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## What Makes a “Generative Poetics” in Which Language and Time are interwoven Possible? ——A Review of Dai Dengyun’s New Book *Interweaving of Language and Time* and Its Inspiration for the Research of Chinese Literary Theory in the Past Century

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**Abstract:** The intellectual history path of literary theory research lies in going beyond the literary theory itself to focus on its culture and value. This is the case with Dai Dengyun’s new book, *Interweaving of Language and Time: from Yale School to Generative Poetics*, which not only carefully analyzes Yale School’s own themes of thought, inner reasoning, and theoretical achievements, but also makes an enlightening comparison, outline, and forward-looking of Yale School’s ideological backgrounds, topic contexts, historical trends, and cultural values, presenting the unique generative features of Yale School’s literary theory. This book enters from Western studies and exits from Chinese studies and reflects on Chinese literary theory in the past century from the unique perspective of Generative Poetics, thus has expanded new ideas in the research of Chinese literary theory in the past century. Chinese literary theory in the past century has not only epistemological problems, but also cultural and ideological dilemmas, especially the absence of the dimension of interweaving of language and time. By drawing on Generative Poetics, the Chinese literary theory research has found a new value foundation and thinking fulcrum, showing the unique ideological and cultural potential of Generative Poetics.

**Key words:** *Interweaving of Language and Time*; Yale School; Generative Poetics; Chinese literary theory in the past century

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**题目:** 语言与时间相交织的“生成诗学”何以可能?——评戴登云新著《语言与时间的交织》兼及对百年中国文论研究之启示

**摘要:** 文论研究的思想史路径在于超出文论自身而关注其文化与价值问题。戴登云新著《语言与时间的交织——从耶鲁学派到生成诗学》即如此,该书不仅细致辨析了耶鲁文论自身的思想主题、内在理路、理论成就,还对耶鲁文论的思想背景、论题场景、历史趋势、文化价值等做了富有启发性的对比、勾勒、前瞻,呈现了耶鲁文论独具特色的生成性特征。该书以研究西学入,以研究中学出,借鉴生成诗学这一独特视角审思百年中国文论,拓展了百年中国文论研究的新思路。百年中国文论自身不仅有知识学上的问题,更有文化与思想困境,尤其是语言与时间交互之维的缺失。通过借鉴生成诗学,中国文论研究寻获新的价值地基与思维支点,显示了生成诗学自身独特的思想文化潜质。

**关键词:**《语言与时间的交织》;耶鲁学派;生成诗学;百年中国文论

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### 1. The problem of language and time that emerge from the intellectual history

There are different perspectives on literary theory, one is the perspective of pure literary theory, which is professional and mainly talks about literary theory, which is also the most common perspective. The other is from the perspective of intellectual history, which discusses the ideological premise, operating mechanism, cultural appeal, and social significance of literary theory. From the perspective of intellectual history, it helps to break the current trend of overly disciplinary literary research and promote the grasp and understanding of deeper issues in literary theory. Dai Dengyun's new book, *Interweaving of Language and Time: From the Yale School to Generative Poetics* (Social Sciences Academic Press, 2023), approaches the subject from the perspective of intellectual history, exploring the ideological premise, operating mechanism, cultural appeals, and social significance of the Yale School's literary theory, and consciously reflects on the study of Chinese literary theory through the discussion of these issues, which is a significant case in Western literary research in recent years.

*Interweaving of Language and Time* takes four critics (Paul de Man, Geoffrey Hartman, Joseph Hillis Miller, Harold Bloom) as its research objects, covering a wide range of topics. It not only includes common literary studies such as literary criticism, literary views, and theories of literary history, but also philosophical content like language and time, as well as enlightening content such as the construction of generative poetics and reflections on Chinese literary theory in the past century, of which the core issue is the “interweaving of language and time” summarized by the author.

The term “language” here primarily refers to literary language, though not confined to literature alone.

The concept of “time” extends beyond everyday life to encompass temporal dimensions reconstructed through linguistic expression. The core characteristic of generative poetics lies in its thorough analysis of the relationship between language and time. The author creatively distills and meticulously examines the Yale School’s three dimensions of language and three vectors of time. The concept of the three dimensions of language refers to the signified dimension, the inter-dimension, and the self-reflective and referred dimension. The third dimension can be combined with the first: language either points outward or inward. As Paul de Man put it, this is a “language game”. The second dimension is particularly unique, and understanding 20th-century Western intellectual history helps clarify this concept. In Paul de Man’s thought, language is not only about the object itself, but also about the subject’s experience and the fate of the individual. Language has a mysterious relationship between the reader and the author, or “complicity relationship”. The three dimensions of language are not fixed, but in the relationship of opposition, separation, interlacing, interaction, and coexistence. This characteristic, termed “rhetoric” by the Yale School, functions through metaphors and similar devices. The rhetorical view of language not only helps to restore the complex appearance of language and stimulate the potential of language, but also helps people grasp the unspeakable, which is time. Therefore, the interweaving of language and time has become the core issue of literary theory. The time in the language covers three dimensions (three vectors) of linearity, duration, and co-existence, resulting in “difference and dislocation”. In this sense, language is time, and time is language. The author’s discussion of the complexity of language and time is innovative, which further confirms the central position of language and time in literary research.

There are two points worth thinking deeply about the interweaving of language and time, so as to give us a more comprehensive understanding of the Yale School and even the contemporary western literary theory.

First, as a school of literary theory emerging after the linguistic turn, Yale literary theory naturally places great emphasis on language. However, this does not imply that earlier theoretical schools lacked attention to language and thus suffered from theoretical flaws; rather, it reflects a natural trend in the development of intellectual history, where different eras are defined by distinct thematic concerns. In reality, contemporary linguistic theory has not fundamentally reversed the determinative role of social reality in shaping language. Without specific social realities, language remains empty—including today’s internet language, which does not emerge in a vacuum. Instead, it arises from the need of cyber society for a new linguistic form, complete with specific user groups and social material conditions. In the absence of these, internet language would undoubtedly be hollow and meaningless. The movement for Esperanto was once popular in the modern era, but eventually faded away, because Esperanto was a language without the support of social reality, and the national culture lost its support and became water without a source. To avoid the emptiness of language (and to some extent, its over-linguisticization), the author firmly grasps the time, situating language discussions within broader historical and humanistic contexts. This not only demonstrates the uniqueness of Yale literary theory but also reflects the author’s comprehensive academic perspective. Essentially, the linguistic turn didn’t prioritize language itself but rather used language as a lens to deepen understanding of values and meaning. I believe this constitutes a crucial problem awareness in *Interweaving of Language and Time*, offering unique

reference value for clarifying academic perceptions of the Western literary theory's linguistic turn.

Second, the Yale School primarily focuses on literary language rather than general language. While academic discussions on literary language are abundant, it appears that literary language has not been elevated to a transcendent status beyond its instrumental role, remaining predominantly a technical issue in literary studies. Even rhetoric, for example, is regarded as a technique, and it is difficult to see the fundamental significance of language and rhetoric. Among contemporary Western literary theories, as a rare school grounded in literary criticism, Yale literary theory offers particularly distinctive perspectives and judgments on literature. For its proponents, they confront the following challenge: How should we differentiate literary language from other forms of language such as everyday language, scientific language, and philosophical language? What are the relationships between these linguistic forms? What advantages, status, and significance does literary language possess? These questions are difficult to answer simply, but one certainty remains: since modern times, literary language has faced increasing challenges. Therefore, preventing the instrumentalization of literary language and reestablishing its ontological status becomes crucial. The author points out that one of the ideological premises of Yale literary theorists is to literalize the world. Similar perspectives appear in the works of György Lukács and Milan Kundera, who either view ancient Greece as embodying the seamless integration of humanity and nature (Lukács, 2012, pp.56-57) or regard the novel as another vital dimension of Western modernity (Kundera, 2004, p.17). Undoubtedly, both perspectives emphasize the world's literaryization (myth or fiction). These views inevitably give the impression of exaggerating literary language. However, in essence, this represents a fundamental restoration: recognizing that literary language has a foundational significance for the genesis (time) of the whole world, and this language transcends the narrow definition of linguistic expression, evolving into a broad ontological framework. The critical challenge lies in restoring literature's ontological role in reshaping the world and unleashing its potential—a task that extends beyond the narrow confines of literary theory itself. Consequently, transcending the history of literary theory to engage with intellectual history has become an inevitable research imperative.

It can be said that as the title of *Interweaving of Language and Time* reveals, the author keenly grasps the symbiotic relationship between language and time, avoiding both superficial discussions detached from linguistic context and abstract explorations divorced from temporal dimensions, and more importantly, the confusion of thought caused by the severing of the relationship between language and time. This not only shows the author's grasp of the internal ideological characteristics of the Yale School, but also shows the author's own unique concern for the generation of literary theory. Compared to external perspectives, this approach exhibits greater immediacy and dialogicality. Through the Yale School's intellectual exploration and the author's academic synthesis, the relationship between language and time emerges as a pivotal element in intellectual history, becoming an indispensable component of this field.

In general, through the intellectual history paradigm, the author not only carefully analyzes Yale School's own themes of thought, inner reasoning, and theoretical achievements, but also makes an enlightening comparison, outline, and forward-looking of Yale School's ideological backgrounds, topic contexts, historical

trends, and cultural values, presenting the unique generative features of Yale School's literary theory, offering many refreshing insights. Particularly commendable is the author's strong local consciousness in China's literary theory research, which involves exploring and reflecting on the development of China's literary theory in the past century through Yale literary theory (generative poetics), thereby expanding new avenues for studying Chinese literary theory over the past century. This reflects a new trend in Western studies: self-reflection through the lens of the other.

## **2. Reflecting on the dilemma of Chinese literary theory in the past century from the perspective of "generative poetics"**

Combined with the Yale literary theory's explanation of the complexity of language and time, and promoting generative poetics, the author believes that on the one hand, Chinese literary theory in the past century has a tendency toward monolithic thinking and a dualistic mode of thinking, such as the ancient and the modern, the Chinese and the Western, epistemology and axiology, and on the other hand, it lacks attention to the dimensions of language and time. How language grasps time and how time is embedded in language are not paid necessary attention, sorted out and reflected on in these historical experiences. I think this diagnosis is justified, and of course there is room for further expansion. This involves two aspects: the non-generative nature of thinking patterns and the absence of linguistic and temporal considerations in the content of thought.

In terms of the first aspect, there are two manifestations, one is the problem of simplification. Simplified thinking is indeed a prominent problem in Chinese literary theory in the past century, but this is not the whole problem. This involves the understanding of simplification. Objectively speaking, simplification is a way of thinking, that is, only one point is concerned, not the rest, this one-sidedness is the norm of the development of human thought, such as Confucianism emphasizes society, Taoism emphasizes nature, each has its own concerns, and there are disputes between each other, and only in the later stage or mature period of the development of intellectual history can it show integration. Obviously, the development of one-sidedness contributes to the development of ideas, not the other way around. A typical case is the Hundred Schools of Thought in the pre-Qin Dynasty, which were all one-sided thoughts, and only thus became the unreachable intellectual peak of later generations. Therefore, the simplification of Chinese literary theory in the past century itself is not the crux of the problem, the crux lies in the fact that the simplification and one-sidedness have not been deeply explored or perfected, but rather remain superficial and fleeting, leading to Chinese literary theory in the past century being like a revolving lantern, with few achieving detailed, in-depth, and systematic works. If Chinese literary theory in the past century can be based on the tradition of epistemology, long-term discussion and accumulation on a number of important issues, and form a variety of schools like the Hundred Schools of Thought in the pre-Qin Dynasty, the overall situation of Chinese literary theory may be much better. Take the Yale School as an example. It is a pity that China still lacks a literary theory school like the Yale School. Of course, the school here should be centered on "scholarship", not "school". As far as Chinese literary theory is concerned, there is a tradition of belittling language, advocating the idea of "forgetting the words when grasping the meaning" and "words failing to convey the meaning", etc., but

Chinese literary theory in the past century has never formed a solid research tradition centered on language. Most linguists have maintained a distant relationship with literary theory, and such singular or specialized literary theory research is often absent in Chinese literary theory in the past century. Even the most popular topic in Chinese literary theory, the study of human nature, has never formed a stable and orderly tradition, instead suffering multiple pressures. Not to mention that Chinese literary theory in the past century has long been closely related to external political policies, so that although there is no lack of political nature in Chinese literary theory in the past century, it lacks the accumulation of “politics” tradition. In this regard, the establishment of the school with “scholarship” is the original intention of simplification, but the actual situation is that “scholarship” failed to become scholarship, the foundation is unstable, a patchwork of sand, not to mention a broader overall and holistic research. The more glaring issue lies in the counterpoint to simplification: a haphazard patchwork labeled as “East-West fusion” or “ancient-modern synthesis,” yet in reality, it’s a chaotic amalgamation of Eastern and Western elements, ancient and modern concepts, resulting in a mismatched blend that loses their distinctiveness. True integration requires prolonged gestation, as exemplified by the Neo-Confucianists of the Song Dynasty who achieved synthesis of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism. Isn’t it strange that it will be integrated in just three or five years? This demonstrates that we must avoid both the pitfalls of simplification, namely, to govern separately and lose contact, and the hasty patchwork mentality of seeking quick gains through superficial integration.

Second is the problem of dualism. Dualistic thinking has existed since ancient times, but dual opposition is not so. China emphasizes the unity of heaven and man, the harmony of yin and yang. Although it divides heaven and man, yin and yang into dualities, it is not opposition or separation. Even in Hegel, dualism (spirit and matter) is by no means merely opposition. Dual opposition thinking easily reminds us of the most hotly debated anti-essentialism in recent literary theory circles. Anti-essentialism opposes dual opposition, the typical embodiment of which is the binary opposition between rationality and sensibility, where reason stands high and sensibility bows down. One of the recent trends in Western literary theory is to challenge this mode of thinking, oppose dual opposition, and oppose the hegemony of reason, sparking new ideas such as uncertainty, decentralization, rhizome, and nomadism, including the rhetoric and metaphor that Yale literary theory has long pursued. From the perspective of broader history of language and thought, overly precise language has actually brought many problems, such as difficulties in handling emotional and semantic issues. In an age of secularization and rationalization, language itself has become increasingly secularized and rationalized, lacking poetry and hard to leave a lasting impression. The world indeed needs “re-poeticization” (re-literarization). The role of literature in fostering global prosperity and harmonious coexistence has not diminished, but rather intensified. The pursuit even obsession of uncertainty and metaphoricity of words shown by western contemporary critics and literary theorists can probably be explained here, that is, the refusal of the transparency of language. After all, the more transparent a language becomes, the easier it is to be disciplined. By emphasizing linguistic opacity and implicitness, we stimulate language’s self-awareness in generating and reshaping global meaning—a process inherently imbued with political-ethical consciousness. In a sense, this remains a reflection of dualistic thinking. Another manifestation of dualistic thinking is the

relationship between self and other. No thinking can be separated from the relationship between self and other. The problem is whether to be self-centered or other-centered, or to re-establish the relationship between self and other. These are fundamental challenges inherent in dualistic thinking. On the self's stage, roles like divinity, rationality, sensibility, body, desire, language, and discourse and so on are played in turn, and the other, which is opposite to the self, also appears in an endless stream. Thus, the essential expansion of dualistic thinking lies in introducing concepts like intersubjectivity, fold, and dislocation—not to dismantle the collective unconscious of dualism, but to fundamentally achieve the iterative renewal of human cognitive paradigms.

The above analysis of simplification and dualism does not imply the author's blindness to this issue; rather, it reflects their unique cultural concerns—an attempt to transcend the non-generative frameworks of simplification and dualistic opposition in order to achieve a higher form of literary-theoretical thinking, namely generative thinking. In this regard, I argue that simplification has remained an unrealized goal of Chinese literary theory in the past century. However, within the new century-long historical context, pure simplification is no longer sufficient to address emerging challenges, making the parallel advancement of simplification and synthesis (not an eclectic patchwork) an inevitable trend. The same logic applies to dualism: the “elements” that have been neglected or devalued must first attain equal and reciprocal status, thereby enabling the evolution of higher-order dualism that extends ad infinitum (multiple dualisms). In this sense, the author's diagnosis is profoundly insightful. From the author's perspective, a key problem in Chinese literary theory in the past century lies in its neglect of exploring the complex relationship between language and time, as it has oscillated between epistemology and axiology, which not only tears apart the community of Chinese literary theory but also restricts its development. In the author's view, century-old Chinese literary theory constitutes an intricate hybrid of intellectual and knowledge discourses, encompassing multiple dimensions of ancient/modern and Chinese/Western thought. Rather than approaching it through one-dimensional or absolutist lenses, a broader and more transcendent perspective is needed. The author suggests that insights can be drawn from the Yale School, specifically its “generative poetics”. This anti-modern or anti-metaphysical stance of generative poetics has established a unique intellectual history signpost, which is not only significant for Western literary theory but also serves as a rare “stone from another mountain” for century-old Chinese literary theory—one that merits our attention.

### **3. Examining the problem intention of China's literary theory over the past century from the perspective of the “interweaving of language and time”**

The above discussion is to examine the problems of Chinese literary theory in the past century through “generative poetics”, which mostly belongs to external analysis, and more specifically or internally, it is a matter of language and time. This is the core of *Interweaving of Language and Time*, and it is also the most subtle of the author's cultural concerns. If Western literary theory represented by the Yale School firmly grasps the problem of language and time, makes its own thinking, and promotes the development of Western literary theory and social culture, then how the problem of language and time is repositioned in Chinese literary theory

in the past century has become a problem that must be faced.

Let's look at the language first. There is a lot of discussion in the academic circles about literary theory of China, but less discussion on literary theory of Chinese (poetics of Chinese). This naturally stems from the lack of a linguistic perspective, but ancient literary theory has a tradition of linguistic discourse, such as the debate over literary style, the contention between parallel prose and prose, the modern debate between classical and vernacular Chinese, and the dispute between Chinese and Western languages. From parallel prose to classical prose, the language of academic discourse also underwent a transformation, from parallel prose in *Wenxin Diaolong* to prose in *Yuan Shi*. There are also many traditional poetic theories in form of poetry and notes on poets and poetry, which show that the style of writing is pluralistic and flexible. The language of Chinese literary theory in the past century is in an era of unity and pluralism. Unity refers to modern Chinese, but there are also many literary styles, such as parallel prose, prose, modern academic writing, translated texts, revolutionary prose, philosophical prose, speech and dialogue, and so on. They coexist in a state of mixed language. However, today's academic language is undoubtedly the center of modern vernacular (modern Chinese), which is increasingly simplified (standardized), which puts great pressure on other literary styles. The attention of *Interweaving of Language and Time* to poetic language is particularly commendable. In fact, today's literary criticism is hardly worth reading, and literary theory is boring. In my opinion, what will end is not literature as poetic wisdom, but stylized literary criticism and literary theory. In this regard, it is necessary to restore the Chinese, poetic and philosophical nature of Chinese literary theory, and it is necessary to dig deeply, sort out and study the diverse literary language practices in Chinese literary theory in the past century. Of course, style is only one aspect, and there are other issues of the discourse power, 30 years ago, the academic circles discussed Chinese literary aphasia, some scholars believe that a large number of terms, concepts, and propositions used in the Chinese literary circles are from the West or the former Soviet Union, and the Chinese literary circles have hardly put forward any original terms, concepts, and propositions. This diagnosis is of course debatable, but the problem is that it has been 30 years since the Chinese literary theory aphasia was proposed (Cao Shunqing, 1996, p.50). Has it been substantially resolved so far? To a certain extent, the problem of aphasia is not a literary problem, but a social and cultural problem. If social and cultural problems are not solved, aphasia will not be solved either. If we still use a set of literary discourse systems from the West or the former Soviet Union, aphasia cannot be solved. The key to solving this problem is that interpreting Chinese literature needs to be based on a set of discourse systems rooted in Chinese literary experience, and interpreting Chinese literature from this discourse system is reasonable and effective and should not become "Chinese literature in Western literary theory".<sup>①</sup>Of course, it is necessary to learn from and absorb foreign ideas, but foreign ideas cannot replace local thinking. Many traditional Chinese literary discourse, such as "Tao", "Shen Si", and "Qi Yun", are not given due prominence. Some argue that since terms like "principle", "imagination", and "inspiration" already exist, there is no need for local terminology. In fact, from the perspective of difference, the introduction of China's unique concepts and propositions is of

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<sup>①</sup> James Elkins (1999) incorporated the interpretation of Chinese landscape painting into Western art history, and comparing it with Chinese literature, it is not difficult to get "Chinese literature in Western literary theory".



promoting significance to the entire global literary theory ecology. For the West, China as an Other has a certain stimulation. For example, in Japanese literary aesthetics, there is the concept of “wabi-sabi”, while Chinese literary aesthetics is not without these unique expressions, such as the traditional “Gan Xing”, “Yi Xiang”, and “Shen Si”.<sup>②</sup> This is a world of differences, and all countries in the world should contribute their own thinking, and then seek common ground while reserving small differences, otherwise there is only one language in this world—English, and there is only one literary theory—Western literary theory, which is a great misfortune of human culture. From the perspective of the Yale School, the deep concern and in-depth study of Chinese language theory is one of the biggest inspirations for the research about Yale School, because language is the biggest difference, it is the representation of all differences and even the ontology itself.

Turning to the question of time and its relationship with language (literature), the author argues that time is not merely linear and one-dimensional, but also differential, coexistent, and so forth. These three dimensions are intertwined—characterized by differential dislocation—and time is particularly interlaced in literary works. Then, is time also such a phenomenon in reality? From the perspective of direct human experience, this is difficult to determine; yet daily life contains abundant non-linear time—such as dream time, psychological time, and faith time, among others. Once the intentionality of time is acknowledged, it naturally leads to the conclusion that time is characterized by interlacing. Furthermore, given the central significance of time to literature, the attention devoted by literary theory to temporal issues constitutes a core concern of literary studies—for the fundamental problem of literature lies in the resistance, transcendence, and reconstruction of time (specifically its finitude). Throughout history, is there a poet who has not lamented the cycle of life and death, the alternation of seasons, the vicissitudes of human affairs, and the rise and fall of history? Abundantly present in literature are temporal consciousness and temporal experience, which serve to resist the finitude and transience of real time. In *Classical Treatise on Literary Writing*, Cao Pi asserted: “Life has its limits, and glory fades with age. These are fleeting pursuits, far less enduring than the timeless legacy of literary works. Thus, ancient authors found solace in ink and paper, expressing their ideas through writings. Without relying on courtly rhetoric or imperial patronage, their fame naturally endured through the ages.” Language has transcended the limited time. Although Cao Pi said that “literature is a great undertaking of governing the country and an immortal event”, although the great undertaking of governing the country ranks before the immortal event, in fact “immortality” is the mystery and destination of literature. Obviously, the question of time in literature constitutes the ultimate question of literature, rather than mere issues of emotion or thought. Those who regard literature as so-called emotion and thought are far away from the essence of literature. For all questions of emotion and thought point to temporal problems: how to realize one’s own value in a limited time, settle people’s souls, construct the world of meaning, and so on. This is as far as literature is concerned, as far as literary theory is concerned, literary theory needs to grasp the time in literature, feel the time experience (intuitive, traumatic, tragic, etc.) of poets and writers when facing the world, reveal that poets and

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<sup>②</sup> In the popular book *Aesthetics: A Beginner’s Guide* (2020) of Charles Taliaferro, there is even a chapter titled “Cross-cultural Aesthetics”, which specifically discusses Chinese aesthetics and Japanese aesthetics, a feature that distinguishes it from most Western aesthetic books. The discussion of the chapter of “Shen Si” in *Wenxin Diaolong* is mainly compared with western imagination, which shows that “Shen Si” may become one of the universal terms in global literary theory.

writers transcend the finiteness of time through language (narrative, rhetoric, metaphor, etc.), truly promote the humanistic aesthetic education, spiritual settlement and redemption function of literary theory research, and restore the functions of restarting, reshaping and reconstructing the world that literature once had. This is the real “primordial horizon” of literature. Therefore, the mission of literary theory is not only to make a choice between the East and the West, ancient and modern, which is only the “second meaning”, but also to experience, grasp, describe, interpret and construct the emotional, ideological and spiritual life experience of people who are at the crossing of the East and the West, ancient and modern (through literature). Although Chinese literary theory in the past century is in the time interlacing of tradition, modernity and postmodernity, this time interlacing is not the key to literary theory, and the time interlacing of literary theory will not have any substantial impact on ordinary people, the key is that the influence of time interlacing on ordinary people’s emotions, thoughts, and spirits is reflected in literature, and literary theory needs to grasp precisely this, which is the “first meaning” of literary theory research. Of course, it is necessary to discuss the time interlacing in the literary theory, which helps us to sum up experience, but in the end, it still leads to the comprehension, grasp, description, interpretation, and construction of the time experience of modern people, poets, and writers in the interlacing of time. Moreover, regarding the original experience of temporal interlacing—such as myth, dream, imagination, faith, and so forth—it is no simpler than that of the traditional, modern, or postmodern. In this regard, issues like aphasia and the lack of discursive power in Chinese literary theory can be alleviated to a certain extent, for the focus of literary theory has been redirected from the “secondary meaning” (e.g., disciplinary knowledge) to the “primary meaning” (the interlacing of language and time), namely, a focus on the temporal experiences of modern humans, poets, and writers as mediated through language. This presents an enormous challenge for Chinese literary theory, also a rare opportunity.

#### **4. Conclusion: The ideological and cultural potential of “generative poetics”**

By drawing on generative poetics, Chinese literary theory research seeks new value foundations and thinking fulcrums, showing the unique ideological and cultural potential of generative poetics itself. From this point of view, the meaning of *Interweaving of Language and Time* is clear, and this book strengthens the language and time issues in literary theory research, and promotes a more original generative poetics, which fully reflects the author’s unique phenomenological academic background and sensitive humanistic consciousness, and is also the crystallization of his long-term dedication to the study of Yale School.

The author uses two threads to intertwine and sort out the Yale School and activate its interpretive power for reality. In terms of language, we should pay attention to the complexity of language when discussing literary theory, especially the complexity of Chinese (literature) itself and cross-language complexity. Such language is inherently rhetorical, not purely rational or transparently clear; it demands deeper apprehension and savoring on our part. In terms of time, it is a concern for the complexity of time. Time is not just linear, but the interlaced juxtaposition of multiple lines, which strengthens our understanding of the spiritual drive and creativity of man as a finite thing (in Heidegger’s words, “mortal”), and through the dislocation of time, man realizes the transcendence of finite time. In an era where objects and words predominate over people, the

investigation of temporality and life through language undoubtedly enhances the new humanistic dimension of literary theory research.

As far as today's literary research is concerned, some bring us new knowledge, while others bring us new enlightenment. To learn from the West means not only "scholarly theories", but also "scholarly visions". In my opinion, this book not only provides a case study of Western literary theory based on the intellectual history, but also promotes a reflection path of epistemology and intellectual history of Chinese literary theory from the perspective of the other, especially from the perspective of generative vision, and also provides an original literary vision to examine the world, and the poetic generation of the world (i.e., "generative poetics") is not only possible, but also necessary.

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