding reliability was reinforced through iterative triangulation between theoretical categories and textual instances, maintaining consistency across both poetic traditions.

The third phase involved comparative synthesis, tracing convergences and divergences in (a) the positioning of the lyrical self, (b) the structure of transcendental space, (c) the orchestration of sound and silence, and (d) the adaptation of Symbolist motifs in Vietnamese poetics. Insights derived from motif analysis directly inform the evaluative dimensions summarized in Table 1, bridging theoretical frameworks and textual interpretation.

D. Analytical Criteria and Evaluation Metrics

Drawing from this synthesis, the analysis is organized around four interrelated dimensions that translate the theoretical framework into analytic categories. These dimensions serve as interpretive coordinates for examining the cross-cultural semantics of silence, symbolism, and affect. The following table outlines the analytical dimensions, their theoretical foundations, and corresponding focal concerns.

TABLE 1
ANALYTICAL DIMENSIONS AND THEORETICAL ANCHORS

Dimension	Theoretical Framework	Key Analytic Focus
Lyrical Self	Kristeva (1980); Lakoff and Johnson (1980)	First-person subjectivity, affective projection, metaphysical reflexivity
Transcendental and Cosmic Space	Bachelard (1994)	Spatial metaphors—void, moon, night, river—as psychic architecture
Light, Shadow, and Sound Symbols	Barthes (1977); Jakobson (1960)	Rhythmic and phonic patterning; aesthetic gaps as affective thresholds
Cultural Hybridity and Symbolic Translation	Bhabha (1994); Said (1978)	Local resemanticization of Symbolist tropes; colonial and cosmological negotiation

Source. Author's synthesis of theoretical models (Kristeva, 1980; Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Bachelard, 1994; Barthes, 1977; Jakobson, 1960; Bhabha, 1994; Said, 1978).

This framework offers a structured yet adaptable model for textual analysis, ensuring theoretical coherence while accommodating the cultural and semiotic particularities of each poetic corpus.

E. Limitations, Reflexivity, and Future Directions

The study confines itself to canonical texts from the classical phases of *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism, excluding later or contemporary reinterpretations such as Valéry, Apollinaire, or digital poetics. While privileging interpretive over quantitative approaches, the study acknowledges its qualitative boundaries. Future research may triangulate these findings with corpus-based metrics or cognitive-stylistic modeling to expand methodological scope.

Two directions appear particularly promising: first, examining post-1986 Vietnamese *Đổi mới* (Renovation) poetry and postwar French modernism; second, exploring symbolic spatiality in twenty-first-century experimental and digital poetics. Such inquiries could extend this comparative framework, tracing how metaphor, rhythm, and affect evolve across new technological and geopolitical contexts.

Methodological Reflection:

As a comparative inquiry grounded in close reading and cross-cultural hermeneutics, this study recognizes the researcher's interpretive role as both mediator and participant in meaning-making. Analytical choices were guided by an awareness of linguistic asymmetry, cultural translation, and the affective resonance of metaphor. Rather than aspiring to neutrality, the analysis embraces interpretive reflexivity—acknowledging that understanding poetic consciousness across traditions requires both intellectual distance and empathetic engagement.

IV. RESULTS

A. General Comparison: The Lyrical Self

(a). Fragmented Yearning and Sensual Resistance in Vietnamese *Thơ Mới*

Building on earlier analyses of metaphor, space, and affect, this section examines how *Thơ mới* (Vietnamese New Poetry) and French Symbolism articulate lyrical subjectivity through intersecting symbolic frameworks. In *Thơ mới*, the self appears not as a stable identity but as a fragmented, desire-inflected locus. As Lakoff and Johnson (1980) argue, metaphor shapes not only language but also thought and action, positioning poetry as a medium for reconfiguring perception.

Xuân Diệu's *Vội vàng* (Xuan Dieu, 2019) dramatizes a resistance to temporal decay, as the following lines illustrate:

“Tôi muốn tắt nắng đi,
Cho màu đừng nhạt mất;
Tôi muốn buộc gió lại,
Cho hương đừng bay đi.”
(I want to snuff out the sun
So that colors do not fade;
I want to bind the wind
So that fragrance will not fly away.)

As Bachelard (1994) observes, “Inhabited space transcends geometrical space” (p. 47). Nature here becomes an ontological medium through which the lyrical “I” seeks to suspend impermanence. Butler (2005) reminds us that the self “is always in becoming” (p. 44); in *Thơ mới*, that becoming unfolds through desire and resistance, poised between mastery and acceptance of loss.

Huy Cận's *Tràng giang* (Huy Can, 1940) extends this vision:

“Thuyền về nước lại, sâu trăm ngả /
Củ một cành khô lạc mấy dòng.”
(Boats return with the water, a thousand ways of sorrow,
A single dry branch drifting through many currents.)

Here, the drifting branch becomes a metonym of solitude and estrangement. Barthes (1977) describes the poetic voice as a presence—submerged yet resonant. The image gestures toward Freud's (1961) anxiety of existence and

Jung's (1964) archetypal disconnection, while recent Vietnamese scholarship (Lê, 2019; Trần, 2021) situates such interiority within colonial and linguistic dislocation.

(b). *Transcendental Abstraction in French Symbolism*

French Symbolism shares *Thơ mới*'s metaphysical impulse but renders selfhood through abstraction and musical ambiguity. Baudelaire's *L'Invitation au voyage* (Baudelaire, 2017) envisions the beloved in a harmony of spirit and sensation:

“Là, tout n'est qu'ordre et beauté,
Luxe, calme et volupté.”
(*There, all is order and beauty,
Luxury, calm, and pleasure.*)

Sensual imagery crystallizes into metaphysical order, language serving as a conduit to transcendence. This serenity collapses into crisis in Mallarmé's *L'Azur*:

“— Le Ciel est mort. — Vers toi, j'accours !”
(— *The sky is dead — toward you I run!*)

Caruth (1996) reads such cries as “the story of a wound that cries out” (p. 7). The azure, once a symbol of the divine, dissolves into absence, yet the voice persists—toward *toi*, toward renewal. Across Baudelaire and Mallarmé, this movement from harmony to void maps a modernist dialectic in which abstraction becomes the means of spiritual endurance.

(c). *Comparative Matrix of Lyrical Patterns*

The preceding readings reveal parallel modes of self-formation through symbol and rhythm; the synthesis below situates these dynamics within a broader comparative frame. Viewed together, the two traditions articulate complementary poetics of selfhood: *Thơ mới* stages a sensuous, fractured “I” suspended between passion and transience, while Symbolism abstracts identity into dreamlike resonance. Both portray lyric subjectivity as oscillation—between dissolution and affirmation, self and world, language and silence.

To clarify these intersections and divergences, Table 2 below synthesizes the key comparative parameters of the lyrical self in *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism, outlining their major aesthetic, emotional, and philosophical dimensions.

TABLE 2
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE LYRICAL SELF IN VIETNAMESE NEW POETRY AND FRENCH SYMBOLISM

No.	Criterion	Vietnamese New Poetry	French Symbolism
1	Lyrical Subject	Romantic, nostalgic, metaphysically burdened	Transcendental, ambiguous, dreamlike
2	Emotional State	Existentially fractured, sensually urgent	Ethereal, melancholic, disembodied
3	Symbolic Imagery	Light, fragrance, river, dry branch	Azure, mirror, voyage, silence
4	Cultural–Poetic Context	Postcolonial negotiation, Eastern cyclicity	Rejection of realism, archetypal suggestion
5	Representative Poems	Xuân Diệu (<i>Vội vàng</i>), Huy Cận (<i>Tràng giang</i>)	Baudelaire (<i>L'Invitation au voyage</i>), Mallarmé (<i>L'Azur</i>)

Note & Source. Author's comparative synthesis based on close readings of canonical Vietnamese and French poetic works.

Both traditions configure the lyrical self through distinct symbolic vocabularies yet share a modernist pursuit of transcendence. Ultimately, the poetic self emerges as a mutable synthesis of perception and affect—a continuous becoming that negotiates impermanence, language, and the metaphysical unknown. Through this comparative lens, lyric modernity appears as both a shared affective structure and a culturally distinct articulation of humanity's enduring desire for permanence within impermanence.

B. *Imagery, Nature, and the Symbolic Landscape*

(a). *Nature as Metaphysical Landscape*

In modern poetry, nature evolves from mere scenery into a metaphysical landscape—a mirror of interior consciousness. Bachelard (1994) observes that “Inhabited space transcends geometrical space” (p. 47), capturing how imagination transforms matter into mind. As discussed in Section 2.2, metaphor and conceptual blending shape perception; the poetic landscape thus becomes a cognitive-affective field where emotion and world converge. Both *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism exemplify this dynamic: the former infuses nature with sensual immediacy, while the latter renders it a locus of mystical abstraction and psychic depth.

(b). *Vietnamese New Poetry: Nostalgia and Sensory Vitality*

In *Thơ mới*, nature articulates transience and embodied feeling. Xuân Diệu's *Đây mùa thu tới* (Xuan Dieu, 2019) transforms landscape into self-reflection:

“Đây mùa thu tới – mùa thu tới
Vội áo mơ phai dệt lá vàng
Hơn một loài hoa đã rụng cành
Trong vườn sắc đỏ rữa màu xanh.”

(Here comes autumn — autumn comes
 In a faded-dream garment woven of yellow leaves;
 More than one flower has shed its branch;
 In the garden red hues scour the green.)

The “faded-dream garment” visualizes beauty on the verge of loss; poetic space externalizes affect (Barthes, 1977, p. 49). Hàn Mặc Tử’s *Mùa xuân chín* (Han Mac Tu, 1936) fuses light and emotion in what Bachelard (1994) calls a “space of reverie” (p. 200):

“Trong làn nắng ửng: khói mơ tan,
 Đôi mái nhà tranh lấm tấm vàng.
 Sột soạt gió trêu tà áo biếc,
 Trên giàn thiên lý. Bóng xuân sang.”
 (In the rosy sunlight, dreamlike mist dissolves,
 Thatched roofs gleam faintly with golden specks.
 A teasing breeze stirs the blue silk hem,
 Beneath the pergola of telosma—spring’s shadow arrives.)

Here, mist and breeze act as emotional atmospheres; perception and feeling merge, turning nature into a living metaphor of impermanence.

(c). French Symbolism: Surreal Masks and Sacred Correspondences

French Symbolism reimagines nature through abstraction and suggestion. Verlaine’s *Clair de lune* (Verlain, 1869) stages the soul as a dreamlike theatre, aligning with Kristeva’s (1980) concept of the “semiotic field” (p. 16), where language suspends stable reference:

“Votre âme est un paysage choisi
 Que vont charmants masques et bergamasques,”
 (Your soul is a chosen landscape
 Where charming masks and bergamasks go to and fro.)

Baudelaire’s *Correspondances* (Baudelaire, 2017) envisions nature as sacred architecture, an “architecture of metaphysical longing” (Bachelard, 1994):

“La Nature est un temple où de vivants piliers
 Laissent parfois sortir de confuses paroles...”
 (Nature is a temple where living pillars
 Sometimes let slip confused words...)

The Symbolist landscape, sensed rather than described, dissolves the boundaries between matter and mind, image and absence.

(d). Synthesis: Spatial Functions and Cultural Poetics

Both traditions transform nature into a mirror of interiority, yet their symbolic orientations diverge: *Thơ mới* translates space into emotional immediacy, while Symbolism abstracts it into metaphysical form. This Vietnamese reanimation of landscape also reflects colonial temporal dislocation, where nature becomes both refuge and reflection of cultural selfhood.

To clarify these convergences and divergences, Table 3 below synthesizes the main comparative parameters of the two traditions, highlighting how imagery, space, and emotion operate as intertwined vehicles of symbolic meaning.

TABLE 3
 COMPARATIVE MATRIX OF NATURE AND SPACE IN VIETNAMESE NEW POETRY AND FRENCH SYMBOLISM

No.	Criteria	Vietnamese New Poetry	French Symbolism
1	Key Imagery	Autumn, spring, mist, moon – melancholic, vital	Moonlight, masks, temples – mystical, intertextual
2	Poetic Function	Resonance of nostalgia and solitude	Portal to unconscious reverie and metaphysical rupture
3	Nature of Space	Expansive, synesthetic, grounded in emotion	Multilayered, symbolic, detached from realism
4	Symbolic Dynamics	Layering of sorrow with seasonal decay	Opposition of form and absence, sound and silence
5	Emotional Register	Warm, tragic, embodied	Cool, spectral, refracted

Note & Source. Author’s synthesis from selected poems by Xuân Diệu, Hàn Mặc Tử, Baudelaire, and Verlaine.

These symbolic dynamics reveal a shared reliance on metaphorical cognition, where spatial imagery fuses perception and affect. *Thơ mới* transforms realism into reverie to externalize inner life, while Symbolism abstracts nature into a cipher of transcendence. Each tradition shapes a metaphysics of perception in which landscape and psyche interpenetrate as reciprocal dimensions of poetic being.

C. Images of Light, Darkness, and Transcendental Symbols

Extending the spatial–affective dynamics outlined in 4.2, this section explores how light and shadow crystallize the metaphysics of lyric consciousness in *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism. In both traditions, illumination and obscurity form a dialectic through which poets articulate memory, selfhood, and transcendence. As Bachelard (1994) observes,

“Inhabited space transcends geometrical space” (p. 47); light and dark thus become inner architectures rather than surface effects. Affective poetics likewise reads luminosity as a perceptual rhythm that mediates feeling and cognition. Within this spectrum, Vietnamese lyricism tends toward fragile immediacy, while French Symbolism moves toward spectral abstraction and metaphysical distance.

Xuân Diệu’s *Nguyệt cầm* (Xuan Dieu, 1938) exemplifies this interplay:

“Mây vắng, trời trong, đêm thủy tinh;
Lung linh bóng sáng bỗng rung mình
Vì nghe nương tử trong câu hát
Đã chết đêm rằm theo nước xanh.”
(*Clear sky, clouds gone, a crystal night;
The trembling light shimmers, soft and bright,
For in the song of the river maiden’s refrain
She died on the full-moon night, beneath the blue waves.*)

Radiance fuses with remembrance, the crystal night trembling with cultural memory. As Butler (2005) notes, “An account of oneself is always given to another...” (p. 31); here, light performs that disclosure, translating solitude into an ethical address shaped by intersubjective modernity.

Mallarmé’s *Brise marine* (Mallarme, 1899) transforms illumination into resistance against despair:

“La chair est triste, hélas ! et j’ai lu tous les livres.
Fuir ! là-bas fuir ! Je sens que des oiseaux sont ivres
D’être parmi l’écume inconnue et les cieux !”
(*The flesh is weary, alas! and I have read all the books.
To flee! away—there, to flee! I feel that birds are drunk
With being amid the unknown foam and the skies!*)

The “deserted brightness of my lamp” borders on erasure; darkness becomes a medium of dissolution. Kristeva (1980, p. 16) describes such textures as semiotic intensities—energies that bypass rational articulation to convey affective depth.

Verlaine’s *La lune blanche* (Verlaine, 1874) offers a counterpoint of calm illumination:

“La lune blanche
Luit dans les bois ;
De chaque branche
Part une voix
Sous la ramée ...
Ô bien-aimée.”
(*The white moon
Shines through the trees;
From every bough
There comes a voice
Beneath the arbor —
O my beloved.*)

Serene light merges stillness with feeling; reflection transforms darkness into resonance. “Rêvons, c’est l’heure”—“Let us dream, it is time”—invites dwelling in reverie, a luminous threshold of consciousness (Bachelard, 1994, p. 202).

Though distinct in tone, both traditions treat illumination and obscurity as relational forces rather than opposites. To clarify their construction, Table 4 synthesizes key convergences and divergences.

TABLE 4
COMPARATIVE MATRIX OF LIGHT AND DARKNESS IN VIETNAMESE NEW POETRY AND FRENCH SYMBOLISM

No. Criteria	Vietnamese New Poetry	French Symbolism
1 Light	Fragile, nostalgic, emotionally expressive	Ambiguous, ethereal, metaphysical force
2 Darkness	Cold, melancholic, emotionally charged	Liminal space of the unconscious, symbolic dissolution
3 Symbolic Function	Mirror of memory, spiritual witness	Portal to the unconscious, metaphysical introspection

Source. Compiled by the author based on Xuân Diệu (n.d.), Mallarmé (1865), Verlaine (1874), and theoretical insights from Bachelard (1994), Butler (2005), and Kristeva (1980).

The dialectic of light and shadow culminates in a poetics that finds coherence through fragmentation. *Thơ mới* channels transcendence through remembrance and sensual immediacy, transforming light into a vessel of longing; French Symbolism destabilizes perception, turning brilliance and obscurity into thresholds of consciousness. In both movements, illumination and darkness figure modernist temporality itself—a consciousness suspended between revelation and loss, where the divided self glimpses a fleeting unity of being.

D. Sound, Musicality, and Metaphysical Metaphors

Building on the spatial and visual metaphors examined earlier, this section turns to sound—the medium through which both *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism explore the boundaries between emotion, perception, and transcendence. Drawing on Bachelard’s phenomenology of reverie and Kristeva’s concept of semiotic rhythm, sound is treated here as an affective bridge between feeling and metaphysical cognition.

(a). *Vietnamese New Poetry: Sonic Intimacy and Emotional Atmosphere*

In *Thơ mới*, sound is more than ornament—it becomes a vessel of emotion, a texture that binds memory, tenderness, and reflection. Huy Cận’s *Ngâm ngủi* (Huy Can, 1940) captures this intimacy with quiet precision:

“Sợ buồn con nhện nhện giăng mau,
Em ơi! hãy ngủ, anh hầu quạt đây.
Lòng anh mở với quạt này,
Trăm con chim mộng về bay đầu giường.
Ngủ đi em, mộng bình thường,
Ru em sẵn tiếng thùy dương mấy bờ.”
*(The spider weaves its thread of sorrow;
Sleep, my dear, I will fan you here.
My heart opens with this fan,
A hundred dream birds come to the bed’s edge.
Sleep, my dear, your dreams will be ordinary,
I will lull you with the voice of the casuarina by the riverbank.)*

The rhythmic fan, the murmur of dream birds, and the whispering *thùy dương* translate tenderness into sound. These quiet tones do not merely soothe—they weave continuity within impermanence, turning stillness into devotion. Shaped by colonial uncertainty, such sonic intimacy transforms private emotion into a subtle act of cultural resilience.

Xuân Diệu’s *Nguyệt cầm* (Xuan Dieu, 2019) extends this resonance toward the cosmic:

“Trăng nhập vào dây cung nguyệt lạnh,
Trăng thương, trăng nhớ, hồi trăng ngàn...
Đàn buồn, đàn lặng ôi đàn chậm,
Mỗi giọt rơi tàn như lệ ngân.”
*(The moon blends with the cold strings of the lute,
The moon yearns, the moon remembers, O pale moon.
The lute is sad, the lute is silent, O the slow lute!
Each fading note like a silver tear.)*

Here, light and sound converge in a single synesthetic movement. Each vibration echoes longing; each pause turns silence into utterance. Musicality becomes a metaphysical language—a rhythm through which the self confronts its own fragility.

(b). *French Symbolism: Echoes of the Subconscious and Cosmic Fusion*

In French Symbolism, sound becomes a metaphysical principle uniting perception and the unconscious. Baudelaire’s *Correspondances* (Baudelaire, 2017) envisions this universal resonance:

“Comme de longs échos qui de loin se confondent
Dans une ténébreuse et profonde unité,
Vaste comme la nuit et comme la clarté,
Les parfums, les couleurs et les sons se répondent.”
*(Like long echoes that merge in the distance,
In a deep and shadowy unity,
Vast as night and as the light,
Perfumes, colors, and sounds respond to one another.)*

These “long echoes” evoke an invisible harmony where sensory boundaries dissolve and music becomes a way of knowing. Verlaine’s *Chanson d’automne* (Verlaine, 1866) distills this abstraction into emotional minimalism:

“Les sanglots longs
Des violons
De l’automne
Blessent mon cœur
D’une langueur
Monotone.”
*(The long sobs
Of the violins
Of autumn
Wound my heart
With a monotonous
Languor.)*

Its rhythm enacts the very languor it describes. Each drawn-out note mirrors the exhaustion of feeling, turning repetition and pause into the sound of grief itself. The poem becomes what Kristeva (1980, p. 40) calls a “semiotic rhythm of affect,” where language yields to sound to reveal the pulse of the unconscious.

(c). *Resonances and Divergences*

Across both traditions, sound mediates between the self and the world. *Thơ mới* anchors musicality in the immediacy of lived emotion—domestic quietude, nostalgia, and the presence of absence—while Symbolism abstracts it into a metaphysical register, transforming sound into the language of the ineffable.

To synthesize these parallels and distinctions, Table 5 summarizes how rhythm, resonance, and symbolism shape the auditory imagination in Vietnamese and French lyric traditions.

TABLE 5
COMPARATIVE MATRIX OF SOUND AND SYMBOLISM IN VIETNAMESE NEW POETRY AND FRENCH SYMBOLISM

No. Criteria	Vietnamese New Poetry	French Symbolism
1 Key Imagery	Sonic Fan sounds, dream birds, moon lute — gentle, intimate, emotional	Echoes, violin sobs — abstract, surreal, intermodal
2 Poetic Musicality	Lyrical, melancholic, evoking nostalgia and quietude	Hypnotic, irregular, invoking metaphysical dissonance
3 Role of Symbolism	Fusion of nature and feeling through auditory metaphor	Sound as universal connector within the symbolic cosmos

Source. Compiled by the author from primary poetic texts and theoretical references (Bachelard, 1994; Kristeva, 1980).

Sound thus becomes an epistemic metaphor—revealing knowledge through resonance rather than articulation and transforming listening into a mode of understanding. Through rhythm, silence, and vibration, poetry turns hearing into knowing: an acoustics of existence that binds emotion, memory, and metaphysical imagination.

E. *Comparative Matrix: Nature, Light, Sound, and the Self in Vietnamese New Poetry and French Symbolism*

(a). *Convergences in Poetic Vision*

Expanding on earlier analyses of space, light, and sound, this section examines how both traditions articulate parallel metaphysical grammars of the lyrical self. Though separated by culture and era, Vietnamese *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism share a common aspiration—to translate sensory experience into a language of inner being. Here, nature, light, and sound function not merely as imagery but as mediums of consciousness where emotion and transcendence intersect. Guided by Bachelard’s (1994) poetics of interior space and Kristeva’s (1980) semiotics of affect, both traditions reveal language as a dwelling for thought and feeling.

To illustrate these intersections, Table 6 summarizes the principal parallels in the symbolic treatment of nature, imagery, sound, and transcendence.

TABLE 6
COMPARATIVE PARALLELS BETWEEN VIETNAMESE NEW POETRY AND FRENCH SYMBOLISM

No. Aspect	Vietnamese New Poetry	French Symbolism
1 Nature	Interior landscape reflecting solitude and memory	Dreamlike, metaphysical terrain echoing the unconscious
2 Light and Darkness	Figures of nostalgia, faith, and emotional fragility	“Cosmic metaphors” uniting inner and outer dimensions
3 Sound and Musicality	Lulling tones bridging self and nature	Surreal harmonies evoking dream and reverie
4 Transcendent Symbols	Moon, mist, river, lute — signs of yearning and stillness	Light, silence, sea — emblems of infinite desire
5 The Lyrical Self	Solitary, emotive, seeking unity and resonance	Abstract, visionary, aspiring toward totality

Note. Table synthesizes shared characteristics based on textual analysis. Source: Author’s comparative synthesis drawing on Bachelard (1994) and Kristeva (1980).

Both traditions envision poetry as a threshold to the unseen. *Thơ mới* internalizes nature as an archive of emotion and remembrance, while Symbolism reimagines it as a spectral architecture of consciousness. Each transforms the visible into vibration, merging the sensuous and the spiritual. Xuân Diệu’s moonlit tenderness and Baudelaire’s perfumed soundscapes embody this shared impulse to voice the ineffable through rhythm, image, and reverie.

(b). *Divergences in Poetic Logic and Cultural Context*

Yet these affinities arise from distinct historical and philosophical conditions, producing different configurations of the lyric self and its aesthetic mission. The contrasts below reflect not opposition but variation in how each movement approaches modernity and the sacred.

To clarify these distinctions, Table 7 presents the principal divergences between *Thơ mới* and French Symbolism across historical, aesthetic, and philosophical dimensions.

TABLE 7
COMPARATIVE DIVERGENCES BETWEEN VIETNAMESE NEW POETRY AND FRENCH SYMBOLISM

No.	Aspect	Vietnamese New Poetry	French Symbolism
1	Historical Context	Colonial rupture and search for identity	Reaction to modernity's disenchantment and alienation
2	Sources of Inspiration	Countryside, love, nostalgia, personal memory	Dreams, metaphysics, the unconscious
3	Artistic Aims	Assertion of personal voice within hybridity	Art as metaphysical passage and escape
4	Philosophical Focus	Emotion, vulnerability, longing for resonance	Ambiguity, abstraction, quest for the ineffable
5	Artistic Form	Concrete imagery, folk tonality, fluid rhythm	Ambiguous symbolism, synesthesia, indeterminate form

Note. Table reflects synthesized contrasts from close textual and contextual analysis. Source: Author's comparative synthesis grounded in Bachelard (1994) and Kristeva (1980).

Thơ mới humanizes transcendence through tactile imagery—Huy Cận's rivers, Xuân Diệu's trembling light—while Symbolism abstracts emotion into metaphysical suggestion. The former grounds the ineffable in intimacy; the latter transforms emotion into idea. Their divergence is creative rather than oppositional: in distinct idioms, both articulate a modernist consciousness of fragmentation, transforming dislocation into imaginative renewal. Ultimately, each mediates between perception and the infinite, translating fleeting sensations into enduring forms of meaning.

V. DISCUSSION

A. Poetic Space as Symbolic Topology

This discussion situates the preceding analyses within a broader framework of symbolic poetics, showing how space, sound, and selfhood converge across cultural contexts. In both Vietnamese *Thơ mới* (New Poetry) and French Symbolism, poetic space unfolds as a symbolic topology—a landscape where memory, longing, and transcendence intersect. Recent affect-oriented scholarship underscores that such spatial configurations function not merely as representational settings but as sites where emotional experience is cognitively organized and culturally mediated (Hogan et al., 2022).

As Bachelard observes, “Space that has been seized upon by the imagination cannot remain indifferent space,” redefining it as lived resonance rather than static geometry (Bachelard, 1994, p. 183). This vision informs Huy Cận's *Tràng giang* (“Long River”), where the drifting branch—“Củi mấy cành khô lạc mấy dòng”—embodies dispersion and existential solitude. Likewise, Verlaine's *Clair de lune* evokes the soul as an interior landscape of reverie: “Votre âme est un paysage choisi.” Spatial imagery thus maps not external surroundings but the architecture of consciousness itself (Barthes, 1977).

If space represents the dwelling of the self, sound becomes its motion—an auditory extension of spatial awareness.

B. Sound, Silence, and Metaphysical Resonance

Across both traditions, sound and silence serve as key poetic modes for approaching what exceeds direct articulation. Rather than conveying stable meanings, they register emotion as transient sensation, positioning affect between presence and disappearance.

In Vietnamese lyric modernism, Xuân Diệu's *Nguyệt cầm* exemplifies how sound functions as a fragile trace of feeling. Musical imagery renders emotion through vibration and fading resonance, allowing affect to surface as sensory intensity rather than declarative meaning. Emotion thus appears as a momentary impression that resists symbolic fixation.

A similar dynamic characterizes French Symbolist poetry. In Verlaine's *Chanson d'automne*, sound is detached from narrative development and reshaped as rhythmic pressure, through which melancholy unfolds as cadence rather than concept. Feeling acts directly on perception before it is organized into meaning.

Silence is no less active. Mallarmé's *Brise marine* figures stillness as a threshold where creation and negation coexist, suspending language at the edge of articulation. Silence here intensifies perception rather than signaling absence.

Together, sound and silence operate as complementary forms of metaphysical resonance, mediating between affect and abstraction. Through their interplay, lyric expression sustains emotional movement at the limits of language, where perception remains open and unstable.

C. The Fragmented and Transcendental “I”

Both movements foreground a self in transformation—fractured, desiring, and perpetually becoming. In Xuân Diệu's *Vội vàng* (“Hastily”), the cry “Tôi muốn tắt nắng đi” expresses the impossible wish to halt time and preserve light. In Mallarmé's *L'Azur*, “Le Ciel est mort. — Vers toi, j'accours !” transforms despair into a gesture of defiance. As Butler (2005, p. 44) argues, the self is not a fixed ground but a process shaped through affect and social inscription. The poetic “I” thus emerges as a shifting node where memory, emotion, and aspiration intersect.

These tensions crystallize within the symbolic binaries that structure perception and meaning.

D. Symbolic Binaries and Cultural Encoding

In both poetic traditions, recurrent binaries—such as light and darkness, sound and silence, nature and self—function as generative structures rather than fixed oppositions. Extending earlier analyses of sensory and spatial interplay, these

dualities disclose the architecture of modern poetic consciousness, in which tension operates as a productive force. In *Thơ mới*, shaped by historical rupture and cultural uncertainty, such binaries register both personal dislocation and broader shifts in collective sensibility.

In Hàn Mặc Tử's *Đáy thôn Vĩ Dạ*, images of light and distance sustain a simultaneous sense of intimacy and estrangement, indicating that perception unfolds through oscillation rather than resolution. French Symbolist poetry similarly reframes dualities as thresholds of the unconscious, where sensory convergence produces synesthetic coherence. In Baudelaire's poetics, nature functions as a symbolic system in which scent, sound, and color interact to suggest latent unity beneath apparent division.

Across these contexts, binary structures become zones of negotiation in which fragmentation generates possibility. Rather than reinforcing rigid oppositions, such pairings mediate between rupture and continuity, allowing modern poetic imagination to emerge as a hybrid space where cultural inheritance and aesthetic innovation intersect.

E. *Intercultural Poetics and Aesthetic Convergences*

Despite differing histories, *Thơ mới* and Symbolism converge in viewing poetry as revelation rather than representation. The postcolonial longing of Vietnamese verse mirrors the Symbolist pursuit of transcendence amid spiritual disenchantment. Both articulate a crisis of presence, turning to image, rhythm, and sound to voice what language alone cannot hold. Ultimately, modern poetry—across cultures—becomes a form of ontological inquiry: through space, sound, and symbol, it inscribes the human spirit within a larger metaphysical order. In this sense, both traditions participate in the world-literary negotiation of modernity, where poetic language becomes a universal mode of knowing. Together, they reaffirm literature's enduring power to mediate between perception and transcendence.

VI. CONCLUSION AND ACADEMIC IMPLICATIONS

A. *Theoretical Synthesis*

This study has demonstrated that Vietnamese *Thơ mới* (New Poetry) and French Symbolism, though formed within distinct historical and cultural contexts, converge in their reimagining of the lyrical self. Drawing on conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980), the poetics of space (Bachelard, 1994), and the semiotics of subjectivity (Kristeva, 1980), both movements articulate a shared existential impulse—the longing to transcend empirical reality and recover coherence amid fragmentation.

In *Thơ mới*, the self arises from postcolonial rupture, suspended between nostalgia and disillusionment. Natural imagery—moonlight, mist, fading autumn hues—becomes an interior geography of emotion rather than mere description. Within this landscape, the poet, caught between inherited tradition and emerging modernity, seeks a fragile ontological harmony.

French Symbolism, born of fin-de-siècle disillusionment, turns inward toward abstraction and reverie. Nature becomes alchemical; musicality fractures syntax; and light and shadow oscillate between revelation and erasure. The Symbolist poet does not mirror the world but reconfigures it through a liminal imagination that transforms perception into thought.

Kristeva's concept of the *chora*—a pre-symbolic rhythm beneath language—clarifies the emotional cadence that animates both traditions. The Symbolist's musical reverie and the Vietnamese poet's lyrical resonance unfold within this rhythmic continuum, where meaning precedes articulation. Both share the symbolic imperative to locate the self within an imagined order that redeems alienation.

Their recurring binaries—reality and dream, light and darkness, sound and silence—form a shared topology through which transcendence becomes thinkable. In *Thơ mới*, these oppositions express a yearning for unity between human interiority and cosmic vastness; in Symbolism, they signal dissolution into the ineffable. As seen in Xuân Diệu's luminous imagery and Mallarmé's abstract harmonies, both traditions pursue coherence through symbolic transformation. Through the interplay of rhythm and space, they inhabit the *chora*—that pre-symbolic dwelling where meaning and being converge.

The convergence of these symbolic structures opens new pathways for critical and pedagogical reflection, reframing poetry as both method and revelation.

B. *Academic and Practical Implications*

Academic Implications

This research advances comparative poetics by integrating cognitive metaphor, semiotic theory, and postcolonial critique into a unified analytical model. It challenges Eurocentric readings of Vietnamese modernity while resisting reductive equivalences between traditions. By tracing how each constructs its symbolic architecture, the study situates lyric poetry as a philosophical medium where affect, cognition, and form converge. It also contributes to decolonizing literary theory and broadening the epistemic reach of world literature.

Practical Implications

Pedagogically, this research proposes a transnational model for teaching modern poetry that prioritizes dialogue over hierarchy. In multilingual classrooms, comparative reading fosters empathy and intercultural awareness, encouraging

engagement with both local and global traditions. Such comparative practice also cultivates a hybrid intellectual space where cultural difference becomes a source of creation rather than division (Bhabha, 1994).

The findings offer practical value for creative writing, translation, and adaptation, revealing how auditory and visual symbolism migrate across languages and media. Moreover, the interdisciplinary framework links literature, philosophy, and aesthetics, demonstrating how poetic structures can function as instruments of cultural understanding.

Ultimately, lyric poetry emerges as a dynamic form of knowledge—a space where identity, history, and transcendence intertwine. In bridging perception and the infinite, these poetic traditions affirm literature's enduring role as a vessel of consciousness, linking the human spirit to the world's symbolic continuum. Future research might extend this framework to later modernist and postcolonial poetics, exploring how symbolic cognition evolves across linguistic, historical, and geopolitical frontiers.

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