Oral Tradition

Sound Effects

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Neil Rhodes and Chris Jones, *Special Editors*

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Editor's Column

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Sound Effects:
The Oral/Aural Dimensions of Literature in English
Introduction

Neil Rhodes and Chris Jones

Sound Effects traces the history of the relationship between oral conditions and aural effect in English literature from its beginnings in the Anglo-Saxon period through to the twenty-first century. Few collections nowadays, other than textbook histories, would attempt a survey of their field from the early middle ages to the present day, and it is not our intention here to offer a continuous narrative. But despite the many centuries covered by this collection, the reader will find that certain themes recur in different contexts and that the individual essays speak to each other, often over long distances of time. It ends where it might have begun, with Homer, though in modern English form. The effect of this pattern is to create an "envelope" structure in which the ancient oral forms of Greek and Anglo-Saxon verse reappear as contexts for understanding how these forms survive and how sound works in the poetry of the modern world. The scope of the volume is also determined by its subject, since we are concerned with tradition as well as with the oral and aural. In particular, we are concerned with how literary production and reception respond to the different waves of media evolution from oral to written, manuscript to print (and the theater), and the later development of machine technology. We are not specifically concerned with the computer and the Internet, though they are an unstated presence behind the project as a whole. A subsidiary theme is the way in which sound, understood in both oral and aural terms, provides the agency through which high and low, elite and popular cultures are brought into conjunction throughout English literature.

This collection derives from a conference held at the University of St. Andrews in 2006, one of an occasional series on the media in history as a context for literary interpretation.[1] The aim of the conference was to extend our discussion of the literary media from printed text and script back to the most basic medium of all: speech. But we also wanted to explore points of

[1] Publications from earlier conferences have been Rhodes and Sawday 2000 and Jones and Murphy 2002. In the case of *Sound Effects* we would like to take this opportunity of thanking Beth Wright for acting as conference secretary and John Wesley for his work as program coordinator; thanks also go to Fiona Benson and Beth Wright for the striking artwork. We are most grateful to John Miles Foley both for delivering one of the plenary papers and for the invitation to prepare this special issue of *Oral Tradition,* and also to David Crystal for generously offering to record passages of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in Original Pronunciation for the collection. Thanks are due finally to Michael Bull, Wes Folkerth, and Bruce Smith for their extremely helpful appraisals of the proposal for this collection, and to Kristine Johanson for her indispensable help in editing the papers.

contact between the established field of oral tradition and the emerging field of sound studies. The origins of the latter might be traced as far back as Luigi Russolo's *The Art of Noises* (1913), but in academic terms the landmark publication is probably Murray Schafer's *The New Soundscape* (1968), which gave us a term that has become increasingly common in modern cultural history. More recently, there have been groundbreaking books by Bruce Smith (1999) on early modern England and John Picker (2003) on the Victorian period, as well as valuable multi-disciplinary collections such as Les Back and Michael Bull's *Auditory Culture Reader* (2003). Our hope is that the present collection will make its own contribution to this developing field by offering a broad historical contextualization of the oral/aural dimensions of English literature in an easily accessible online form that also allows us to provide sound and image files in an eCompanion.

Although our use of this last facility has been relatively modest, the electronic medium of the publication points in the direction that sound studies should obviously go. This has been the direction taken by John Miles Foley in his editorship of *Oral Tradition* and in his own work on the parallels between the conditions of primary orality and those produced by modern Internet technology.[2] It will seem increasingly odd to produce printed books about sound that are themselves soundless. The point we have reached was imagined half a century ago by Marshall McLuhan, who effectively invented modern media studies and gave us the concepts of "acoustic space" and, through his influence on Walter Ong, the "secondary orality" of the electronic media. It was McLuhan (1962) who announced that "the new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village" (31), and it is fitting that his work should now be enjoying a revaluation: this is his century. McLuhan was a Canadian, as is Murray Schafer; when we add in the work of Harold Innis on the railways and Eric Havelock on oral tradition, both of whom were based at Toronto like McLuhan, it becomes apparent that the field covered by the present collection has a distinctively Canadian provenance. It so happens that two of our three early modern essays here are by Canadian scholars, the third considers McLuhan himself, and the opening essay in the collection comes from the present provost of Trinity College, Toronto.

Old English scholarship has come a long way since the first enthusiastic attempts to apply oral-formulaic theory to the surviving corpus of poetry, in the wake of the fieldwork carried out by Milman Parry and Albert Lord.[3] It is now unusual to find expressed the once commonly held view that Old English poetry was originally composed orally, and subsequently dictated to, or otherwise transcribed by, "monkish scribes," in whose hands pristine oral performance became textualized and corrupt. Versions of this oralist view of Old English poetry still persist in the popular imagination, to the extent, that is, that the popular imagination embraces Old English poetry at all. In this respect, that the 2007 Robert Zemeckis film *Beowulf* depicts an oral-formulaic poet at work in the hall Heorot, declaiming genuine verses from the poem in convincingly accurate pronunciation, was both surprising (in that the filmmakers had considered

[2] See further Foley 2008 and the Pathways Project (http://pathwaysproject.org).

[3] This phase of attention devoted to Old English poetry as oral began in earnest with Magoun 1953. For a summary and history of this approach, see Foley 1988. The online annotated bibliography devoted to oral-formulaic theory and maintained at the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition makes a full subsequent bibliography here superfluous: http://www.oraltradition.org/bibliography/ .

and investigated questions surrounding the poem's mode of production at all) and unsurprising (in that the film had adopted a superseded, but nevertheless attractive, model of that mode of production). Curiously, then, in the movie theaters of the English-speaking diaspora, the Zemeckis film may have created something approaching the idealized circumstances that scholars once imagined for the aural reception of Old English verse delivered as secular and heroic entertainment in the halls of the Anglo-Saxons, perhaps for the first time in the long history of the poem.

In professional scholarship on the subject, one now more commonly reads of Old English poetry as being marked by a "residual orality," or of a scribal culture inflected by formulaic compositional practices that reflect, derive from, or imitate those of an oral poetics, either actual and contemporary, or already vanishing and idealized. Foley puts Old English poems into the third of his four categories of oral poetry, "voices from the past," a typology that admits we will never know "the exact scenario of their commission to textual form," but acknowledges nonetheless that these poems "bear a telltale compositional stamp" of a culture informed by orality (2002:47).

In investigating the nature of this more nuanced relationship between a highly literary scribal culture in dialogue with the idea, or ideal, of an oral culture that is otherwise traceless in Old English poetry, few scholars have made more of an impact on the field over the last decade than Andy Orchard. In the present essay, Orchard explores close verbal parallels that occur across a number of texts, written in both Anglo-Saxon and Latin. As the existence of an apparently formulaic vocabulary in Anglo-Latin poetry (at times closely sharing phrasing or idiom with that of Anglo-Saxon) clearly cannot be attributable to an oral process of composition by illiterates, Orchard instead examines this allusive criss-crossing of textual pathways as subject to the same kind of investigation as any intertextual reference might be. Thus he is able to begin mapping out a network of influence and borrowing between specific Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Latin poems, rather than assuming such relationships are due to drawing on a common reservoir of oral-traditional idiom. This in turn permits a reconsideration of the oral/aural dimension of entexted Old English literature. For, as Orchard demonstrates, extended memorization and recitation of verse formed a significant part of an education in Latin letters: that is to say, methods of acquiring literacy were highly dependent on orality. Thus a writer such as Aldhelm would have held in mind an enormous stock of rote-learned set phrases in verse, which could then have been redeployed in written composition, giving an impression of formulaic composition, and indeed depending on having been uttered from memory, but not being "oral-formulaic" in the way in which traditional scholars of oral-formulaic theory would understand the term. That this body of textualized poetry, marked by memorization and recitation, and highly aural in character, if not straightforwardly oral, is likely to have replaced an earlier Anglo-Saxon culture of oral composition is something Orchard's investigation admits, provocatively concluding that "it is a paradox that while we can never hear again the ancient poetry of the inherited native Anglo-Saxon oral tradition, it is precisely the imported literate Christian and Latinate culture that eventually displaced it that . . . allows us a glimpse of what was."

Sound as compositional element, and as a factor in the production and performance of poetry (or not), has been such a dominant topic for inquiry for literary scholars of Old English

that it is perhaps not surprising that sound as subject matter or theme treated within the literature in its own right has been largely neglected. This curious blind spot is addressed, for the first time in detail, by Alice Jorgensen in our second essay. Thus the collection turns from the ways in which the dimension of sound might affect and effect the textual world, to the ways in which the textual world in turn represents that dimension of sound. Jorgensen looks in particular at how noises are voiced within Old English battle poetry. Drawing on Elaine Scarry's theorization of pain (*The Body in Pain*, 1985) to examine the relationship in several Old English texts between language, violence, and noise, she provocatively develops the idea that language subjected to violence degenerates into noise, before turning to focus more closely on the poem *Exodus*. Jorgensen argues that it is in large part the depiction of noise that makes us experience *Exodus* as a violent poem, a conclusion that nevertheless does not avoid the irony that inarticulate noise is represented through articulate song.

Old English literature is often experienced in rather grim isolation from later literary tradition, but some of the most interesting issues surrounding the oral and aural character of early medieval poetry are played out again, in different contexts, in the early modern period. By the sixteenth century the English language itself had developed into its recognizably "modern" form, but up until the 1570s it was regarded as inadequate for literary purposes, and for anything more serious than poetry Latin was essential. Intellectual and scholarly works were written in Latin and much official business was conducted in that language: the purpose of going to school was to learn Latin. But while a large part of Latin language-learning was still conducted orally, as it had been in earlier centuries, humanist writers and educators saw medieval *sermo* as responsible for the debasement of the ancient tongues. In his *De Recta Pronuntiatione* (1528), Erasmus attempted to recover what he understood to be the original purity of spoken Latin and Greek from the corruption he claimed they had suffered through long centuries of vernacular abuse, and in the 1540s Sir John Cheke and his circle at Cambridge were also much concerned with the matter of correct pronunciation. At the same time, though sixteenth-century England was still very much an oral world for the educated as well as for the unlearned, the work of the humanists on the restoration of classical texts and their redirection of rhetoric toward writing meant that new approaches to speech and pronunciation have also to be seen in terms of a gradual shift towards a more literate culture.

This new and vexed relationship between speech and writing provides the context for John Wesley's essay on the Elizabethan schoolmaster, Richard Mulcaster. As the teacher of Spenser, Kyd, Lodge, and Lancelot Andrewes, whose innovations in poetry, drama, prose fiction, and bible translation did so much to stimulate confidence in English as a literary language, Mulcaster might be regarded as one of the prime movers of the Elizabethan renaissance. He was, of course, responsible for teaching these future authors Latin, but he also published a book called *The Elementarie* (1582) on "the right writing of our English tongue," which takes as its starting point the project for work on an English phonetic alphabet initiated by the Cambridge circle and developed by John Hart (1569) in his work on the transcription of the voice. As Wesley shows, Mulcaster's aim was to challenge those attempts to give absolute precedence to sound by constructing an allegory in which "Sound" is portrayed as a tyrant who is eventually forced to defer to Reason and Custom. But Wesley goes on to argue that this happy compromise is threatened as Mulcaster increasingly finds sound to be the subversive element in his plans for

right writing. Although he placed special emphasis on voice training in his own pedagogy, he is ultimately forced to concede that it is this element of sound performed in speech that is always going to trouble the orthographer.

In his discussion of the competition for precedence and authority between sound and writing in the sixteenth century, Wesley gives us a theoretical context for addressing the oral/aural dimensions of early modern literature. In the case of Shakespeare, however, we need to take into account an entirely new medium, not available to medieval writers, or indeed to anyone in England before the late 1560s: the theater. The purpose-built, commercial theaters of Elizabethan London were the wooden arenas in which plays were heard: they were quite literally the sounding boards for scripts. And while there was undoubtedly a growing literary market for printed play-texts, the plays themselves would have been initially experienced as speech. An enormous amount of intellectual labor has been expended on the reconstruction of "authentic" Elizabethan play-texts, but how do we recover their sounds? Experimental "original pronunciation" productions of Shakespeare attempting to do just that have been staged at the reconstructed Globe theater in London, guided by the expertise of David Crystal.[4] To date, Shakespeare's Globe has mounted performances of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Troilus and Cressida* in OP, and Crystal has described the first of them in his book *Pronouncing Shakespeare* (2005). The court was a melting pot of regional accents, and accent was less an indicator of class than of age. Pronunciation was changing rapidly, and this was reflected in the speech of the younger generation. Under Crystal's tutelage, Juliet and the nurse pronounced the same word in different ways (2005:111, 41, 74). But actors also found that in OP Juliet's wordplay seemed to be less intellectual and more to do with pleasure, while Jimmy Garnon, who played Mercutio, said of the Queen Mab speech that "in RP this always feels like poetry. In OP it suddenly felt real" (146-47). Without endorsing the distinction between poetry and reality, it is tempting to see in that remark a hint that OP might also stand for "original presence" in defiance of Derrida and much modern theory.

Three passages from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* courtesy of David Crystal.

Recovering the sounds of Shakespeare is what Patricia Parker sets out to do in her essay on "Shakespeare's Sound Government." Taking up some of the issues raised by Wesley in a theoretical and pedagogical context, which include the point that the ungovernability of sound in Elizabethan English is reflected in the instability of spelling, she argues that the Shakespearean textual tradition has led to the suppression of the aural dimension of the plays. Her essay draws especially upon work for her edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which aims to restore some of the meanings lost to us through the standardizing print tradition of the Shakespearean text. Making sense of Bottom's somewhat confused report of his dream, "The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen . . ." (4.1.204-05), Parker pursues a strategy of "hearing with the eye, seeing with the ear" to retrieve some of Shakespeare's lost puns; this is not just a matter

[4] Recordings of the Globe productions were not available, and we are grateful to David Crystal for offering us his own versions of three passages from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for this special issue of *Oral Tradition.* The passages here are 2.1.249, 3.2.102, and 5.1.413 ff.

of recovering sound effects in purely sensory terms, but of recovering aurally generated meanings. The subject of orally based Latin language-learning reappears here in a quite different context, as Parker uncovers wordplay between Latin and English, but she also goes on to emphasize the importance of the polyglot communities of early modern London and the contribution of other modern languages to the "translingual soundings" of Shakespearean drama. Ultimately, this international dimension to the verbal experience of the plays shows how sound opens up much wider issues: "far from being mere verbal 'quibbles'," she argues, "such polyglot or homophonic soundings frequently forged larger cultural associations in the period." Recovering Shakespeare's sound effects, therefore, is a vital task for the cultural historian, as well as for the editor.

In the last of the three Elizabethan essays, Neil Rhodes turns to the other new medium of the sixteenth century, print itself, and considers its relationship to orality in the light of the ideas of the founding father of modern media studies, Marshall McLuhan. While later printed editions of Shakespeare may have obliterated the aural dimensions of the plays experienced in the theater, some writers in the early modern period itself responded to print as a quasi-oral medium. The most striking example of a writer who was able to use print to simulate oral conditions was Thomas Nashe, and Rhodes begins by suggesting that it was this aspect of his literary production that led the young McLuhan to choose him as the topic for his Cambridge Ph.D. thesis. McLuhan's initial interest in Nashe situated him within the domain of high culture, since his thesis was principally concerned with the arts of the classical trivium, and in that context orality appeared in formal dress as oration. But in his own translation from Cambridge into the commercial print world, Nashe exploited the potential of speech models drawn from popular culture, those of fairground and marketplace, which enabled him to experiment with different kinds of oral performance and create what was almost a hybrid oral-print medium. It was this experience, Rhodes argues, that prompted McLuhan's later work on the media and popular culture. The other aspect of Nashe that was important to McLuhan was his hostility to Ramus. Whereas Nashe had managed to absorb oral tradition into the print medium, Ramus's reform of the trivium and his consequent influence on textbook production had the effect of severing print from the old oral world. It was McLuhan who proposed Ramus to his student Walter Ong as a subject for his own Ph.D., thereby initiating some of the most important work on the relationship between orality and literacy in the later twentieth century.

The ideas of McLuhan and Ong, or the Orality-Literacy School as it is sometimes called, have often been represented as sentimentalizing oral cultures while at the same time stigmatizing the supposedly alienating effects of print. In this formula, print produces linearity and closure, the communal vitality and spontaneity of the oral world are replaced by the solitary occupation of silent reading, and hearing yields to sight as the principal cognitive mechanism. Part of the purpose of Rhodes' essay is to show that their ideas were not quite so monochrome as that and to argue, in the case of McLuhan, that it was Nashe's experimental use of print to simulate the conditions of oral culture that prompted him to think about some of the cultural consequences of modern media. As far as the evolutionary model itself is concerned—the model in which print supplants oral culture in early modern England—recent historical research, by Adam Fox (2000) for example, has convincingly demonstrated that the two media cross-fertilized and actually helped to reinforce each other during the period. But once these qualifications have been made, it

is nonetheless the case that, by the mid-eighteenth century, writers (and presumably some readers) had themselves become aware of the distancing effects of print. Their response, as James Mulholland describes in his essay on Ossian, was to create a new cult of the oral within the pages of the printed book. This was not the same as Nashe's experiment, which manipulates print to fuse elite and popular rhetorical models; in the case of Ossian what was at stake was the claim for a national culture (that of Scotland) rooted in oral tradition and epitomized in the Romantic figure of the bard.

The newly discovered Gaelic epic was, of course, an invention. But as Mulholland shows, this involved not just the invention of tradition, but also the invention of "voice." What Ossian's creator, James Macpherson, was attempting to do was to re-create a sense of the living voice of the bard from the typography of the printed page. The key term for Mulholland here is "intimacy." This is not so much the intimacy of private space, of book and reader, as the imagined communal intimacy of oral performance, the human interaction of the bard and his audience, re-created in the silent world of print. This illusion is reinforced by the illustrations that accompanied the published versions of Ossian, which are designed to supplement Macpherson's typographical construction of "voice" by enhancing the reader's sense of participation and human presence. The Ossian phenomenon is part of the wider cult of the primitive in the Romantic era, but it also marks the point where readers begin to reimagine themselves as audiences.

What it also does is alert us to the social dimension of media evolution and to the way in which performance may act as a mechanism for social bonding. The theater partially fulfills this role in literate cultures, but in the eighteenth century, alongside and in contrast with the development of the silent reader, a vibrant song culture existed that was genuinely participatory and not merely constructed as such through the devices of print. To illustrate this phenomenon, Dianne Dugaw focuses on the journals of James Boswell, another Scot, and describes how Boswell sang his way through Britain and Europe in an extraordinary variety of different social situations. For Boswell, song worked through shared experience to bridge social difference in all sorts of encounters: with an aristocrat at a gentleman's drinking club; with peasants in Corsica; and in a breakfast conversation with a lady. In some situations the theater might act as a point of reference, as in this last encounter where Boswell's diary records his flirtatious allusion to the song from *The Beggar's Opera*, "Youth's the Season Made for Joys," which Dugaw herself sings in an accompaniment to her essay. But while song culture might be mediated by the theater, this essay also underlines the point that song had the effect of bringing elite and popular culture into conjunction, which is a process we see at work in different contexts elsewhere in this collection.

One instance of this mixing of high and low was the growing interest of the intellectual elite in the ballad, a central feature of both the cult of orality that produced Ossian and the song culture celebrated by Boswell. Indeed, we could see the ballad as central to English oral tradition more generally, while bearing in mind that a significant part of the ballad corpus is of course Scottish and that there is also a distinctive Gaelic ballad tradition (which Macpherson exploited). Upperclass appreciation of the ballad can be traced at least as far back as Sidney's well-known affection for "Sir Patrick Spens," but it first achieves a respectable place in the English literary canon with the publication of Thomas Percy's *Reliques* in 1765 and reaches its apotheosis in

Wordsworth and Coleridge's revolutionary *Lyrical Ballads* at the end of the century. But as well as providing a meeting point for elite and popular literary taste, ballads also have a curiously bi-focal relationship to history: on the one hand, they may be timeless narrative songs about love, loss, betrayal, and murder, evolving over centuries of performance but essentially undatable; on the other, they may be based on very specific events, datable by the trials that followed from them and the subsequent reports of these. The two kinds are usually put into the separate categories of folk ballad and street or broadside ballad, but in either case ballads foreground the role of memory in relation both to composition and to historical fact.

Thomas Pettitt's essay on "The Suffolk Tragedy," a ballad first printed in 1828, begins by arguing that the role of memory in the composition and transmission of ballads is inadequately recognized by the term "oral tradition." Instead, he proposes a fusion of the two in the term "memoral" that would, he suggests, be the real alternative to written transmission. He then goes on to argue that the relationship between folk and broadside ballad may have been misunderstood. In terms of media the difference between them should be obvious. The broadside was a printed sheet recording recent sensational events and sold on the street, while the folk ballad was preserved in memory, transmitted by voice, at some stage written down, and eventually, perhaps, printed. But Pettitt points out, first, that some of the ballads sold as broadsides were in fact acquired from "memoral" tradition and commercially repackaged. He then conducts an experiment to show, much more surprisingly, that the reverse process can also be seen at work: that ballads that start out as broadsides can over time acquire the characteristics of the folk ballad through entry into memoral tradition. Taking "The Suffolk Tragedy" as his example, a ballad in the murdered sweetheart category, he shows how repeated memoral performance had the effect of "decomposing" the ballad to its basic narrative structures and emotional core. It is a vivid illustration of how Fox's argument about the cross-fertilization of oral and print media in the early modern era can be extended to even later periods.

When we approach the oral and aural dimensions of literature in social terms, we immediately encounter questions of register, and of elite and popular cultural contexts, but when we move our attention to the media in history we are more likely to find ourselves addressing issues of primitivism and modernity. Interestingly, Pettitt describes the operations of memoral tradition as a "ballad machine," suggesting that modern technology may imitate the processes of much older forms of transmission. When we reach the Victorian period, however, the impact of the Industrial Revolution and the communications revolution brought about by the railways creates what appears to be an irreversible modernity in the form of a new machine-dominated world. The effects of this shift are transmitted in literature perhaps most strikingly through the new soundscapes of the city.

Bruce Johnson approaches this subject by showing how the hugely expanded cities of Victorian Britain could no longer be read visually, but only experienced aurally. So despite the apparently relentless drive towards modernity in social and economic terms during the nineteenth century, cognitively the effects of the new machines are more ambiguous. The movement that Johnson describes is, for example, the opposite of that proposed by Walter Ong when he argued that print culture replaced an aural perception of the world with a visual one. And Johnson also sees many of the characteristics traditionally associated with oral culture, in particular the sense of shared life generated by sound, as being replicated in the new, mechanically created, sonic

community of the city. In other respects, however, nineteenth-century technological innovation points more directly toward modernity. The obvious examples in the field of sound would be the telephone and the recording machines developed toward the end of the century, which have the effect of detaching sound from its human origins. These innovations extend a process that begins with the disembodied, imaginary voices of print, as Mulholland shows in his discussion of Ossian. But the device that Johnson chooses as the point of convergence for many of the themes of his essay is, in fact, the typewriter. The typewriter represents a new stage in information and communications technology and, of course, in literary composition and production itself. It represents speed, but also noise. The silent hall of the medieval scriptorium, or the dusty Victorian office where clerks scratch at their ledgers, is transformed by the typewriter into the loud, mechanical clatter of the modern workplace. At the same time, the typewriter is inseparable from gender. As Johnson neatly sums up in his discussion of Grant Allen's novel *The Type-Writer Girl* (1897), "She is her technology, its sound is her sound." He points out that the "type-writer" is both the machine itself and the woman who types, and also that it becomes a trope for a newly voluble workplace where the ancient regulations for female silence no longer apply.

Derek Attridge's essay on Joyce also opens with a woman and the sound of a machine, in this case Molly Bloom and the train whistle from the Penelope section of *Ulysses*. But Attridge is concerned not so much with the cultural impact of technology, as in the way sound can be translated into language and represented on the printed page. Joyce was certainly alert to the effects of early twentieth-century sound technology, and this awareness may well have acted as a prompt for his "aural games," but Attridge reminds us that the soundscape of Dublin in 1904 was not that of 1922 and that mechanical urban noise is not the dominant aural feature of *Ulysses*. Molly's thoughts move from train whistle to song and then to the internal ruminations of her own body. What Attridge specifically focuses on is the role of nonlexical onomatopoeia in the linguistic representation of sound and, crucially, on the way it attempts to represent the reminiscence of sound as aural associations slide into one another in the consciousness of an individual. In so doing, he sets out a number of ways in which nonlexical onomatopoeia cannot simply be seen as a rhetorical device for the "unmediated imitation" of sound. Some of the theoretical issues that arise here return us to the competition between sound and writing in the sixteenth century discussed earlier by Wesley. What Attridge is ultimately describing, however, is a literary experiment that we might associate specifically with modernism, while nonlexical onomatopoeia itself might be regarded as the most perfect illustration of what Parker calls "hearing with the eye." While the representation of new machine noise in literature might be regarded as a feature of modernity, the non-mimetic features of the modernist novel work differently, not presenting noise as something extraneous but instead using sound effects to show how, in Attridge's words, "the text produces a world." The culmination of this process is *Finnegan's Wake*.

Reminiscence of sound and the text's production of a non-mimetic, acoustic world are ideas also explored by Chris Jones in his essay on twentieth-century poets' patterning of a verse soundscape resonant with aural associations of Anglo-Saxon poetry. It may be tempting to style the invocation of Anglo-Saxon poetry in sound by Ezra Pound and other modernist poets as yet another form of post-romantic nostalgia, or fetishization of putative origins, albeit in this

instance given the novel twist of constituting a form of primitivism made manifest in and through phonetic sound. Jones, however, complicates such a straightforward, period-bound narrative by dwelling first on Anglo-Saxon poetry's sense of its own lateness and its relationship with an imagined, earlier acoustic world, as evidenced in *Beowulf*. In his understanding of the poem, this text not only produces an aural world, but also invents (with an ear cocked to the medieval associations of that word with "discovery") an oral means of production for that world, and, in doing so, provides an origin myth for itself. Through its multiple textualized stagings of oral/aural poetry, *Beowulf* cultivates, just as self-reflexively as in the case of the Ossian phenomenon described by Mulholland, a cult of the oral. The recovery and reimagining, then, of an Anglo-Saxon soundscape by the poets W. S. Graham and Edwin Morgan, both considered in the second half of this essay, are analogous to the *Beowulf*-poet's own recovery and reimagining of the performance of an "ur-Anglo-Saxon" poetry. The latter is not simply a uniform, end-point source text for the former writers to revisit and echo; it desires "pure" oral origins as fiercely as any work engrained in page and ink. Finally, Jones draws on and adapts Foley's understanding of the operation of traditional idiom and "extratextual" metonymic meaning, as developed in *Immanent Art* (1991), in order to argue that we need to recognize a form of aural allusion being deployed in Graham's and Morgan's work that does not direct itself to a specific "source" text, but that summons a whole body of work into the soundscape of the new, or "trigger," composition.

The final essay in the collection concerns a modern poem that has evolved over half a century, Christopher Logue's *War Music*. But it also takes us back to the beginnings of the Western literary tradition in Homer and draws together the two strands of oral tradition and aural effect that have run throughout the volume. The *Iliad* itself is oral, but in Logue's case, Greenwood reminds us, "we are dealing not with orality, but rather the tradition of poetry as collaboration between text and voice," and this is the focus of her close analysis of the sound qualities of *War Music,* where she looks in depth at Logue's rendition of one extended simile from Book 16. But Greenwood's close reading also has wider contexts. She invokes the principle of "life," both in the sense of human presence and as the livingness of sound, apprehensible in oral performance and sustained in the written poetry-for-voice created by Logue. While these are ideas that have been strongly contested by modern literary theory, they have also been extraordinarily tenacious in audience responses to literature in many ages, as the essays in this collection demonstrate, and they remain so today in our electronically mediated environment. Greenwood also sees Logue's achievement very much as the culmination of an English tradition of Homer translation, absorbing influences from Chaucer to Pound and echoing earlier attempts by English writers to translate the sounds of Homer into their own language.

In both respects, Greenwood's essay encourages us to retrace our steps through this collection. Her discussion of the "intimacy" of the relationship between oral poets and their audiences returns us to Mulholland's discussion of the eighteenth-century invention of "voice," while the subject of "war music" itself echoes the sounds of battle in Old English poetry described by Jorgensen. But to end with Homer is not merely to offer a retrospective window on oral tradition and aural effect. One of the aims of this collection is to show how the oral and aural dimensions of English literature can be contextualized by their relationship to media evolution, not in a progressively linear way but in more complex forms in which old media reinvent

themselves in new conditions and new media seem to reproduce the characteristics of much earlier modes of communication. In the case of Homer, the parallels between oral tradition and modern Internet technology are being explored in Foley's Pathways Project (2008, ongoing), which shows how both media-technologies consist of navigable networks of interlinked potentials, with "users" charting singular pathways through multiple possibilities. At the same time, electronic technology is restoring sound to us in a world of acoustic space, as McLuhan anticipated long ago: we write in print, but we speak on the web. Twenty-first-century media are transforming our understanding of the oral/aural dimensions of earlier literature as well as creating new conditions for new literature, and in doing so they will force us to rethink our conception of voice and "life," as well as our very idea of the human itself.

So let us begin: Hwæt, Hi, Hiya, Howay . . . .

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The Word Made Flesh: Christianity and Oral Culture in Anglo-Saxon Verse

Andy Orchard

As far as the history of English literature goes, in the beginning was *Cædmon's Hymn*, and *Cædmon's Hymn*, at least as an inaugural event, seems something of a damp squib.[1] Not just because Bede's description of the unexpected inspiration of the apparently Celtic-named putative parent of English verse has so many analogues in the form of similar and sometimes seemingly more miraculous stories (see, for examples, Atherton 2002; Ireland 1987; Lester 1974; O'Donnell 2005:29-60 and 191-202), including a Latin autobiographical account of the "inspiration" of the drunk Symphosius (whose Greek-derived name means "drinking-party animal" or suchlike), supposedly similarly spurred to song at a much earlier North African booze-up of his own, the narrative of which seems to have been known in Anglo-Saxon England at around the same time Cædmon took his fateful walk to commune with the common herd (Orchard forthcoming a). And not just because for many readers there is a lingering sense of disappointment on first acquaintance, since however well-constructed we are increasingly told that *Cædmon's Hymn* may be (Howlett 1974; Conway 1995; but see O'Donnell 2005:179-86), the fact that the repetition of eight so seemingly trite and formulaic epithets for God (seven of them different, however) has seemed to some a tad excessive in a poem of only nine lines (Fry 1974 and 1981; Stanley 1995). Still further factors seem to undermine the iconic status of *Cædmon's Hymn*, including its variant forms and the rumbling (if unlikely) suggestions that it is no more than a back-translation from Bede's somehow superior Latin, at the margins of which it so often appears in the manuscripts (Kiernan 1990; Isaac 1997).

Yet all such features might simply seem to add to what might be considered the appropriately primitive or unpolished aspects of what continues to be customarily described as an inaugural text. Nevertheless, surely the principal and continuing problem with regarding *Cædmon's Hymn* as the beginning of English literature is the uncomfortable fact that it seems so obviously a beginning with a deep past, a hinterland of secular praise-poetry unfortunately unrevered by the Venerable Bede, who in fervently foregrounding Cædmon's bovine *ruminatio* has literally obliterated what seems a sound link to the preliterate, pre-Latinate, pre-Christian past (West 1976; Wieland 1984; Niles 2003). However we assess the "miracle" of *Cædmon's*

[1] The bibliography on *Cædmon's Hymn* is vast; for earlier material (much of it still useful), see Caie 1979. In general, see now O'Donnell 2005, with an accompanying CD-ROM that includes relevant manuscript-images.

Hymn, one striking aspect of Bede's account is the fact that, according to Bede, Cædmon, despite his mature years, leaves the party because he has nothing to sing: the later Old English version (Miller 1890-98:342) adds the detail that he left "for shame" (*for scome*); the implication seems to be that it was expected that adult Anglo-Saxons would carry round in their heads a store of song. So much, indeed, would have connected Cædmon's convivial contemporaries with their monastic co-habitees in holy orders: the requirements of daily devotion, not to mention the then-prevalent method of learning Latin (Lapidge 1982, 2006), would have necessitated not only mass memorization of the Psalms, but also of the works of Christian-Latin poets such as (for example) Juvencus, Caelius Sedulius, and Arator, clear echoes of whose works appear already in the Anglo-Latin poetry of Aldhelm (639-709), the first Anglo-Saxon to compose significant amounts of Latin verse (Orchard 1994a:161-70; Lapidge 2007:178-79, 182, and 185-86), as well as in the poems of Bede himself (Jaager 1935; Lapidge 1994 and 2007:195-96, 219, 224). Indeed, several scholars have seen in the very structure, theme, and wording of *Cædmon's Hymn* clear signs of Latin literary and liturgical influence (Holsinger 2007; Schrader 1980; Orton 1983; Fritz 1974), and certainly the Latin version of the *Hymn* transmitted by Bede carries evident echoes of the Vulgate Psalms (Orchard 1996:414-15), while the phrasing of Bede's frame-narrative exhibits further biblical parallels that suggest that "Bede regard[ed] Cædmon as Christ's apostle to the English in the matter of vernacular sacred song" (*ibid.*:403).

The purpose of this paper is precisely to address the interface between written and spoken verse in Anglo-Saxon England, verse that is overwhelmingly Christian in tone and intent, drawn from the literate world of Latinate sources, but which nonetheless in its evident echoing of earlier verse, some of which still survives, preserves intact ancient oral traditions of remembered and recycled vernacular song. For if *Cædmon's Hymn*, crowned as the first English poem, seems to share aspects of both Latin and Germanic traditions, other poems throughout the Anglo-Saxon period also exhibit a deep sensitivity both to inherited vernacular poetic lore and to the new demands of imported Latin learning.

One of the oldest pieces of English poetry that has survived without any clearly Christian content is preserved in a very Christian context in a Latin letter by an anonymous Anglo-Saxon cleric writing in the eighth century and apparently encouraging another unknown and seemingly senior colleague not to hesitate to undertake missionary work among the Continental pagans. In, perhaps appropriately, not quite correct Latin, he tells his friend: *memento saxonicum verbum* ("remember the Saxon saying," properly *memento saxonici verbi*) and then switches to Old English to quote two lines of proverbial poetry, presumably from memory, that make his point (Tangl 1955:283 [no. 146]; Dobbie 1942:57; Stanley 1987:121-23):

Oft daedlata domę foręldit,
sigisitha gahuem, suuyltit thi ana.

Often a deed-slack man puts off glory, every chance of winning: for that, he dies alone.

This undated Saxon proverb, seemingly carried round in a clerical memory and expected to be recognized by another brother in Christ, is perhaps even older than *Cædmon's Hymn* (Orchard 2007:219), and was presumably cited to emphasize the ties of blood and tradition that connect

Anglo-Saxons with the Continental Saxons they sought to draw into the Christian fold. The lesson of these two lines is clear: decisive action that leads to success brings fame, and indecisive failure to act leads only to a lonely death.

Such an evidently inherited and apparently commonplace sentiment seems worldly and heroic, and would indeed not be out of place among those expressed by the pagan characters in *Beowulf* itself, where, for example, Hrothgar congratulates the eponymous hero for killing Grendel by saying (*Beowulf* 953b-55a; Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008:34):[2]

"Þu þe self hafast
dædum gefremed þæt þin [dom] lyfað
awa to aldre."

"You yourself have brought about by your deeds that your glory will live forever."

Beowulf himself reflects the same mode of heroic thinking, after Hrothgar has lost his closest retainer, Æschere, slain by Grendel's mother (*Beowulf* 1386-89; Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008:48):

"Ure æghwylc sceal ende gebidan
worolde lifes; wyrce se þe mote
domes ær deaþe; þæt bið drihtguman
unlifgendum æfter selest."

"Each of us shall experience an end of life in the world: let him who can gain glory before death: that is the best thing afterwards for the noble warrior once he is gone."

By contrast, the Christian poet of *Beowulf*, when speaking in his own voice, is somewhat more circumspect in recycling the theme: for him the secular heroic *dom* ("glory") has become the Christian *dom* ("judgment") to come. In speaking of the pagan hero Sigemund, it has been argued that the *Beowulf*-poet is deliberately ambiguous (Griffith 1995; Orchard 2003a:105-11), as well he might be, given the incestuous history of his Norse counterpart, Sigmundr (*Beowulf* 884b-87a; Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008:31-32):

Sigemunde gesprong
æfter deaðdæge dom unlytel,
syþðan wiges heard wyrm acwealde,
hordes hyrde.

On Sigemund there fell after his death-day no small judgment (or "glory"), after the man keen in battle killed a serpent, the guardian of a hoard.

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[2] The word *dom* is not in the manuscript, but, given the frequency of the alliterative collocation *dæd* . . . *dom*, the emendation is widely accepted.

Sigemund's actions in slaying a dragon and acquiring its treasure-hoard seem to prefigure those of Beowulf himself, but when it comes to assessing his protagonist, the Christian poet of *Beowulf* is perhaps surprisingly less ambiguous, describing the (literally) doomed efforts of Wiglaf to keep life in his fatally injured lord as follows (*Beowulf* 2855-59; cf. Fulk, Bjork, and Niles 2008:97 and 258):

Ne meahte he on eorðan, ðeah he uðe wel,
on ðam frumgare feorh gehealdan,
ne ðæs wealdendes wiht oncirran;
wolde dom godes dædum rædan
gumena gehwylcum, swa he nu gen deð.

He could not, much as he wanted to, keep life on earth in that chieftain, nor change anything of He who Rules, but the judgment (*dom*) of God would govern every man's deeds, just as it does now.

From a Christian perspective, it seems, even the greatest of heroes, entitled to the greatest glory, were once and are still subject to the judgment (*dom*) of God.

Yet these deeply connected themes (in Old English, alliteratively so) of "death" (*deaþ*), "deed" (*dæd*), and "doom" (*dom*)—the last in its twin senses of both "judgment" and "glory"—are also addressed by the Venerable Bede himself in another of the earliest Old English poems extant, namely what is now known as *Bede's Death Song* (Dobbie 1942:107; Smith 1968:42; Stanley 1987:131-33):

Fore thaem neidfaerae naenig uuiurthit
thoncsnotturra, than him tharf sie
to ymbhycggannae aer his hiniongae
huaet his gastae godaes aeththa yflaes
aefter deothdaege doemid uueorthae.

In the face of that needful journey no one turns out to be wiser in thought than that it is necessary for him to ponder before his journey hence as to what may turn out to be the doom on his soul of good or evil after the day of death.

Of the four compounds here (*neidfaerae* . . . *thoncsnotturra* . . . *hiniongae* . . . *deothdaege*), all but the last are restricted to verse, while *neidfaerae* is unique in the extant corpus. The final words of the first and last lines (*uuiurthit* . . . *uueorthae*) seem to flirt with the notion of *wyrd* ("fate"), and in their grammatical transition of mood from indicative to subjunctive seem likewise to highlight the certain uncertainty of any soul when faced with a final divine assessment of its all too worldly activities (cf. Marsden 2004:167). *Bede's Death Song* exists in more medieval manuscripts than any other poem that has survived from Anglo-Saxon England, including *Cædmon's Hymn* (Schopf 1996; Cavill 2000 and 2002; O'Donnell 2005:78-97), generally appended to Latin texts that circulate thanks to Bede's glory and fame, but there still

remain significant doubts as to whether the poem is Bede's own composition, or one cited from memory. Unlike Cædmon, who, although of advanced age (*prouectioris aetatis constitutus*) "had learned no songs" (*nil carminum aliquando didicerat*), Bede is described by the Anglo-Saxon Cuthbert as "learned in our songs" (*doctus in nostris carminibus*). Even if it now seems unlikely that this Cuthbert, who went on to become Abbot at Bede's own monastery of Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, is the same Cuthbert to whom Bede dedicated his treatise on Latin metrical verse, *De arte metrica* (Whiting 1935:34-35), nonetheless his words on Bede's secular poetic expertise carry considerable weight: whether he recalled old poems or composed new ones of his own, presumably Bede, unlike Cædmon, could have stayed carousing at the party in the unlikely event that he so chose.

In Cuthbert's account, the dying Bede calls to mind the Psalms, the Pauline Epistles, and the Canticles, with the vernacular poem slotted into the sequence; as with *Cædmon's Hymn*, we are also given a Latin version, to which the Old English text has been added in more than thirty manuscripts. Cuthbert's description runs as follows (Plummer 1896:I, clxi):

> O uere quam beatus uir! Canebat autem sententiam sancti Pauli apostolici dicentis: Horrendum est incidere in manus Dei uiuentis, et multa alia de sancta scriptura, in quibus nos a somno animae exsurgere, praecogitando ultimam horam, admonebat. In nostra quoque lingua, ut erat doctus in nostris carminibus, nonnulla dixit quod ita latine sonat: "ante necessarium exitum prudentior quam opus fuerit nemo existit, ad cogitandum uidelicet antequam hinc proficiscatur anima, quid boni uel mali egerit, qualiter post exitum judicanda fuerit." Cantebat etiam antiphonas ob nostram consolationem et suam, quarum una est: "O rex gloriae, Domine uirtutum, qui triumphator hodie super omnes celos ascendisti, ne derelinquas nos orphanos, sed mitte promissum Patris in nos, Spiritum ueritatis. Alleluia."
>
> O truly what a blessed man! He used to sing the thought of the blessed Apostle Paul saying: "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God," and many other things from Holy Scripture, in which by drawing attention to our final hour he used to urge us to rouse ourselves from the sleep of the soul. Likewise in our own language, since he was learned in our poems, he spoke some words, and it sounds like this in Latin: "Before the necessary exit no one exists who is wiser than that he needs to ponder, before his soul departs hence, what good or evil it has done, how it will be judged after death." He also used to sing antiphons to console both us and himself, of which one is "O King of Glory, Lord of Might, Who didst this day triumphantly ascend far above all heavens, we beseech Thee leave us not comfortless, but send to us the promise of the Father, even the Spirit of Truth; Hallelujah."

Just as some scholars have used the multiplicity of manuscripts and their textual variants to argue for the role of memory or transitional literacy in the transmission of the Old English version(s) of *Cædmon's Hymn* alongside what are mostly otherwise largely or entirely Latin texts (Jabbour 1969; O'Brien O'Keeffe 1987 and 1990; for a contrary view, see O'Donnell 2005:187-90), so too a similar case can be made with respect to *Bede's Death Song*. Whether Bede composed the *Death Song* himself, or whether he recited it from memory (as the context of Cuthbert's description, alongside memorized snatches of the Psalms, the Pauline Epistles, and the Canticles

suggests), one might well think, given its length, circulation, and status, that it would have been a popular poem, although evidence of imitation is thin. A possible echo has been suggested (Plummer 1896:I, clxv, citing a suggestion given to him by York Powell) in the poetic *Solomon and Saturn* dialogue, appropriately enough, where Solomon, representing biblical wisdom, tells the pagan Saturn that (lines 362-63; Dobbie 1942:44):

"Ne mæg mon forildan ænige hwile MS *forildo*
ðone deoran sið, ac he hine adreogan sceall."

"No one can delay for any time the precious journey, but he has to endure it."

But the parallel seems slight, and the thought is perhaps too commonplace for a ready identification; if it is a deliberate echo, the Latinate syntax of the original poem has been much simplified. Nonetheless, it is clear that the extent of the influence of the ancient and traditional techniques of Old English verse on even the most pious Christian minds shines through much Anglo-Saxon poetry.

In somewhat the same vein, modern readers of Old English verse have long noted the way in which Christ and his apostles and saints on the one hand, and Satan and his rebellious angels on the other, are equally depicted in language that seems more suitable to the mead-hall than the monastery. Several Old English poems with explicitly Christian themes, for example, and largely derived from identifiable Latin Biblical or hagiographical sources, contain wildly expanded battle-scenes that sometimes have little or no warrant in the original; examples from three different manuscripts include *Judith* (lines 199-241a), from the *Beowulf*-manuscript (see further Griffith 1997:62-70 and 130-34; Orchard 2005:89-92), *Elene* (lines 99-152) from the Vercelli Book (see further Cook 1919:87-88; Orchard 2005:92-97), and *Genesis A* (lines 1960-2095) from the Junius manuscript (see further Doane 1978:295-300; Stévanovitch 1992:571-81; Orchard 1994b:46-53), in each of which cases the respective poets seem to have relished the chance to produce what appears to be traditional poetry perhaps more in tune with the tastes of the pre-Christian past.

Likewise, lavish descriptions of sea-voyages are found in several notably Christian poems, including *Elene* again, where, while the Latin source simply mentions that the eponymous heroine travels to the Holy Land, Cynewulf, the author of *Elene*, offers an extended and (as we shall see) carefully crafted description of a majestic crossing (lines 225-55). Elsewhere in the Vercelli Book, the poet of *Andreas*, who seems to have been familiar with both *Beowulf* and the poetry of Cynewulf (Powell 2002:105-232; Orchard 2003b; Friesen 2008:107-241; Orchard forthcoming b) capitalizes repeatedly on the possibilities offered by his source, and spends a significant proportion of his poem on the sea-voyage that Andreas and his men take to Mermedonia in a ship skippered by Christ himself.

An odder example that testifies further to the native traditional and presumably inherited taste for such purple passages on martial and nautical themes is found in yet another manuscript, in the Exeter Book poem now known as *Guthlac B*, where, after the death of the saint, a follower crosses the fens in a boat to convey the sad news to Guthlac's sister. That this is a set-piece description of what in the source is a simple punt-trip across a flooded fen is clear (Roberts

1979:122-23 and 179-80); the passage has all the hallmarks of a full-scale ocean-voyage (lines 1325b-35a):[3]

Beofode þæt ealond, 1325
foldwong onþrong. Ða afyrhted wearð
ar, elnes biloren, gewat þa ofestlice
beorn unhyðig, þæt he bat gestag,
wæghengest wræc, wæterþisa for,
snel under sorgum. Swegl hate scan, 1330
blac ofer burgsalo. Brimwudu scynde,
leoht, lade fus. Lagumearg snyrede,
gehlæsted to hyðe, þæt se hærnflota
æfter sundplegan sondlond gespearn,
grond wið greote. 1335

That island trembled, the earthly plain burst up. Then the messenger, deprived of courage, became afraid, went in haste, the hapless warrior, so that he embarked on the boat. The wave-stallion stirred, the water-speeder went, swift under sorrows, the hot sky shone, bright over the dwelling-places. The timbered ocean-vessel hastened, light, keen on its course. The flood-horse scudded, loaded to the harbor, so that the wave-floater, after the water-play, trod on the sandy shore, ground against the gravel.

Rhyme and assonance mark out the beginning and end of these lines (*ealond foldwong onþrong . . . sundplegan sondlond . . . grond*), and assonance on (-)*ā*(-) marks out the medial lines (*ār . . . gewāt . . . bāt gestāg . . . scān / blāc . . . lāde*), which are also characterized by a high level of sibilance entirely suitable to a description of slipping through the water: each of lines 1327-34 contains clusters of (-)*s*(-) groups.

The description of swift movement given here is also carried by a rapid injection of monosyllables, and by the concatenation in the space of ten lines of ten crisp finite verbs of brightness and speed (*onþrong . . . gewat . . . gestag . . . wræc . . . for . . . scan . . . scynde . . . snyrede . . . gespearn . . . grond*).[4] This passage is also marked by ten different compounds (*ealond, foldwong, wæghengest, wæterþisa, burgsalo, brimwudu, lagumearg, hærnflota, sundplegan, sondlond* [I discount *unhyðig* in this context, since *un-* is simply a negative prefix]), of which four refer to land (*ealond, foldwong, burgsalo,* and *sondlond*) and six to water, mostly to the vessel itself (*wæghengest, wæterþisa, brimwudu, lagumearg, hærnflota,* and *sundplegan*). Of all these compounds, only *ealond* has any wide currency, appearing some 175 times in both prose and verse; the other nine are all restricted to poetry, with three of them being unique to *Guthlac B* in the extant corpus (*hærnflota*, *lagumearg*, and *sondlond*), and the rest being largely confined to no more than one or two other poems (*brimwudu* [also *Elene* 243]; *burgsalo* [also

[3] The manuscript reads *wæterþiswa* at line 1329, with the second *w* sub-puncted.

[4] I ignore the colorless verb *wearð* ("was," "became"), but note that *blac* (translated here as "bright") could also be taken as the past tense of the verb *blican* ("to gleam") here.

Panther 49, *Riddle 57* 5, *GuthB* 1282]; *foldwong* [also *ChristC* 972]; *sundplega* [also *Phoenix* 111]; *wæghengest* [also *Elene* 236]; *wæterþisa* [also *Whale* 50]). The final half-line here is echoed in *Riddle 32* (line 4: *grindan wið greote*), the solution of which, appropriately enough, is generally given as "ship," as well as in a passage from *Andreas* that may indeed be echoing more broadly these very lines from *Guthlac B* (lines 422b-425a; Krapp 1905:17; Brooks 1961:14; parallels are highlighted in ***bold italics***):

Mycel is nu gena
lad ofer ***lagu***stream, ***land*** swiðe feorr
to gesecanne. ***Sund*** is geblonden,
grund wið greote. 425

There is still a great journey over the ocean-stream, land very far to seek. The sea is stirred up, the deep with gravel.

The Vercelli scribe in fact wrote *sand* ("sand") at line 424, although the emendation is commonly accepted; the assonance here (*land . . . sund . . . geblonden grund*) is in any case of a type that can also be found elsewhere in Old English poetry. So, for example, the fine description of Beowulf's own voyage to Denmark (*Beowulf* 210-28; cf. Orchard 2003a:74-75) contains the surely onomatopoeic phrase *streamas wundon* / *sund wið sande* (lines 212b-13a: "the tides eddied, the streams against the sand"), and the same combination of sounds echoes throughout the rest of the passage until the sea-voyage is over (*bundenne . . . winde . . . wundenstefna . . . liðende . . . land . . . sund . . . ende*). The parallel is made the more enticing given the clear evidence that the *Andreas*-poet knew *Beowulf*, and apparently imitated it often (Powell 2002:135-67; Friesen 2008:123-43).

The arresting (indeed, some might say overblown) description of a watery journey in *Guthlac B* quoted above shares some of its diction uniquely with Cynewulf's skillful depiction of an epic sea-voyage in *Elene* that again has no parallel in the putative Latin source, but which appears freely to employ the inherited diction of earlier verse (*Elene* 225-55; Krapp 1932:72-73; Cook 1919:10-11; Gradon 1958:36-37; parallels with other Old English poems extant are given in ***bold italics***):[5]

Ongan þa ofstlice eorla mengu 225
to flote fysan. Fearoðhengestas
ymb ***geofenes stæð*** ***gearwe stodon***,
sælde sæmearas, sunde getenge.
Ða wæs ***orcnæwe*** idese siðfæt,
siððan wæges helm ***werode gesohte***. 230
Þær ***wlanc manig*** æt ***Wendelsæ***
on stæðe stodon. ***Stundum wræcon***
ofer mearcpaðu, mægen æfter oðrum,

[5] For a full list of parallels, see Appendix 1 below.

ond þa gehlodon hildesercum,
bordum ond ordum, ***byrnwigendum***, 235
werum ond wifum, ***wæghengestas***.
Leton þa ofer fifelwæg famige scriðan *MS altered from* fæmige
bronte brimþisan. ***Bord*** oft ***onfeng***
ofer earhgeblond yða swengas;
sæ swinsade. ***Ne hyrde ic sið ne ær*** 240
on egstreame idese lædan,
on merestræte, mægen fægerre. *MS* fægrre
Þær meahte gesion, se ðone ***sið beheold***,
brecan ofer bæðweg, ***brimwudu*** snyrgan *MS* spellingum
under swellingum, ***sæmearh*** plegean, 245
wadan ***wægflotan***. Wigan wæron bliðe,
collenferhðe, ***cwen siðes gefeah***,
syþþan to ***hyðe hringedstefnan***
ofer lagofæsten geliden hæfdon
on Creca land. Ceolas leton 250
æt ***sæfearoðe***, ***sande*** bewrecene,
ald yðhofu, ***oncrum fæste*** *MS* yð liofu
on brime ***bidan*** beorna ***geþinges***,
hwonne heo sio ***guðcwen gumena þreate*** *MS* hwone
ofer eastwegas eft gesohte. 255

Then a multitude of men quickly began to hasten towards the ocean. Sea-stallions stood poised at the edge of the deep, surge-steeds tethered alongside the sound. The lady's expedition was widely known, once she sought the wave's protection with her war-band. There many a proud man stood at the edge, by the Mediterranean. From time to time there traveled over the coast-paths one force after another, and loaded the wave-stallions with battle-shirts, shields and spears, mail-coated fighters, men and women. Then they let the steep ocean-speeders slip, foam-flecked, over the monstrous waves. The ship's side often caught the billows' blows across the surge of the deep; the sea resounded. I never heard before or since that a lady led on the streaming ocean, the watery way, a fairer force. There, one who watched that journey, would be able to see forging through the streaming path the timbered ocean-vessels scudding under the swelling sails, the surge-steeds racing, the wave-floaters wading on. The warriors were happy, bold-hearted, the queen delighted in the journey, after the ring-prowed vessels had crossed over the watery fastness to the harbor in the land of the Greeks. They left the keeled boats at the sea's edge, driven onto the sand, ancient wave-vessels, fast at anchor, to await on the water the outcome for the warriors, when the warlike queen, with her company of men, should seek them out again along roads from the east.

The full list of parallels in Appendix 1 below may seem at first glance bewildering, but on closer inspection it is striking how often the same set of poems recurs: *Andreas* (15×); *Beowulf* (15×); *Elene* (13×); *Genesis A* (5×); *Phoenix* (4×)*; Christ B* (3×); *Juliana* (2×); *Judith* (3×); *Guthlac A* (2×); *Guthlac B* (2×); *Daniel* (2×); *Fates* (1×). Almost all of these poems can be connected in

terms of diction in other ways (Orchard 2003b), and it is no surprise that there should be such an overlap of common language within Cynewulf's four signed poems (*Elene*, *Juliana*, *Christ B*, and *Fates*), nor between Cynewulf's language and that of poems otherwise associated with his formulaic style (especially *Andreas*, *Phoenix*, and *Guthlac B*). It will be noted that both parallels linking this passage to *Guthlac B* are specific to the description of the water-crossing already cited above, and perhaps constitute evidence of direct borrowing (see further Orchard 2003b: 278-87).

At all events, the medial section of this description in *Elene* (lines 237-42) contains five compounds in six lines, all in the a-verse (*fifelwæg . . . brimþisan . . . earhgeblond . . . egstreame . . . merestræte*), and all containing different elements relating to water and the sea; when combined with the two simplex words on the same theme (*yða* and *sæ*) in the same few lines, what appears is effectively a poetic thesaurus of watery words (*-wæg, brim-, ear-*, *yð-*, *sæ-*, *eg-*, *mere-*). Although only one of these lines in this passage alliterates on *s-* (line 240), in fact, most of the lines in the passage as a whole exhibit a high degree of sibilance, and Cynewulf's customary sensitivity to sound effects is also in evidence, for example, in the assonance in three of the first four lines of the passage of *fear-* / *gear-* / *mear-*. In short, what is striking about this extended description is that Cynewulf seems very deliberately to have chosen to elaborate by various effects a theme that, if it can be matched elsewhere in Old English literature, is again only hinted at in his immediate source.

Indeed, one might well argue that throughout all of his signed works Cynewulf demonstrates a deep sensitivity to the inherited poetic tradition, and actively seeks opportunities to showcase his talents and perhaps to show off his remembered repertoire of earlier verse. So, for example, the closing lines of *Christ B* represent a considerable elaboration on their immediate source (Hill 1994), and represent an extended simile with its roots in the Latin literary tradition (*Christ B* 850-66; Krapp and Dobbie 1936:26-27; Cook 1900:33; parallels with other Old English poems extant are given in ***bold italics***): [6]

Nu is þon gelicost swa we on laguflode
ofer cald wæter ceolum liðan
geond ***sidne sæ***, ***sundhengestum***,
flodwudu fergen. Is þæt frecne stream
yða ofermæta þe we her on lacað
geond þas wacan woruld, windge holmas
ofer deop gelad. Wæs ***se drohtað strong***
ærþon we ***to londe geliden hæfdon***
ofer hreone hrycg. Þa us help bicwom,
þæt us to ***hælo hyþe gelædde***,
godes gæstsunu, ond us giefe sealde
þæt we oncnawan magun ofer ceoles bord
hwær we ***sælan*** sceolon ***sundhengestas***,

[6] For a full list of parallels, see Appendix 2 below. Cynewulf has a similarly ornate wind-simile towards the end of *Elene* (lines 1270b-76a), which seems to gesture towards Book 1 of Vergil's *Aeneid*.

ealde yðmearas, ***ancrum fæste***.
Utan us to þære hyðe ***hyht staþelian***,
ða us gerymde ***rodera waldend***, 865
halge on heahþu, þa he ***heofonum astag***.

Now it is most like when on the liquid-flood, over the cold water, throughout the wide sea, we journey in ships, ocean-horses, travel flood-wood. The surge is perilous, waves beyond measure, that we ride on here, throughout this frail world, windy swells over the deep water-way. That plight was severe, before we had crossed to land over the rough ridge. Then help came to us, so that there led us to the safety of harbor God's spiritual son, and gave us the grace that we might know beyond the ship's planking where we ought to tether ocean-horses, ancient wave-steeds, secured with anchors. Let us fix our hope on that harbor, holy on high, that the ruler of the firmament opened up for us, when he ascended into the heavens.

This lengthy passage is prompted by the slightest suggestion in the basic source of the whole of *Christ B*, a homily on the Ascension by Gregory the Great (*Homeliae in euangelia XXIX*, lines 248-52; Étaix 1999:254):

Quamuis adhuc rerum perturbationibus animus fluctuet, iam tamen spei uestrae anchoram in aeternam patriam figite, intentionem mentis in uera luce solidate. Ecce ad caelum ascendisse Dominum audiuimus. Hoc ergo seruemus in meditatione quod credimus.

Although the soul may still waver from the disturbances of things, nonetheless fasten the anchor of your hope on the eternal homeland, and make firm the aspiration of your heart on the true light. Behold, we have heard that the Lord ascended into heaven; let us keep this in contemplation, as we believe it.

While a nautical metaphor is implicit in Gregory's mention of fixing the anchor of one's faith (*spei uestrae anchoram . . . figite*), and may also have been inspired by Gregory's use of the verb *fluctuet* ("may waver"), clearly the Old English goes far beyond its source. The verbs in Gregory's homily move in turn from the third-person (*fluctuet*) through the second (*figite . . . solidate*) to the first (*audiuimus . . . seruemus . . . credimus*), but the similarly careful patterning of the Old English, albeit insistently tied to the first-person plural pronouns appropriate to the end of what is, in essence, a versified homily (*we . . . we . . . we . . . us . . . us . . . us . . . we . . . we . . . us . . . us*), suggests something of its own artistry. The structure of the Old English passage likewise shows signs of deliberate planning: verbal echoes and patterns give the first two sentences a very similar structure (*is . . . we on . . . ofer . . . geond*; *is . . . we . . . on . . . geond . . . ofer*), effectively highlighting the parallels between a perilous voyage "throughout the wide sea" (*geond sidne sæ*, line 852a) and man's equally fraught journey "throughout this frail world" (*geond þas wacan woruld*, line 855a), while the nouns and compounds used to describe the sea-vessels at the beginning and end of the passage (before the final injunction), show similar care in selection and arrangement (*ceolum . . . sundhengestum . . . flodwudu*; *ceoles . . . sundhengestas . . . yðmearas*); each of the compounds combines terrestrial and marine elements,

the terms *sundhengest* and *flodwudu* are attested only here in extant Old English, and *yðmearh* only appears once elsewhere (*Whale* 49). This is evidently craftsmanship of a high order.

The broader metaphor, which compares the Christian life to a dangerous sea-voyage through this life to the safe haven of heaven and salvation, here alluded to by Gregory and made explicit in *Christ B*, is of course a commonplace of the Christian-Latin tradition, and is also widely attested in Anglo-Latin literature, especially in the letters of Boniface for whom it becomes a key theme (Curtius 1953:128-30; Orchard 2001:20-21). A related metaphor, comparing the difficulties of attempting or completing a literary work to that of bringing a ship safe to harbor, is also a feature of the Latin tradition, and naturally often appears at the beginning or, as here in *Christ B*, at the end of literary compositions: Anglo-Latin authors who conclude poems with this conceit include Aldhelm, in his *Carmen de uirginitate* (the metaphor appears at lines 2801-11; the poem ends at line 2904), and Alcuin, in his poem on the kings, saints, and bishops of York (lines 1649-58). In the case of Alcuin, the verses in question, which, like those quoted above from *Christ B*, constitute the final lines of the poem, read as follows (Godman 1982:134):[7]

Haec ego nauta rudis teneris congesta carinis,
Per pelagi fluctus et per vada caeca gubernans, 1650
Euboricae ad portum commercia iure reduxi;
Utpote quae proprium sibi me nutrivit alumnum,
Imbuit et primis utcumque verenter ab annis.
Haec idcirco cui propriis de patribus atque
Regibus et sanctis ruralia carmina scripsi. 1655
Hos pariter sanctos, tetigi quos versibus istis,
Deprecor ut nostram mundi de gurgite cymbam
Ad portum vitae meritis precibusque gubernent.

> I, an inexperienced sailor, steering through the ocean's waves and dark channels, have rightly brought cargo packed in a vulnerable ship back to the harbor at York, who fostered me as her own product, and reverently raised me from my earliest years, and therefore it is for her that I have written these crude verses concerning her own bishops, kings, and saints. Likewise it is to those saints, whom I have touched on in these verses, that I pray to steer our vessel by their merits and prayers from the whirlpool of the world to the harbor of life.

If the first six lines here clearly refer to the notion of bringing a literary work to a successful conclusion, the last three lines take a more personal turn, and in that sense bring Alcuin's lengthy poem to the same highly self-focused finish as that of Cynewulf.

At all events, it is certain that the closing lines of Cynewulf's *Christ B* cited above dealing with the anchor of hope and the sea of this world (850-66) have close verbal parallels not only with the rest of this work, but with the other signed poems of Cynewulf in general. Whole

[7] Asser uses the same metaphor in his *De gestis Ælfredi* (chapter 21), as well as a related one describing Alfred steering the kingdom through difficult times (chapter 91); cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983:74, 101, and 239; Stevenson 1904:218-19.

lines in this passage are repeated with little or no variation: the verse concerning God's spiritual son ("godes gæstsunu ond us giefe sealde," *Christ B* 860) reappears verbatim elsewhere in the poem (*Christ B* 660; cf. *Elene* 182); the line describing the Ascension itself ("haliges hyhtplega þa he to heofonum astag," *Christ B* 737) appears earlier in a slightly variant form (*Christ B* 866; cf. *Elene* 188); and the verse describing the safe sea-crossing ("ærþon we to londe geliden hæfdon," *Christ B* 857) is matched with only a change of pronoun in *Juliana* (*Juliana* 677; cf. *Elene* 249). While a phrase such as "ruler of the firmament" (*rodera waldend*, *Christ B* 865b)[8] is also found in both in *Elene* (lines 206b, 482b, and 1066b) and *Juliana* (line 305b), it is a commonplace widely attested elsewhere in extant Old English.[9] Much less broadly scattered is the phrase "holy on high" (*halge on heahþu*, *Christ B* 866a), which, in the form "holy from on high" (*halig of heahðu*) appears elsewhere in *Christ B* as well as in both *Elene* and *Juliana* (*Christ B* 760a and 789a; *Elene* 1086a; *Juliana* 263a). Outside the four signed poems of Cynewulf, the phrase is attested only in *Andreas* and *Guthlac B*, both poems with close connections to Cynewulf's corpus (*Andreas* 873a and 1144a; *Guthlac B* 938a and 1088a), as we have seen. Even the key phrase about "fixing one's hope" on Christ (*hyht staþelian*, *Christ B* 864b) can be matched elsewhere in both of the longer signed poems (*Juliana* 437b; cf. *Elene* 795), albeit that the general homiletic sense is also echoed elsewhere, most famously in the closing lines of *The Seafarer* (lines 117-24; Krapp and Dobbie 1936:146-47; Gordon 1960:48):

Uton we hycgan hwær we ham agen, [*MS* se *for second* we]
ond þonne geþencan hu we þider cumen,
ond we þonne eac tilien, þæt we to moten
in þa ecan eadignesse, 120
þær is lif gelong in lufan dryhtnes,
hyht in heofonum. Þæs sy þam halgan þonc,
þæt he usic geweorþade, wuldres ealdor,
ece dryhten, in ealle tid. Amen.

Let us consider where we have a home and then think how we may arrive there, and then we may strive that we are allowed to enter the eternal blessedness, where there is life derived from the love of the Lord, hope in heaven. For that let there be thanks to the holy one, because he has honored us, the prince of glory, eternal lord, forevermore. Amen.

The insistent use of the first-person plural here (five times in the first three lines) matches the similar accumulation in the parallel passage from *Christ B*. At any rate, in the expansive and imaginative treatment of relatively commonplace classical and patristic Latin themes, we can see

[8] All these lines from *Elene* and *Juliana* are further linked by alliteration with (*on*) *rode* in the a-line; see further above.

[9] The same phrase is found in *Az* 11; *ChristC* 1220; *Dan* 290; *GenA* 1203, 1253, 2406, 2756; *KtPs* 92; *MEp* 9; *Met10* 30. In none of these cases, however, is it linked by alliteration with (*on*) *rode*, unlike the examples cited from *Elene* and *Juliana*.

the extent to which the author of both *Elene* and *Christ B* produced dense and self-contained passages that elaborate considerably on their putative sources and analogues.

If we move beyond consideration of how Cynewulf repeats his own diction throughout the four signed poems, the full tally of parallel phrasing from these closing lines of *Christ B* offers almost the same set of poems recurring as in the similar list from the parallel passage from *Elene* considered above: *Andreas* (10×); *Elene* (5×); *Christ B* (5×); *Juliana* (4×); *Guthlac B* (3×); *Beowulf* (2×); *Fates* (2×); *Daniel* (2×); *Psalm 106* (2×). The exception to the previous pattern here is clearly what looks like a double echo of this passage from *Christ B* in the Old English *Metrical Psalms*. It is worth quoting first the Latin Vulgate original of the relevant passage (Psalm 106:23-30):

> qui descendunt in mare navibus facientes opus in aquis multis
> ipsi viderunt opera Domini et mirabilia eius in profundo
> dixit et surrexit ventus tempestatis et elevavit gurgites eius
> ascendunt in caelum et descendunt in abyssos anima eorum in adflictione consumitur
> obstipuerunt et intremuerunt quasi ebrius et universa sapientia eorum absorta est
> clamabunt autem ad Dominum in tribulatione sua et de angustia educet eos
> statuet turbinem in tranquillitatem et silebunt fluctus eius
> laetabuntur quoniam quieverunt et deducet eos ad portum quem voluerunt

> They that go down to the sea in ships, doing business in the great waters: these have seen the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep. He said the word, and there arose a storm of wind: and the waves thereof were lifted up. They mount up to the heavens, and they go down to the depths: their soul pined away with evils. They were troubled, and reeled like a drunken man; and all their wisdom was swallowed up. And they cried to the Lord in their affliction: and he brought them out of their distresses. And he turned the storm into a breeze: and its waves were still. And they rejoiced because they were still: and he brought them to the haven which they wished for.

The subject-matter of this Psalm is self-evidently related to that of the parallel passage from *Christ B*, and it seems innately likely that a literate and Latinate Christian author such as Cynewulf, who presumably had a close familiarity with the Psalms, would have chosen to echo the thoughts expressed here. What is more intriguing is the specific parallels between these closing lines of Cynewulf's poem and the Old English metrical rendering of this Psalm (*Paris Psalter 106* 22-29; Krapp 1932:88-89; the parallels with *Christ B* are given in ***bold italics***):

22 Þa þe sæ seceað, mid scipe liðað,
wyrceað weorc mænig on wæterðyrþum.
23 Hi drihtnes weorc digul gesawon
and his wundra wearn on wætergrundum.
24 Gif he sylfa cwyð, sona ætstandað [*MS* æt standeð]
ystige gastas ofer egewylmum,
beoð heora yþa up astigene.
25 Þa to ***heofenum*** up ***heah astigað***,

nyþer gefeallað under neowulne grund;
oft þa on yfele eft aþindað.
26 Gedrefede þa deope syndan,
hearde onhrerede her anlicast,
hu druncen hwylc gedwæs spyrige;
ealle heora snytru beoð yfele forglendred. [*MS* for gledred]
27 Hi on costunge cleopedan to drihtne,
and he hi of earfeðum eallum alysde.
28 He yste mæg eaðe oncyrran,
þ æt him windes hweoðu weorðeð smylte, [*MS* hi]
and þa yðe eft swygiað,
bliþe weorðað, þa þe brimu weþað.
29 And he hi on ***hælo hyþe gelædde***,
swa he hira willan wyste fyrmest,
and he hig of earfoðum eallum alysde.

Those who seek the sea, travel on ships, they work many works in the rush of waters.
They have seen the secret works of the Lord, and the multitude of his wonders in the watery depths.
If he himself speaks, straightaway there stand up stormy spirits over terrifying surges, the waves of which are raised up.
Then they rise up high to the heavens, fall back down to the hidden depths; often they fall away into evil.
Then they are deeply disturbed, sorely stirred up, here just as any drunken fool would weave his way; all their sense has been evilly swallowed up.
In their trials they called out to the Lord, and he set them free from all their hardships.
He can easily turn the storm, so that for him the wind's gusts grow calm, and the waves are silent again; they grow benign, that settle the waters.
And he led them to the safety of harbor, just as he knew was their most fervent wish, and he set them free from all their hardships.

If Cynewulf were indeed citing the Psalms from the Old English metrical version, which seems to be a product of the mid-tenth century, we would have a more secure basis for dating his works than has been available thus far. The topic clearly deserves a closer look, especially in view of other evidence that the *Metrical Psalms* were well known, at least in later Anglo-Saxon England.

We noted above the extent to which generations of Anglo-Saxons in holy orders would have internalized through constant repetition over many years the Latin texts of the Psalms, so it is perhaps no surprise that the Old English poetic version offers some of the best evidence for the circulation, quotation, and imitation of vernacular verse from the Anglo-Saxon period. The *Metrical Psalms* that are mainly preserved in the so-called "Paris Psalter" (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, fonds latin 8824) certainly seem to have been widely known, at least in later Anglo-Saxon England. This metrical rendering of Psalms 51-150 is generally supposed to have been done in the mid-tenth century, though the dating is far from secure, and at least four

separate reflexes of parts of the text survive (Sisam and Sisam 1958). Three lines from Psalm 117.22 are quoted in the *Menologium* (lines 60-62), with slight variants from the Paris Psalter text (Toswell 1993), while a very close version to that found in the Paris manuscript supplies what seems a lacuna in the main exemplar of the so-called "Eadwine Psalter" (Cambridge, Trinity College, MS R. 17. 1 [987]), a mid-twelfth-century manuscript from Christ Church, Canterbury, as a gloss from Psalm 90.15 (*eripiam*) to 95.2 (*nomen*), omitting 92.1-2 (Gibson 1992:31). The fact that this gloss, which appears to share with the Paris Psalter a common ancestor that appears to be "a copy of great authority" (Baker 1984:271), is in a slightly different hand to what immediately precedes and follows "suggests that the glossator's immediate exemplar was defective at this point, and that the gap in the O[ld] E[nglish] translation was supplied later from another manuscript" (Ker 1990:136 [no. 91]).

While the closeness of the two versions of Psalms 90.15-95.2 in the Paris and Eadwine Psalters suggests an ultimately shared written tradition, with the scribe of the Eadwine Psalter at this point evidently a less careful copyist at several points (Baker 1984), Patrick O'Neill has discovered a further place in the latter manuscript, in the rendering of the last of the seven Penitential Psalms, which were recited widely among the devout from the late tenth century on, where another scribe has copied in a further passage from the *Metrical Psalms* corresponding to what we find in the Paris Psalter, as an alternative to the existing Old English gloss (at Psalm 142.9; O'Neill 1988; the text here follows the *Paris Psalter*, as in Krapp 1932:140):

Do me wegas wise, þæt ic wite gearwe
on hwylcne ic gange gleawe mode;
nu ic to drihtnes dome wille
mine sawle settan geornast.

Make the paths known to me, so that I know clearly on which I walk with a knowing mind; now I will most eagerly set my soul to the glory of the Lord.

The Vulgate reads: "fac mihi viam in qua ambulo quoniam ad te levavi animam meam" ("Make the way known to me, wherein I should walk: for I have lifted up my soul to thee"). Parallels to the phrasing of the Old English here can be found elsewhere in extant verse, particularly elsewhere in the *Metrical Psalms* themselves (Diamond 1963).[10] Given the fact that the manuscript at this point contains a viable (if unpoetic) rendering of the Latin text (albeit in an emended form), it seems likely that the scribe added in this extract from the *Metrical Psalms* from memory.

A further manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Junius 121, written at Worcester around 1075, has a prose version of a Benedictine Office associated with Wulfstan, and was likely composed in the early eleventh century (Ure 1957). Where appropriate, this text gives Old English verse versions of the Psalms that (when they can be compared directly) match closely what is found in the Paris Psalter; the fact that the Junius text also contains poetic renderings of psalms from the earlier part of the sequence (namely Psalms 1-50) not represented in the Paris

[10] For line 1, cf. *PPs102*,7 1; *PPs118*, 26 1.

Psalter suggests that there once existed a complete cycle of *Metrical Psalms* in Old English for which the Paris Psalter is the best witness (*ibid.*:17-19). And once again there seems good evidence from the end of the period, as at the beginning, that generations of Anglo-Saxons did indeed carry songs in their heads to be recalled and recycled as appropriate; and if the secular heroic tradition was ultimately eclipsed by the literate and Latinate world of Christian learning, the old words and themes were never entirely erased from memory.

It is a paradox that while we can never hear again the ancient poetry of the inherited native Anglo-Saxon oral tradition, it is precisely the imported literate Christian and Latinate culture that eventually displaced it that (to switch more appropriately to a visual metaphor) allows us a glimpse of what was. Christian Anglo-Saxons also remembered verse, and apparently made and remade new poems in the mirror of that recollection, as well as passing on the old songs. Perhaps most tantalizing in this regard is an intriguing if largely ignored pen-trial in the lower margin of folio 88 of London, British Library, Harley 208 (Ker 1990:304), which reads "hwæt ic eall feala ealde sæge" ("Listen, I [have heard?] very many ancient tales"), a line that echoes the description in *Beowulf* of Hrothgar's scop recalling old stories (presumably including earlier verses) on the way back from the monster-mere (lines 869-70a: "se ð e ***ealfela ealdgesegena*** / worn gemunde" ["he who remembered a great multitude of ancient tales"]).[11] This pen-trial, which is in the same hand as that which also writes as further scribbles an alphabet and a *Pater noster* on the preceding folios, seems to be recording a remembered snatch of text. What is at issue is whether this pen-trial represents further evidence that *Beowulf* was known and remembered in Anglo-Saxon England, to go with that from *Andreas* already noted, or whether, as Jeff Opland has argued, the phrase in question represents the opening of a now-lost poem that happens to share the same formula as appears in *Beowulf* (1980:186). Without more texts to be recovered or inferred, we can never really know. But evidence like that presented above surely sheds occasional light on what is, after all, a scenario innately likely in any event, namely that untold numbers of Anglo-Saxons must have carried in their heads songs both Latin and vernacular, Christian and secular, learned and lay, new and unknowably ancient. Most of those songs are inevitably lost to us now, alas: those winged words have long flown. But thanks to a culture of writing imported, promoted, and encouraged in Anglo-Saxon England by the natural needs of Christianity as a religion of the book we can, even now, sometimes get a sense of all that oral and aural and memorial activity that must have been, and move cautiously beyond the inscribed pages of medieval manuscripts and modern printed texts, and, like the Anglo-Saxons themselves, occasionally hear distant echoes of faraway voices, recording faraway strains.[12]

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[11] Ker dates the scribble "s. x/xi (?)" (the same date he puts on the *Beowulf*-manuscript itself); the main text of Harley 208 was written on the continent in the ninth century, and at this point contains a selection of Alcuin's letters. I am grateful to Michael Fox for drawing this reference to my attention.

[12] My thanks to Paul Weller, Samantha Zacher, and Chris Jones, without all of whose winged and sometimes stinging words this paper would never have been finished.

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Appendix 1: Parallels for Elene *225-55*

<226>	ongan hine þa ***fysan*** ond ***to flote*** gyrwan	*And* 1698
<227>	on ***geofones staðe*** golde geweorðod	*Ex* 581
	godes ærendu ***gearwe stodun***	*Guth A* 724
	ge þe on godes huse ***gearwe standað***	*PPs133*,2 1
<228>	***sælde sæ***grundas suðwind fornam	*Ex* 289
	sæwudu ***sældon*** syrcan hyrsedon	*Beo* 226
<229>	attor ælfæle þær ***orcnawe*** wearð	*And* 770
<230> þ	æt he þone widflogan ***weorode gesohte***	*Beo* 2346
<231>	on þinne wlite wlitan ***wlance monige***	*Gen A* 1825
	ymb þæs wifes wlite ***wlonce monige***	*Gen A* 1848
	and eft ***Wendelsæ*** wide rice	*Gen A* 2211
	on Wendelsæ wigendra scola	*Met26* 31
	wat ic ðonne gif ðu gewitest ***on Wendelsæ***	MSol 204
<232>	stopon stiðhidige ***stundum wræcon***	*El* 121
<233>	***ofer mearcpaðu*** þæt he on Mambre becom	*And* 788
<235>	***byrnwiggendra*** beboden hæfde	*El* 224
	ne he ***byrnwigend*** to þam burggeatum	*Res* 156
	bealde ***byrnwiggende*** þær wæron bollan steape	*Jud* 17
	to ðam orlege ***ordum ond bordum***	*And* 1205
	bogan wæron bysige ***bord ord*** onfeng	*Mald* 110
<236>	***werum ond wifum***	[COMMONPLACE]
	wæghengest wræc **wæterþisa** for	*Guth B* 1329
<238>	ymb ***brontne*** ford ***brim***liðende	*Beo* 568
	bogan wæron bysige ***bord*** ord ***onfeng***	*Mald* 110
<239>	***ofer eargeblond*** ellendne wearod	*Met8* 30
	ofer argeblond Andreas þa git	*And* 383
þ	æra þe mid Anlafe ***ofer æra gebland***	*Brun* 26
<240>	***ne hyrde ic*** cymlicor ceol gegyrwan	*Beo* 38
	on sefan sende ***ne hyrde ic*** snotorlicor	*Beo* 1842
	Gregorius ***ne hyrde ic*** guman a fyrn	*Men* 101
	sið ne ær	[COMMONPLACE]
<241>	eorlas ymb æðeling ***egstreame*** neah	*El* 66
	eaforum ***egstream*** eft gecyrred	*Gen A* 1415
	on þa eðelturf ***idesa lædan***	*Gen A* 1774
þ	e þus ***brontne*** ceol /ofer lagu***stræte lædan*** cwomon	*Beo* 239b-240
	ne ***on egstreamum*** earmran mannon	*Beo* 577
	Heliseus ***ehstream*** sohte	*Jul* 673
	ofer sine yðe gan ***eahstream*** ne dorste	*Christ C* 1167
<242>	mæton ***merestræta*** mundum brugdon	*Beo* 514
<243>	urigfeðra earn ***sið beheold***	*El* 111
	se sceal þære sunnan ***sið behealdan***	*Phoen* 90
	sið bihealdan hwonne swegles tapur	*Phoen* 114
<244>	***brecan ofer bæðweg*** hafa bletsunge	*And* 223
	brecað ofer bæðweg brimhengestum	*And* 513
	blac ***ofer*** burgsalo ***brimwudu*** scynde	*Guth B* 1331
<245>	snellic ***sæmearh*** snude bewunden	*And* 267
<246>	hu ðu ***wægflotan*** wære bestemdon	*And* 487
<247>	secggas ymb sige***cwen*** ***siðes*** gefysde	*El* 260
	collenferhðe swa him sio ***cwen*** bead	*El* 378

	collenferhðe ***cwen*** weorces ***gefeah***	*El* 848
þ	a in ceol stigon ***collenfyrhðe***	*And* 349
	cempa ***collenferhð*** cyning wyrðude	*And* 538
	cleopode þa ***collenferhð*** cearegan reorde	*And* 1108
	cene ***collenferð*** carcern ageaf	*And* 1578
	cuma ***collenferhð*** ceoles neosan	*Beo* 1806
	hwæðer ***collenferð*** cwicne gemette	*Beo* 2785
	syððan ***collenferð*** cyninges broðor	*Fates* 54
	oðþæt hie becomon ***collenferhðe***	*Jud* 134
	oþþæt ***collenferð*** cunne gearwe	*Wan* 71
	collenferþe ceolas stondað	*Whale* 17
<248> þ	ær æt ***hyðe*** stod ***hringedstefna***	*Beo* 32
	hladen herewædum ***hringedstefna***	*Beo* 1897
	hringedstefnan holm storme weol	*Beo* 1131
<249>	***ofer lagufæsten*** leofspell manig	*El* 1016
	ærþon we to londe ***geliden hæfdon***	*Christ B* 857
	ærþon hy to lande ***geliden hæfdon***	*Jul* 677
	lid to lande ***ofer lagufæsten***	*And* 398
<250>	***on Creca land*** ***caseres*** bodan	*El* 262
	on Creca land hie se ***casere*** heht	*El* 998
<251>	***sæfaroða sand*** geond sealtne wæg	*Dan* 322
<252>	on ***ancre fæst*** eoforlic scionon	*Beo* 303
	ealde yðmearas ***ancrum fæste***	*Christ B* 863
<253>	***bad*** bolgenmod beadwa ***geþinges***	*Beo* 709
<254>	geatolic ***guðcwen*** golde gehyrsted	*El* 331
	glædmod eode ***gumena þreate***	*El* 1095
	galferhð ***gumena ðreate***	*Jud* 62
<255>	***ofer eastwegas*** aras brohton	*El* 995
þ	onne he oðer lif ***eft geseceð***	*Sat* 211
	of þære eorðan scealt ***eft gesecan***	*Christ B* 626
	oþþe þec ungearo ***eft gesecað***	*Guth A* 281
	agenne eard ***eft geseceð***	*Phoen* 264
	Israela cyn on ***eastwegas***	*Dan* 69
þ	onan yþast mæg on ***eastwegum***	*Phoen* 113

Appendix 2: Parallels for Christ B *850-66*

<851>	***ofer cald wæter*** cuðe sindon	*And* 201
	ceol gestigan ond on ***cald wæter***	*And* 222
	on ***cald wæter*** ***ceolum*** lacað	*And* 253
	hwanon comon ge ***ceolum liðan***	*And* 256
	ceole liðan cuð wæs sona	*Met26* 60
	ongan ceallian þa ***ofer cald wæter***	*Mald* 91
<852>	hwær we sælan sceolon ***sundhengestas***	*Christ B* 862
	ofer sidne sæ swegles leoma	*Phoen* 103
	on ***sidne sæ*** ymb ***sund*** flite	*Beo* 507
	and ***sidne sæ*** samed ætgædere	*PPs145,5* 61
<856>	hu mæg ic dryhten min ***ofer deop gelad***	*And* 190
	drync to dugoðe is ***se drohtað strang***	*And* 313
	of dæge on dæg ***drohtaþ strengra***	*And* 1385
	ofer deop gelad dægredwoma	*Guth B* 1292
	ofer deop gedreag ***drohtað*** bete	*Rid6* 10
<857>	ofer lagofæsten ***geliden hæfdon***	*El* 249
	ærþon hy ***to lande*** ***geliden hæfdon***	*Jul* 677
<859>	and he hi on ***hælo*** ***hyþe gelædde***	*PPs106,29* 1
	hælo hyðe ðam ðe hie lufað	*MSol* 246

<860>	***godes gæstsunu*** ***ond us giefe sealde***	*Christ B* 660
	gasta hyrde ðe him ***gife sealde***	*Dan* 199
	ongyt georne hwa þa ***gyfe sealed***	*Dan* 420
	geomre ***gastas*** ond him ***gife sealde***	*El* 182
	gæstum gearwað ond him ***giefe sealde***	*Guth A* 100
<862>	***sælde*** sæmearas ***sunde*** getenge	*El* 228
<863>	eorlas ond ***yðmearas*** he hafað oþre gecynd	*Whale* 49
	on ***ancre fæst*** eoforlic scionon	*Beo* 303
	ald yðhofu ***oncrum fæste*** [*MS* yð liofu]	*El* 252
<864>	hellwarena cyning ***hyht staþelie***	*Jul* 437
<865>	***rodera waldend***	[COMMONPLACE]
<866>	***haliges*** hyhtplega ***þa he to heofonum astag***	*Christ B* 737
	halig of ***heahðu*** hider onsendeð	*Christ B* 760
	halig of ***heahþu*** huru ic wene me	*Christ B* 789
	herede ***on hehðo*** ***heofon***cyninges þrym	*And* 998
	hæleða cynnes ond to ***heofonum astah***	*El* 188
	halig of ***heahþu*** hreþer innan born	*Guth B* 938
	halig on heahþu þær min hyht myneð	*Guth B* 1088
	halig of ***heahþu*** þe sind heardlicu	*Jul* 263
	heredon ***on heahþu*** ond his ***halig*** word	*Jul* 560
þ	æt æfre mæge ***heofona*** ***heahþu*** gereccan	*JDayI* 31
þ	ara þe wile ***heofona*** ***heahþu gestigan***	*JDayI* 97
	þa to ***heofenum*** up ***heah astigað***	*PPs106,25* 1

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The Trumpet and the Wolf: Noises of Battle in Old English Poetry

Alice Jorgensen

Battle and warfare are prominent topics in Old English poetry, reflecting their importance to the self-conception as well as the practical concerns of the warrior class who governed Anglo-Saxon England. The representation of warfare in poetry constitutes both a codification of experience, a means of reflecting on contemporary events such as Scandinavian raiding and invasion,[1] and at the same time an idealization, part of a shared imaginary centered on the heroic, migration-age past, lordship and comitatus bonds, courage and violence, and the material culture of treasure, weaponry, and the hall (Howe 1989; Niles 2007; Tyler 2006). The poetry is traditional in its diction and themes. Old English poems portray battle and warfare in ways that are sometimes highly stylized but also have aspects of realism.

The present essay focuses on one element of battle-description in Old English poetry that is both conventional and to some extent realistic: the portrayal of battle as noisy. Noise is a very common ingredient in Old English poetic battle scenes and perhaps an unsurprising one, but it is not inevitable. Classical and medieval Latin poetry often mention noise as part of battle, but historical writings do so much less often. Moreover, as we shall see, noise emerges in Old English battle poetry in distinctive and sometimes strikingly non-naturalistic ways. A focus on noise can afford an interesting avenue into Old English battle poetry for a number of reasons, of which I here highlight two.

First, noise is a junction for the physical and psychological elements of battle. It is part of the sensory onslaught of war and can itself be regarded as a species of violence (Allen 2004:305), though it does not inflict bodily injury unless much louder than anything first-millennium technology could produce. William Ian Miller has pointed out the role of noise, along with other factors such as bloodiness, closeness, and visibility, in influencing our perceptions of actions or events as more or less "violent" (1993:65):

> We tend to perceive violence when blood flows outside its normal channels. Ax murderers are thus more violent than poisoners. . . . Violence is also felt to be noisy: the victims' screams and groans and the victimizers' shouting, the crowds' cheering (as in

[1] This is most obviously the case with those poems that narrate recent history (*The Battle of Maldon* and the poems of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*), but narrations of biblical, hagiographical, or migration age material could also be read in relation to contemporary events; see for example Astell 1989 on the relevance of *Judith* to the Danish invasions.

> public executions), guns' reports, and bones cracking. Ax murderers are thus again more violent than poisoners. Part of the humanizing of capital punishment as it changed from public drawing and quartering to the lonely electrocution of a sedated victim or to permanent sedation by lethal injection was not only the reduction of pain but the reduction of noise and mess.

Looking at noise can help to clarify what it is that modern readers often find so violent about Old English poetry. But it also illuminates how Old English poets deal with the terror, suddenness, and power of violence (if you will, the violence of violence). Referring to terrifying, overwhelming, or, conversely, thrilling or encouraging noises is a way that poets can convey the atmosphere of the battlefield and the mood of warriors. As readers of *The Battle of Maldon* or *Beowulf* will readily acknowledge, Old English poets show a prominent concern with psychological dimensions of combat. Noise can form an element in their exploration of the relationship between interior *mod* ("mind, courage") and exterior *mægen* ("physical strength, might") (Engberg 1985).

Second, a focus on noise offers one route into complex questions of how violence relates to language. These questions are inspiringly posed by Elaine Scarry in her influential and morally committed study of torture, warfare, and creativity, *The Body in Pain* (1985). Scarry's book as a whole starts from the perception that pain is antithetical to language: that the body in extreme pain—of which the endpoint is the total silence of death—is unable to speak and shut in on itself, unable to reach out to engage with the world and creatively "make" that world through language. At the same time, nothing seems more real than the experience of one's own pain or than the materiality of the body. With respect to war, Scarry highlights the distortion of language associated with war: euphemism, propaganda, jargon, and sheer lies. The analysis is offered as a general theory, but the examples are drawn from modern state warfare. In modern warfare, as Scarry remarks, one might speak of "neutralizing" enemy soldiers but of "wounding" a gun (67); it is easy to add examples ("friendly fire," "collateral damage," "ethnic cleansing"). Scarry argues that this scrambling of language is part of a destabilizing and deconstructing of reality as the world-views of warring sides come into conflict. At the end of the war the winners claim the privilege of reconstructing (political, territorial, moral) reality in accordance with their own interests. For Scarry, there is no necessary relationship between the core activity of warfare, injuring, and the territorial, ideological, and political issues decided through war, which are external to warfare and constructed in language. Yet in war the "heartsickening reality" of dead and injured human bodies is retrospectively co-opted for the winners' position (137). Her work thus points to a fundamental but deeply problematic relationship between warfare and representation. If injuring is to be transformed into politics and ideology, there have to be powerful acts of interpretation; moreover, warfare in Scarry's account *is* a kind of representation, one in which bodies become signs for ideas. At the same time, most representations of warfare are misrepresentations because they partake in the pernicious yoking (and subordination) of human pain and death to political and ideological constructs.

Noise helps to open up these questions of violence and language because, most obviously, language under violence degenerates into noise (speech into a scream, talk drowned out by gunfire). Specifically, in Old English battle poetry there is an ironic counterpointing of

articulate and inarticulate sounds. The first part of this essay briefly surveys the kinds of noises that appear in Old English battle poems, remarking on their associations. The second part looks more closely at a particularly noisy poem that serves to bring Scarry's terms into a distinctively Anglo-Saxon focus. This is the Old English *Exodus*, preserved in Bodleian MS Junius 11.[2]

Battle Noises

In Old English poetry, the most frequently appearing battle noises are those that constitute regular though not inevitable elements in the type-scenes of the "approach to battle" (armies advance to battle, with conventional elements including, among others, the bearing of weapons and a notation about the mental state of the warriors) and the "beasts of battle" (the wolf, eagle, and raven feast or look forward to feasting on the corpses of the fallen).[3] Noise is also often mentioned in the description of the battle proper, especially with respect to the initial clash of lines. A compact example is *Genesis A* 1982-91, describing the advance of the five kings from the south to defend Sodom against the Elamites:

> foron þa tosomne (francan wæron hlude),
> wraðe wælherigas. Sang se wanna fugel
> under deoreðsceaftum, deawigfeðera,
> hræs on wenan. Hæleð onetton
> on mægencorðrum, modum þryðge
> oðþæt folcgetrume gefaren hæfdon
> sid tosomne suðan and norðan,
> helmum þeahte. Þær wæs heard plega,
> wælgara wrixl, wigcyrm micel,
> hlud hildesweg.
>
> They advanced together. The javelins were loud, angry the slaughter-armies. The dark bird sang under the spear-shafts, dewy-feathered, looking forward to a corpse. Warriors hastened in powerful armies, strong in mind, until they had reached the broad place together with an army from north and south, protected with helms. There was bitter play, exchange of slaughter-spears, great noise of battle, a loud war-melody [or: war-sound, war-noise].

This passage contains both type-scenes in brief form (only one beast is mentioned rather than three) plus the joining of battle, with noise a component of all three parts.

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[2] All poems are cited and quoted in the texts of Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records (Krapp 1931; Krapp 1932; Krapp and Dobbie 1936; Dobbie 1942; Dobbie 1953), with the exception of *Exodus*, for which I use Lucas 1994.

[3] Fry (1969:35) defines a type-scene as "a recurring stereotyped presentation of conventional details used to describe a certain narrative event."

As in the *Genesis* example (*francan wæron hlude*), noise in the approach to battle tends to be associated with weapons or equipment. In *Judith* 204-5, *dynedan scildas / hlude hlummon* ("shields made a din, resounded loudly") as the Bethulians issue forth to fight the Assyrians; in *Elene* 50-51 Constantine advances as *rand dynede / campwudu clynede* ("the shield made a din, the battle-wood rang"). Earlier in *Elene*, Constantine's barbarian enemies prepare to advance *wordum and bordum / hofon herecombol* ("with words and shields raised the standard," 24-25); in her edition of the poem, P. O. E. Gradon links this description to the practice of armies banging shields in assent, as described by Tacitus (Tacitus 1938:11 [11.6] and 87; Tacitus 1921:306 [V.xvii.6]; Gradon 1996:26). In these sequences there is a realistic but also atmosphere-building association between noise and movement. As armies begin to move, their hubbub signals the impending threat of violence and the building of physical energy that will explode into the clash of battle. In the *Genesis A* passage quoted above, one may also note how effectively the element of noise is coupled to another ingredient in the type-scene, the interior dispositions of warriors. In lines 1982-83 the loudness of spears is directly juxtaposed to the anger of warriors; we are also told the warriors are "strong in mind" (1986). The clashing and clattering of weapons thus form an external sign of a fighting spirit. The noises of the approach to battle type-scene help to convey the psychological dimension of conflict, the gathering tension, the mounting aggression, and the mustering of resolve; they are also part of a poetic device of suspense preparing the audience for what is to come.

The approach to battle and beasts of battle type-scenes are closely linked: indeed, the beasts of battle are a usual component of the approach to battle (Fry 1969:36, following Ramsey), though they can also appear independently. Like the forward march and the hubbub of armies, the beasts create a sense of the mood of battle, a mood of excitement and terror. In this their noises play a key part. Mark Griffith has shown not only that the beasts' cries are the motif that appears most consistently in Old English instances of the type-scene (1993:185), but also that the type-scene is usually triggered by mention of the noise of battle (189). Often the beasts are explicitly said to cry out in eagerness for the slaughter. In *Elene* 52-53 *Hrefen uppe gol, / wan ond wælfel* ("the raven sang above, dark and eager for slaughter"); in *Judith* 209-11 *him fleah on last / earn ætes georn, urigfeðera, / salowigpada sang hildeleoð* ("there flew in their wake the eagle eager for food, dewy-feathered, the dusky-plumed one sang a battle-song"). Similarly, in the passage given earlier from *Genesis A* the dark bird sings as it looks forward to dining on flesh (1983-85). Noise is most directly associated not so much with violence itself as with its psychological conditions: the beasts of battle are images of bloodlust. The extent to which this psychological dimension is joined to noise is indicated by a notable exception. *The Battle of Brunanburh* includes one of the few appearances of the beasts in Old English where they are seen not looking forward to a feast but actually feasting, and in the aftermath of the battle; it is also one of the few instances in which they are silent. Thomas Honegger (1998:290-93) labels this instance a "naturalistic" as opposed to "poetic" treatment of the type-scene. The placing of the beasts before the battle and the stress on anticipation are both distinctive features in Old English poetry. It is as eaters of the slain rather than heralds of war that the beasts of battle usually appear in Old Welsh and Old Norse poetry (Klausner 1993; Jesch 2002).

While the din of the advance in the approach to battle sequences is a realistic detail, the cries of the beasts are presented in a stylized fashion that highlights the issue of how violence

relates to language. Though sometimes the beasts are said to yell or scream (*giellan*, *hropan*), more often their cries are presented in terms of song or even speech: *singan* "to sing," *sang ahebban* "to raise a song," *-leoð singan* "to sing a song," or *-leoð agalan* "to sing a song"; *secgan* and *reordian*, both meaning "to speak," appear in *Beowulf* (3025-26).[4] There is heavy irony in this depiction of bestial yelling as melodious or articulate sound, especially since *leoð*, *sang,* and *singan* can refer not just to music but to poetry. The song of the beasts represents an inversion of and threat to human language; they point to the silencing of human voices and the destruction of human bodies, which they hope to dismember and eat. But they also point to the result of the battle and to its resolution into a linguistic act: the battle will have its outcome not only in a feast for the wolf but in a song by the poet, whether in celebration or lament. This aspect of the symbolism of the beasts is particularly conspicuous in *Elene*. Here the wolf not only sings (*fyrdleoð agol*, "sang an army-song," 27), but also *wælrune ne mað,* "did not conceal the slaughter-runes" (28); the wolf is presented as a privileged interpreter of battle, one who has the skill to read the signs and reveal their meaning to others. In a coda to *Elene,* the poet discusses his own composition of the poem and uses runes riddlingly to record his own name, Cynewulf. The wolf is thus a counterpart and forerunner to the poet in a poem that repeatedly uses the motif of song and, as Griffith observes, portrays the heroic song of battle being replaced by Christian hymnody (1993:193-94). The shrieking or singing of the beasts of battle stands on the one hand for the chaos and disorder of battle and on the other for battle as a story waiting to be told.

Both the realistic din of weapons and the anthropomorphized song of the carrion beasts also appear in descriptions of the battle proper, along with generalized clamor. Reference to noise forms part of a panoramic or summative view of battle, with which the poet may alternate particular incidents or close-ups of individuals. This is how the battle starts after the Vikings cross the Pante in *The Battle of Maldon* (106-14):

> Þær wearð hream ahafen, hremmas wundon,
> earn æses georn; wæs on eorþan cyrm.
> Hi leton þa of folman feolhearde speru,
> gegrundene garas fleogan;
> bogan wæron bysige, bord ord onfeng.
> Biter wæs se beaduræs, beornas feollon
> on gehwæðere hand, hyssas lagon.
> Wund wearð Wulfmær, wælræste geceas,
> Byrhtnoðes mæg.

[4] Griffith (1993:185) gives details, listing fourteen occurrences of the motif of "giving voice." I have here listed all the forms Griffith has apart from *-rune ne mað* "did not conceal the runes" (*Elene* 28). *Sang*, *singan,* or *leoð* appears in seven of the fourteen instances. One might add a further example not included by Griffith: *Exodus* 161 *onhwæl* "cried out." The manuscript reading is *on hwæl . hwreopon . here fugolas*, which Lucas emends to *onhwæl þa on heofonum hyrnednebba / (hreopon herefugolas hilde grædige)* (1994:101). ASPR (Krapp 1931) has *on hwæl* as a line by itself, followed by asterisks to mark a lacuna, and starts the next line as a new sentence: *Hreopon herefugolas, hilde grædige*.

> There noise was raised up, ravens circled, the eagle eager for food; there was clamor on the earth. They let fly from their hands file-hardened spears, ground javelins; bows were busy, shield received point. Bitter was the onslaught, men fell on each side, warriors lay dead. Wulfmær was wounded, Byrhtnoth's kinsman chose a slaughter-rest.

Here again we see the association between noise and the beasts of battle, though the beasts themselves do not cry out. The poet paints the scene in broad, impressionistic strokes, with noise (*hream*, *cyrm*) the first element in a general outline of violence within which he then details the individual fate of Wulfmær. (*The Battle of Finnsburh* exhibits a technique very like that of *Maldon*, alternating between wide-angle and close-up shots of the fighting and also between the speeches of particular warriors and general noise, *wælslihta gehlyn* "the din of slaughter," 28.) One may note the extent to which sounds, beasts, and weapons rather than warriors are grammatical subjects here and how much use is made of the verb "to be" rather than verbs of vigorous action: battle is made to seem like a hostile environment into which warriors enter as much as a set of deeds they perform. Battle is similarly impersonal in our *Genesis A* passage: *þær wæs heard plega, / wælgara wrixl, wigcyrm micel, / hlud hildesweg* ("there was bitter play, exchange of slaughter-spears, a great noise of battle, a loud war-melody," 1989-91). In this passage, as often in the beasts of battle topos, there is play between the ideas of cacophonous and melodious noise, *cyrm* versus *sweg*: in *Andreas* 1156 *cyrm* is the howling of cannibals deprived of meat; in *Guthlac* 1315 *sweg* is applied to the song of the angels. *Maldon* also ironically alludes to song at the point where Byrhtnoth's loyal thanes, having declared their resolve, plunge into the fray to their deaths: *bærst bordes lærig and seo byrne sang / gryreleoða sum* ("the shield-rim burst and the mailcoat sang a certain terrible song," 284-85).

In Old English poetry, then, noise is particularly associated with the build-up to battle, though it can also play a part in the depiction of battle proper. The presentation of noise frequently involves ironic play between harmonious or articulate and inarticulate or disordered sound. It is not simply that harmony is associated with the good and cacophony with the bad, though this is sometimes the case (Heckman 1998:58-59). Battle is depicted as simultaneously a chaotic, psychologically overwhelming environment, in which human voices are under threat in a very literal sense, and a ritualized activity already pregnant with the poems that will be made about it. The terminology of song self-reflexively indicates the poet's own role in telling the stories of battle. The prominence of battle-noises of course varies from poem to poem, as do the precise form and force given to the implications outlined above. For a closer focus on how battle-noises can function in a particular poem, the next section of this article offers a reading of noises in the Old English *Exodus*.

The Junius 11 *Exodus*

The *Exodus* poem of Bodleian MS Junius 11 deals with the flight of the Israelites from Egypt and the crossing of the Red Sea. Although the biblical episode on which it is based contains no battle, *Exodus* is unambiguously a battle-poem. The march of the Israelites through the desert is depicted as the march of an army, the Egyptians' pursuit in terms of an approach to

battle type-scene complete with beasts of battle; the advance of the tribe of Judah into the Red Sea is shown as a joining of battle with *heard handplega* "hard hand-fighting" (327), *bilswaðu blodige* "bloody wounds" (329), and *beadumægnes ræs* "a rush/onslaught of battle-might" (329); the death of the Egyptians is emphatically bloody (in a famous line, *flod blod gewod* "the flood was filled with blood," 467). The battle elements in the poem serve to transmute the events of the exodus into heroic terms and to underscore its multilayered typological meaning. The passage through the Red Sea is a type of baptism, which, following patristic tradition, is understood as the scene of a spiritual struggle against sin and the devil; it is also linked to the Harrowing of Hell (Earl 1970:565-68; Vickrey 1972:119-23). The deliverance of the Israelites from their foe stands for the redemption of mankind by Christ. This connection is further highlighted by the character of Junius 11 as an anthology of biblical poems that together form an "epic of redemption" (Hall 1976, 2002); the battle-imagery of *Exodus* looks forward to Christ's defeat of the devil in *Christ and Satan*.[5]

Those sequences most infused with battle imagery—the march through the desert, the pursuit of the Egyptians, and their death in the Red Sea—make extensive reference to noise. Noise is an important part of how the poet establishes the impression of battle, given that the Egyptians and Israelites do not directly fight each other. But it also plays a part in the way the poem looks beyond literal violence to something else. In *Exodus* we encounter an opposition between, on the one hand, harmonious sounds used for communication and, on the other, clamorous, disordered noise instilling or expressing fear. The noisiness of the poem helps to create a martial mood, moving from oppressive tension and fear to eager courage. This very focus on the psychological dimensions of battle enables the poet to portray the physical journey of the Israelites through the desert as an inward journey of faith: they must overcome the terror of war on their way to salvation. Moreover, the poem foregrounds the importance of being able to take control of the meanings of battle, both to control and order events that threaten to fall into chaos and to be in a position to tell the story afterwards. The contrast between meaningful and disordered noises helps to articulate this idea, as I hope to show.

A distinctive element in the battle-noises of *Exodus* is the prominence of trumpets or horns. These instruments are not otherwise especially frequent elements in battle scenes in Old English poetry. This is despite the fact that horns and trumpets have powerful martial associations going back to the Bible: one need only think of Joshua's men bringing down the walls of Jericho with a trumpet blast (Joshua 6). The approach-to-battle sequences in *Elene* include mention of horn-blowers (*hornboran*, 54) and trumpets (*byman*, 109); in *Beowulf* Hygelac's arrival to rescue his men from Ongentheow is announced by the sounding of horn and trumpet (*horn ond byman*, 2943), and horns are sounded as the Danes and Geats reach the mere before Beowulf's combat against Grendel's mother (*horn stundum song*, 1423; *guðhorn galan*, 1432) (neither of these episodes is a full-blown battle scene, however). By contrast, the concentration of references in *Exodus* is striking, with six occurrences of *byme* or compounds thereof (99, 132, 159, 216, 222, 566) and one of *horn* (192). The trumpets of *Exodus* would thus

[5] Hall rejects the argument that links *Exodus* to the liturgy of Easter Saturday and the baptism of catechumens, but his remarks on the manuscript context of *Exodus* remain relevant, as indeed do his comments on the Augustinian context; *Exodus* is a poem that concentrates an exceptionally rich and complex range of patristic and biblical references.

seem to be the product of the poet's creative choice rather than simply part of the traditional diction of battle poetry.[6]

The trumpets appear for the most part in the portion of the poem devoted to journeying and pursuit and have a similar effect to the weapon-noises more commonly heard as part of the approach to battle. They establish a martial mood and a sense of energy building towards the fight. After their third camp, the Israelites are roused by trumpet signals. This is the first mention of trumpets in the poem (98-100):

> Þa ic on morgen gefrægn modes rofan
> hebban herebyman hludan stefnum,
> wuldres woman. Werod eall aras.
>
> Then I have heard that in the morning the ones bold in heart raised up trumpets with loud voices, a noise of glory. The host all arose.

Here the trumpet is associated with movement, decision, courage, and glory. In this scene the Israelites are imagined as *sæmen* ("seamen," 105) voyaging under the *segl* ("sail," 105) of the God-sent cloud-pillar that guides them through the desert (Lucas 1994:92); the noise of their progress reinforces the sense of energy and optimism: *Folc wæs on salum, / hlud herges cyrm* ("the folk was joyful, loud the clamor of the army," 106-7). Trumpets in this poem belong to those who are bold and have the moral initiative. At the point when the Egyptians appear in pursuit, trumpets are part of their war-equipment as they advance in terrifying strength (154-60):

> Þa him eorla mod ortrywe wearð,
> siððan hie gesawon of suðwegum
> fyrd Faraonis forð ongangan,
> eoferholt wegan, eored lixan –
> garas trymedon, guð hwearfode,
> blicon bordhreoðan, byman sungon –
> þufas þenian, þeod mearc tredan.
>
> Then the mood of warriors became distrustful against him [Moses], when they saw the army of Pharaoh coming forth from the southern ways, bearing boar-spears, cavalry gleaming—spears were arrayed, war approached, shields shone, trumpets sang—standards being lifted up, the nation treading the borderland.

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[6] The difference between a horn and a trumpet is that a trumpet has a cylindrical bore with a bell on the end and a horn a conical bore tapering gradually to its bell (Galpin 1965:134-36). Though no Anglo-Saxon horns have been found intact owing to the perishable materials from which they were made, there have been finds of horn-fittings (Graham-Campbell 1973), while wooden horns have been preserved in waterlogged conditions from contemporary Ireland (Waterman 1969). However, it is not clear the Anglo-Saxons had trumpets, though both trumpets and horns are identified in manuscript illustrations (Ohlgren 1992:117). Galpin associates the word *byme* with "the instruments of horn or metal used for directing the movements of men in battle or in the chase" (1965:138), discussed in his chapter on the horn. The distinction does not seem crucial within the poetry.

This is a classic approach-to-battle sequence including the elements of advance, flashing lights, and an array of weapons as well as noise. The scene creates narrative suspense. The Israelites are cowed and waver in their trust of their leader.

Trumpets thus help to portray psychological dimensions of boldness and initiative and are associated with the forward surge of both armies and the narrative. However, the sound of the trumpet is also a meaningful sound deliberately produced. Trumpet signals are used to direct the armies, as in lines 98-100 quoted above. Edward B. Irving links this passage to Numbers 10.1-10, which gives instructions for different kinds of trumpet notes to direct different parts of the host to shift camp and for trumpets to be sounded at going to war and at feasts and religious sacrifices (1970:75). *Exodus* does not mention different signal types, but the range of functions associated with trumpets is in fact wider than in Numbers, including signaling to set up camp (lines 132-33) (Lucas 1994:192). Trumpets function as an extension of the human voice. The association with the voice is explicit in the phrase *hludum stefnum* ("with loud voices," 99); at 276 Moses *hof . . . hlude stefne* ("raised up a loud voice") and at 575 the troops *hofon . . . hlude stefne* ("raised up a loud voice") as they praise God. (The combination of adjective plus *stefn* in the dative or accusative singular or plural also occurs at 257 and 463, and the angel speaks to Abraham as a *stefne of heofonum*, "a voice from heaven," at 417.) In Anglo-Saxon art the image of the trumpet or horn can stand for the voice of God (Karkov 2001:107; Ohlgren 1992:28, on the illustration to Psalm 45 in British Library, Harley 603, f. 26v). The association between trumpets, courage, and speech is important to the developing conflict, crisis, and triumph in *Exodus*.

The music of the trumpet is contrasted to the cries of the beasts of battle. The howling of the beasts banishes speech and brings a terror that leads to paralysis. The march of Pharaoh's army, excerpted above, continues with the arrival of the carrion-eaters (161-67):

> Onhwæl þa on heofonum hyrnednebba
> (hreopon herefugolas hilde grædige,
> deawigfeðere) ofer drihtneum,
> wonn wælceasega. Wulfas sungon
> atol æfenleoð ætes on wenan,
> carleasan deor, cwyldrof beodan
> on laðra last leodmægnes fyl.[7]
>
> Then in the skies the horny-beaked one cried out over dead troops (the army-birds screamed, greedy for battle, dewy-feathered), the dark chooser of the slain [i.e., raven]. Wolves sang a terrible evening-song in expectation of food, reckless beasts, death-bold they awaited their fill of the people's army in the wake of the enemies.

The beasts bring an explicit image of the horrible destruction that threatens the Israelites. As in other instances of the type-scene, their cries, specifically those of the wolf, are ironically portrayed as song. The verb *singan* provides a link back to the *byman* of line 159: while the

[7] Lucas's text (1994) here diverges from ASPR (Krapp 1931), as discussed above.

trumpets, alongside the gleam of equipment and the ranks of spears, suggest the ordered strength of the Egyptian force, the wolves signal the chaos that comes in their wake.

The compound *æfenleoð* is repeated when the poet turns from the advancing might of Pharaoh to the Israelites. The Israelites keep a miserable night's watch in their camp, waiting helplessly for the arrival of the enemy force (200-3):

> Forþon wæs in wicum wop up ahafen,
> atol æfenleoð, egesan stodon,
> weredon wælnet; þa se woma cwom,
> flugon frecne spel.
>
> Therefore in the camps weeping was raised up, a terrible evening-song, fears stood, mail-coats cumbered them; when the clamor came, bold speeches fled.

Lucas states that "*Æfenleoð* probably alludes ironically to Vespers" (1994:106), a suggestion taken up by S. A. J. Bradley in his translation (1982:55, 56). The wolves' cry inverts and replaces the praises of God; the wolves accompany the evil forces of Pharaoh, at whose approach the Israelites lose faith (154) in their prophet Moses, who transmits to them the words of God. The *æfenleoð* of the wolves invades the mouths of the Israelites, and noise (*woma*) banishes courageous speech (*frecne spel*). Even as they lose their speech, the Israelites become inactive, lose courage, and lose control over their situation. Fear in this poem is static, frozen on the spot (*egesan stodon*) (Irving 1974:214-15). The mail-coats that should protect them instead weigh them down and thwart an implicit desire to flee (if we accept Lucas's reading of *weredon wælnet*, 1994:106).

The morning, however, breaks the paralysis with a return to trumpets (215-20):

> oð Moyses bebead
> eorlas on uhttid ærnum bemum
> folc somnigean, frecan arisan,
> habban heora hlencan, hycgan on ellen
> beran beorht searo, beacnum cigean
> sweot sande near.
>
> until Moses commanded men in the dawn-time to gather the people with brass trumpets, the warriors to arise, have their mail-coats, set their minds to courage, bear bright armor, summon with signals the troop near the sand.

Again trumpets are associated with directing the army and with action, movement, and courage (also, as in 154-60, with shining armor). Once more the Israelites, under the command of Moses, shape events through the use of meaningful sound. From this point they proceed to the Red Sea. Strikingly, the parting of the Red Sea is described not directly in the poet's voice but within a speech of Moses, suggesting the power of prophetic language over events.

The sounding of the trumpets thus marks the moment at which the Israelites regain faith, initiative, and the power of speech. At the crisis of the poem it is the Egyptians who have their words undone and finally silenced. Their fall is horrifying in both its bloodiness and its cacophonous noise; John P. Hermann (1989:80) calls this scene "not a little sadistic" (449-55):

> Wæron beorhhliðu blode bestemed,
> holm heolfre spaw, hream wæs on yðum,
> wæter wæpna ful, wælmist astah.
> Wæron Egypte eft oncyrde,
> flugon forhtigende, fær ongeton,
> woldon herebleaðe hamas findan –
> gylp wearð gnornra.
>
> The hillsides [i.e., the waves][8] were blood-spattered, the sea spewed blood, tumult was in the waves, the water full of weapons, a slaughter-mist rose up. The Egyptians were turned back, they fled in fear, they recognized sudden disaster, the cowardly ones wanted to reach their homes—their boast grew more mournful.

Just as bold speech deserted the Israelites, now the vaunting words (*gylp*) of the Egyptians leave them, replaced by terrified weeping and clamor. At the last, they are silenced to the extent that they have no one to tell their story (508-10 and 513-14):

> forðam þæs heriges ham eft ne com
> ealles ungrundes ænig to lafe,
> þætte sið heora secgan moste,
> …
> ac þa mægenþreatas meredeað geswealh,
> eac þon spelbodan.
>
> for none came home as a remnant of the whole measureless army who could tell their journey […] but sea-death swallowed the powerful troops, even the messenger.

As Richard Marsden contends, the loss of the *spelboda* reflects the importance of the relationship between hero and poet: "the bereaved Egyptians will have no means to recreate the defeat, no chance to rewrite it and thus to overcome it and reassert their national identity" (1995:163). The Israelites have the last word. Moses delivers a speech in which the victory over the Egyptians is collapsed into the conquest of the Promised Land and the future victories that God promises to his people (556-57, 562-64):

> Hafað us on Cananea cyn gelyfed
> burh ond beagas, brade rice

[8] This is the interpretation argued by Hall (1984).

> …ge feonda gehwone forð ofergangað,
> gesittað sigerice be sæm tweonum,
> beorselas beorna; bið eower blæd micel.
>
> He has granted us a city and rings in the race of the Canaanites, a broad realm… you will overcome each of your enemies, occupy a victorious kingdom between the seas, beer-halls of men; your glory will be great.

The trumpets sound once more: *sungon sigebyman . . . / fægerne sweg* ("the victory-trumpets sang a beautiful sound," 566-67). The troops sing a celebratory *wuldres sang* ("song of glory," 577).

The harmonious notes of the trumpet, the extension of the leader's voice communicating his commands, associated with courage, movement, and moral initiative, thus finally translate into the ability to take control of the meaning of battle through subsequent narration. Discordant clamor, whether the howling of the beasts, the mourning of the terrified Israelites, or the weeping of the dying Egyptians (*herewopa mæst*, "greatest of army-weepings," 461), evokes fear and lack of faith; it drives out speech and at last brings silence. The noises of battle in *Exodus* deepen the psychological drama of the poem, especially with regard to the Israelites' crisis of faith in the desert. They also intersect with a self-reflexive concern with the role of the poet, not merely as one who is necessary to sing the praises of heroes and turn battle into glory, but as one who in this particular poem uses heroic imagery to convey religious meanings.

From the very beginning of *Exodus* we are alerted to the poem's allegorical dimension (1-7):

> Hwæt, we feor and neah gefrigen habbað
> ofer middangeard Moyses domas,
> wræclico wordriht, wera cneorissum –
> in uprodor eadigra gehwam
> æfter bealusiðe bote lifes,
> lifigendra gehwam langsumne ræd –
> hæleðum secgan. Gehyre se ðe wille!
>
> Lo, we have heard far and near throughout the world that Moses declared wonderful laws to generations of men—life's reward after the terrible journey for each of the blessed in heaven, long-enduring teaching for each of the living. Let him hear who will!

The *bealusið* is plainly both the journey of the Israelites and the metaphorical journey of the Christian soul (Earl 1970:544; Lucas 1994:75). Further, the poet echoes Christ's injunction that "he that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (*Qui habet aures audiendi, audiat*, Mark 4.9) (Irving 1974:211), words specifically associated with Christ's use of parables in which ordinary people

and situations stand for God and his kingdom.[9] We may note also the focus here not on Moses' deeds but on his words, *domas* or *wordriht*, and the poet's boldness in mapping his own voice onto that of Moses—whose scriptural teaching he is about to transmit—and even that of Christ. The effect of this opening passage is not only to emphasize that *Exodus* has more than one layer of meaning but also to foreground the poet's role in weaving those meanings together. Toward the end, the poet once again draws explicit attention to the allegorical level. Scripture needs to be unlocked with the "keys of the Spirit" (*Gastes cægon*, 525) through the agency of *lifes wealhstod* ("the interpreter of life," 523: Christ, according to Dorothy Haines [1999:483-87]). In the present life we, like the Israelites, are *eðellease* ("without a homeland," 534), but at the Day of Judgment the Lord will lead faithful souls into heaven (544-45).

The emphasis within the battle sequences on taking control of the meanings of battle, using trumpets to proclaim order and sing the victory-story serves to amplify this framing concern with allegory and meaning-making. The theme is further sustained by the poem's obsession with signs and symbols. The pillars of cloud by day and fire by night that guide the Israelites through the desert are elaborated as a sail, a veil and a tent, a candle, and a leader with fiery hair.[10] Both Pharaoh's army and that of Moses march under banners, which are repeatedly mentioned. Just as the trumpets are caught up in the theme of speech and speechlessness, so they are also part of a web of signs, auditory and visual, that ultimately work to reveal the power of God. In lines 215-20 the poetic figure of variation aligns *bemum* ("trumpets" [dative]) with *beacnum* ("signs/signals" [dative]); *beacnum cigean / sweot sande near* ("summon with signals the troop near the sand," 219-20) is grammatically parallel to *ærnum bemum / folc somnigean* ("gather the people with brass trumpets," 216-17). The term *beacen* is also used of the fire-pillar (*heofonbeacen* "heaven-beacon," 107), the lion standard under which the tribe of Judah marches into the Red Sea (*beacen*, 320), and the dawn, which is *Godes beacna sum* ("one of God's signs," 345).

Interestingly, in this last passage dawn is also called *dægwoma* (344). *Woma* is another word meaning "noise," but editors of *Exodus* and *Elene* marshal contexts in which it might have more the sense of "harbinger" or "herald" (Lucas 1994:92; Gradon 1996:26). In *Elene*, Constantine's vision of the cross is called *swefnes woma* (71), which Gradon translates "revelation of a dream" (1996:26). In *Andreas* 125 and *Guthlac* 1292, *dægredwoma* refers to the rising sun, the harbinger of day. These examples belong emphatically to the order of the visual, not the auditory; the idea of sound seems to extend naturally into the idea of a sign. In noise, we encounter not the thing itself but its rumor or correlate. J. R. R. Tolkien renders *dægwoma* in *Exodus* 344 as "the rumour of day" (1981:27). The prominence of noise in *Exodus* underpins the way the poem focuses on the signs of battle and uses battle itself as a sign, looking beyond literal to spiritual victory.

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[9] From the parable of the sower, in which, in Matthew and Mark's versions, this admonition appears twice (Matt. 13.19 and 13.43, Mark 4.9 and 4.23; see also Luke 8.8). *Qui habet aures* . . . also appears in Matt. 11.15 (Christ compares John the Baptist and the Son of Man) and in Luke 14.35 (Christ tells parables at the house of the Pharisee, including the parable of the wedding guests). There are very minor variations of wording between these different verses.

[10] *Segl* "sail," 81; *halgan nette* "holy curtain" (dative), 74; *feldhusa mæst* "greatest of tents," 85; *heofoncandel* "heaven-candle," 115; *hæfde foregenga fyrene loccas* "the one going in front had fiery locks," 120.

Conclusion

The peculiar feature of battle noise is that it is at once of the essence of violence and incidental to it, a side effect or substitute for the injuring of bodies that, according to Scarry, is the real and central activity in war. In the Old English poetic examples gathered above, noise lends a psychological depth and realism to battle-description, helping to convey elements such as excitement, courage, terror, and, in the case of the drowning of the Egyptians in *Exodus*, suffering. The prominence of noise does much to make us experience *Exodus* as a violent poem. At the same time, however, noise points to how violence is textualized, how blows are transformed into words. The terminology of song points beyond the battle itself to the activity of the poet, who completes the achievement of warriors by telling their story. In *Exodus*, literal injuring is in the end—and, indeed, from the beginning—not the focus at all. The psychological dimension of terror and courage, highlighted through the representation of noise, translates into a drama of faith. The emphasis on signs, signals, and speech, in the context of explicit encouragement to read typologically, encourages us to look past suffering bodies to striving souls. Although Old English poetry is hardly euphemistic about violence, one might accuse *Exodus* of, in Scarry's terms, subordinating the "heartsickening reality" of injured bodies to an ideological construct. Indeed, Hermann has argued that the representation of spiritual warfare in *Exodus* indulges a sadistic pleasure in the destruction of the enemy and is thus "complicitous in social violence" (1989:5; see also 81-82).

Old English battle poetry curiously anticipates some of Scarry's insights into the relationship between violence and language. It lays great emphasis on the question of who will get to tell the tale afterwards and who will be silenced by the destructive forces personified in the beasts of battle. The persistent irony of representing beast noise or weapon noise as song might be related to her perception that language is distorted in warfare and reality is "up for grabs" (137). However, while Scarry argues that the relationship between injuring and the ideological issues attached to war is essentially arbitrary, the sense we gain from Old English poetry, both secular and religious, is that war is crowded with already-present meanings. The typological view of history entails that spiritual conflict is not a meaning retrospectively imposed on the historical exodus but is understood to exist prior to it: the literal struggles of the Israelites are one historical instantiation of this transcendent reality. An examination of battle-noises suggests that battle is a testing encounter with the forces of chaos, the frightening non-human zone represented in the beasts and their howls.[11] Yet when the wolf or the eagle sings we are reminded that the cry of the carrion-eaters and the song of the poet are two sides of the same coin (defeat and victory). Both are characteristically evoked in the early part of a battle sequence when their realistic position is at its end; suspense is generated in Old English battle poetry through anticipation and a sense of battle pressing towards its awful, but meaningful and predictable, close.

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[11] Compare Jennifer Neville's comments on the way the natural world in Old English poetry "symbolises the forces . . . capable of destroying human society" (1999:55).

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Mulcaster's Tyrant Sound

John Wesley

In Shakespeare's *King Lear*, loyal Kent reserves the following bit of vituperation for dissembling Oswald: "Thou whoreson zed, thou unimportant letter!" (2.2.62). Even for early seventeenth-century audiences, the insult bore the residue of a bygone era, and indeed, it registers fittingly in the mouth of a gray-bearded Kent.[1] "Z," writes Richard Mulcaster in 1582, "is a consonant much heard amongst us, and seldom sene" (1925:136). For reasons that I will shortly make clear, the pejorative currency of the letter Z would have obtained greater purchase in the latter half of the sixteenth century; that is, roughly from the date of John Hart's letter (1551, addressed to Edward VI) first calling for an English alphabet based purely on the sounds of men's voices, to the earliest performances of Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* (probably 1594/95), which stages the absurdity of such counsel as Hart's.[2] In between these very general chronological parameters, the debate over the range and uniformity of the English alphabet turned primarily on the position allocated to sound. Should sound govern the pen, or should orthography be subordinate to custom or usage? Do English voices and sounds possess the inherent qualities that would render them amenable to writing? Or can writing reliably record and reproduce English sounds? Eventually, it seems a notion that "being written" was the quality most necessary to render a language "able to be written" began—usually without their authors' knowledge—to be reflected in the orthographical treatises of the sixteenth century. In this paper, I shall look at what happens to sound in the course of this realization, especially in connection with humanist pedagogy. The orthographic debate was, after all, waged chiefly among teachers, a point that leads me to reflect on the confluence of pedagogical theories with those of right writing. Of particular interest in this regard is Richard Mulcaster (1531/32-1611), headmaster of Elizabethan London's largest school, whose orthographical treatise, the *Elementarie* (1582), claims somewhat surprisingly to be a work of pedagogical theory. So, at issue in the following discussion is how a conception of the relationship between speech and writing can be relevant to subjectivity, in this case of children in an educational system.

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[1] Kent is disguised at this point in the play, and it is of course likely that the insult, like the gray beard, is intended to contribute to his ruse. He could also be snidely referring to the pronunciation of O[z]wald.

[2] Robert Robinson's *The Art of Pronunciation* (1617) is one example of a rare late and last-gasp effort to rehearse the orthographical practice of the sixteenth-century phonemic reformers.

The *Elementarie* has been contested in this manner before, most notably in Jonathan Goldberg's *Writing Matter* (1990). In such analyses, the terms "orality" and "literacy" are refracted through sixteenth-century orthography to give us the respective polarities of "sound" and "writing," and henceforth they can be applied to both or either one of the pedagogical terms of "nature" and "nurture"—the designation and relationship of these latter two terms depends on one's approach to the former ones. Goldberg's approach is to locate the *Elementarie*—especially its account of the origins of writing—within the "history of the gramme" (Derrida 1976:84), and therefore finds in Mulcaster's avowed but failed logocentrism a sense that "what is, what existence is, literally, is writing. A retroactive textuality will rename this origin, calling it nature, the oral, shielding it from writing" (Goldberg 1990:21). And, because a "politics of pedagogy . . . coincides with the textual effects" of the *Elementarie* (34), Goldberg maintains that, for Mulcaster, children must be properly inscribed in order to be "(re)inscribed within the pedagogic scheme" (31), one that reinforces "place and hierarchies of order" (37) and inscribes "subjects within structures of belief and obedience" (36); another chapter is devoted to the violence of these literal and metaphorical acts of inscription (58-107). The brutality of this reprogramming process seems most manifest in the disciplinary measures employed by schoolmasters, contemporary anecdotes of which have been used by a number of other recent and useful studies to help define the culture of the Renaissance classroom (Halpern 1991:19-60; Stewart 1997:84-121; Gaggero 2004; Enterline 2006) and of pedagogy in general (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977; Ball 1991). A focus on the beaten boy and the cruelty of his teachers has had the benefit of counterbalancing much earlier twentieth-century scholarship that tended to valorize humanist pedagogues on the basis of their idealistic assertions. Erasmus' pronouncement in 1529 that "schools have become torture-chambers; you hear nothing but . . . howling and moaning, and shouts of brutal abuse" (Verstraete 1985:325) seems, for example, to have been of little interest to E. T. Campagnac, who notes in his 1925 introduction to the *Elementarie* that its "words stand for ideas which must ever lie at the foundation of any orderly and wholesome system of education" (Mulcaster 1925:xiv). Taken again at face value, however, these same "words" are now more liable to stand for miniature robots (re)programmed with the lash. "Orthography," writes Muriel Bradbrook, "serves . . . as a social index" (1964:129); the study of orthography no less so.

Although discipline is not the main focus of this essay, its relevance here stems from the fact that in the Renaissance (as it was in medieval and, to a lesser extent, in classical times) learning language was intimately connected with punishment; this was especially true for learning Latin, as Walter Ong has shown in his essay, "Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite" (1959). Illustrations depicting scenes from the Renaissance classroom invariably position the switch within close reach of the presiding headmaster, but it is worth remembering that there were pictures of reward too; Alexander Nowell's 1593 edition of *Catechism or Institution of Christian Religion*, for example, contains an illustration of a master rewarding his pupil with what appears to be an apple. There was a great deal of debate among humanists about the administration of punishment and reward, and at the center of these discussions was a conception about the nature of children. Given the relationship between language and discipline, what will the *Elementarie* have to say about nature and the uses of the lash? If Latin is associated with masculinity and punishment, and vernaculars with the feminine and domestic (Ong 1959:

108), what are the implications—disciplinary or otherwise—of a vernacular orthography that admits a deep love of English? Of course, the *Elementarie* could be read simply as a desire to make juridical (and masculine) what was once driven by imitation alone, but the textual effects of a vernacular orthography will, I argue, retain features of its sounded and imitative qualities—a retention from which certain disciplinary as well as ontological conclusions may be put forward.

As the case may be, Mulcaster seems to have acquired a reputation of being a particularly malicious headmaster, though this is based largely on two pieces of anecdotal evidence not unanimously regarded as reliable.[3] The reputation persists regardless: Christopher Gaggero, for instance, has argued that Mulcaster's primary objective in the classroom was to "instill fear and pain," which distanced his reforms from earlier humanist conversations about the usefulness of pleasure in learning (2004:168-69). Mulcaster's own thoughts on the subject of discipline were laid out one year prior to the publication of the *Elementarie*, and they are ambivalent; on the one hand, Mulcaster argues that "the cheife and chariest point is, so to plie them all, as they may proceede voluntarily, and not with violence . . . never fearing the rod, which he will not deserve" (1994:39); or that masters should not beat "the parentes folly, and the childes infirmitie, with his owne furie. All which extremities some litle discretion would easely remove" (36); on the other, he advises that "the rod may no more be spared in schooles, then the sworde in the Princes hand" (270). Nevertheless, accounts of arbitrary cruelty in the Tudor classroom have been accepted in much recent scholarship as definitive; Foucault leads the way in this regard, especially with his claims for the "everywhere and always alert" power of discipline that he describes in *Discipline and Punish* (1977:177). In such terms, discipline and inscription share some common features in Renaissance cultural studies, namely an absolute and inescapable dimension of control and fixity, metaphorically and literally.

However, I do not believe this theoretical state can be inferred from Mulcaster's texts: "sound" or orality in this master's pedagogy troubles any notion of a primary fixed and inscribed nature, a disruption that is set out allegorically in the *Elementarie*. In my account of Mulcaster's orthography, nature is implicated in terms that suggest sound as well as inscription, and his theories can be defined as interplay between these two media. Indeed, if Mulcaster's orthography and pedagogy are concomitant, then the story told in the *Elementarie*—especially in the context of Mulcaster's other reforms—is one of the "physical and emotional presence" of sound negotiating and creating its agency within and through culturally inscribed forms (Feld 1996:97). Put another way, I argue that, although writing pins its hopes "on the resistance that the *establishment of a place* offers to the erosion of time," sound does so "on a clever *utilization of time*, of the opportunities it presents and also of the play that it introduces into the foundations of

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[3] In 1855, H. Fleetwood Sheppard reproduced a story about a mock marriage ceremony conducted by Mulcaster for "Lady Burch" (the birch used for beating) and an unfortunate boy's "buttockes" (260); Sheppard attributed the anecdote to an individual named Thomas Wateridge, supposedly alive during the reign of James VI/I. Barker (Mulcaster 1994:lxxv) notes that no record exists for an individual of that name in this context, and that the original document, if it was ever genuine, is now likely lost. Barker, in any case, feels the story "has the facetious air of the jest-book about it" (lxv). A second related anecdote appears in Thomas Fuller's short biography of Mulcaster in *The History of the Worthies of England* (1662:Sss2r-v), where the teacher's "severity" is likened to the brutality of Horace's headmaster, "Plagosus Orbilius" (Sss2v; and see Horace, *Epistles* 2.1.70-71). There are, however, several historical inaccuracies in Fuller's account, and, indeed, it "may be based less on any ascertainable facts than on Fuller's self-confessed intention to amuse his readers" (Barker in Mulcaster 1994:lxxi).

power" (de Certeau 1984:38-39). This makes neither sound nor writing—including the various qualities to which they are often attached—entities that act in isolation or independence.

What is under consideration, then, is not whether orality persisted in the Renaissance classroom, but how it functioned in a politics of pedagogy (read partially through an orthography). In any case, the question of whether elements of an oral and aural culture could remain in a literate and visual culture seems now to have passed its critical shelf life. Walter Ong (1965), among others, has demonstrated the extent to which an "oral residue" persisted in Tudor writing, and this situation can be widely attributed to the rhetorical training received by children in the sixteenth-century schoolroom. Students were taught and judged chiefly by their oral performance skills (in the form of *pronuntiatio et actio*, or delivery, the final part of rhetoric), and many of these skills—like the development of *copia*, for example—were conveyed in and through students' written compositions. More recent scholarship has also shown that orality and literacy are "not two separate and independent things," but rather "overlapping" activities that modify each other as well as co-exist in a variety of situations depending on "factors such as time, location, purpose, and the identity and status of the communicators" (Fox and Woolf 2002:8; see Graff 1987:25 and Finnegan 1988:174). Mulcaster's descriptions of sound and writing highlight some of the tensions of this mutual influence and co-existence. So, although it is tempting to "valorize the oral as more immediate and personal than the written," Mulcaster and his humanist predecessors actually reveal a conception of text as both spatial and aural, dead and also alive (Fox and Woolf 2002:9). Examples of this paradigm are numerous, not only in the "oral residue" of Tudor prose and poetry,[4] but also in direct advice concerning the instruction of grammar and composition. For instance, in the instruction of Latin, Erasmus advocates "the conversation of actual speakers in social relationships" (Elsky 1989:38) as an alternative to the rote memorization of grammatical rules: "For a true ability to speak correctly," states Erasmus in 1512, "is best fostered both by conversing and consorting with those who speak correctly and by the habitual reading of the best stylists" (McGregor 1978:669).[5] As Richard Halpern has noted of the early sixteenth century, texts came to be perceived "as an individualized voice or style" rather than the "incarnation of grammatical rules" (1991:33). Such a way of thinking about texts denies the death of the tongue, even when, in Mulcaster's words, it is "fre from motion" and "shrined up in books" (1925:177). It is to these letters that I now turn, with a background of the sixteenth-century orthographical debate providing some context for Mulcaster's own reforms.

The relatively short life of the English phonetic alphabet begins in the lecture halls at Cambridge in the 1530s,[6] where two eminent scholars, Thomas Smith and John Cheke,

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[4] I have already noted Ong's general contribution, but for a discussion of a specific Renaissance poem in this regard, see, for example, John Webster's essay on Spenser's epic-romance, *The Faerie Queene* (1590, 1596); Mulcaster's student is argued to have employed a style that "reflects assumptions and expectations of oral poetry," the presence of which "establishes the poem's central aesthetic conditions" (1976:76).

[5] Erasmus is responding to Cicero's claim in *De Oratore* that "the whole art of oratory . . . is concerned in some measure with the common practice, custom, and speech of mankind" (Sutton 1948:1.3.12). On the relationship between rhetoric and conversation in the Renaissance, see Richards 2003:43-55.

[6] For more detailed accounts of this aspect of humanist reform, see Dobson 1968 and Denison and Hogg 2006, as well as critical assessments by—especially as they pertain to the present discussion—Bradbrook 1964, DeMolen 1991:103-16, and Goldberg 1990:171-229.

controversially introduced a reformed pronunciation of Greek that met the standards set by Erasmus in *De Recta Latini Graecique sermonis pronuntiatione* (1528). The reform was based on the premise that medieval scholasticism as well as vernacular *sermo* had infected the pronunciation of classical tongues, a situation that, in turn, necessitated a project for the recovery of the sounds of these languages as they were heard in classical times. Stephen Gardiner, the conservative chancellor of Cambridge University, was not amused by this project, and his objections, along with Cheke's replies, were published by Cheke in *De Pronuntiatione Graecae potissimum linguae disputationes* (1555). Earlier, in 1542, Gardiner had been presented with a draft of Smith's *De recta et emendata Linguae Graecae Pronuntiatione*, which would later be published in Paris (1568). The guiding principle in the amendments of Cheke and Smith was that there existed an isomorphic relationship between letters and sounds, since the Greeks would not have devised superfluous or unnecessary letters to express the sounds of their language; and it was out of these principles that interest in an English phonetic alphabet began to emerge, with Smith publishing his endorsement to this purpose in *De recta & emendata Linguae anglicae scriptione, dialogus* (1568). John Hart's letter to Edward VI in 1551,[7] then, must be understood largely as a consequence of his association with Smith and Cheke at Cambridge; although, because it was not borne upon a desire to recapture the sounds of antiquity, Hart's wish for a phonetic script was grounded firmly in what he perceived as the needs of English speakers (particularly as they adjusted to the burden of interpretation placed upon them by the Reformation), as well as of foreigners attempting to read what was mainly an inconsistent and mutable English spelling.

Hart finally published his views in *An orthographie* (1569), the title page of which promises to show "howe to write or paint thimage of mannes voice." Acknowledging in the preface his debt to Smith, Hart promises "to use as many letters in our writing, as we doe voyces or breathes in speaking, and no more" (B3r), a phrase that might have transposed in Hart's new orthography (an alphabet and exercise for which appears at the end of his treatise) as follows: *tu iuz az mani leters in our ureiting, az ui du voises or breds in speking, and no mor*. Hart may have had a universal alphabet in mind, but for his near contemporary, William Bullokar, the need to reform spelling phonetically rises directly from "almost thirtie yeares" of frustration as a schoolmaster, responsible for teaching children "who guided by the eye with the letter, and giuing voyce according to the name thereof . . . yeelded to the eare of the hearer a clean contrary sound to the word looked for" (1580:B1r). "Heereby," as he records, "grewe quarels in the teacher." According to Bullokar, the main obstacle to a uniform English spelling is the use of an alphabet of "letters twentie fower" when there are in fact "fortie and fower" divisions of voice in the English tongue (C1r). Hence, Bullokar devises an alphabet of forty-one "letterz" (D1r-v), with various diacritics to distinguish their sounds even further. As one might expect, few were won over by these reforms, "since, as the more perceptive quickly saw, the uses of language are too varied to be controlled by fiat; so that science degenerated into affection on one hand and eccentric pedantry on the other" (Bradbrook 1964:130). Indeed, one of the only surviving examples of an attempt to emulate these amendments is, in all likelihood, a prank: Robert Laneham's 1575 letter describing the "soomerz progress" of the "Queenz Maiesty at

[7] Reprinted in Danielsson 1955-63.

Killingwoorth Castl" (A1r) was arguably written by William Patten (O'Kill 1977; Scott 1977) as a jibe against the former;[8] the phonetic spelling in this case may have been employed to contribute to an overall sense of Laneham in the letter as an "egocentric and amiable buffoon, with antiquarian tastes and a love for old stories" (Woudhuysen 2004).

It was under such conditions that Z languished. Other letters, however, might have counted themselves fortunate to be the fond plaything of pedants. John Baret's *An Alvearie or Triple Dictionarie* (1574), to which Thomas Smith is one of the dedicatees, calls for C to be deposed as a usurper, one who has "absurdely" maneuvered into a "third place of honour" in the alphabet, and for whom K and S already serve to sound (L3r). It is a spectacular fall from grace for the letter, since, only a decade earlier, it had housed within its curvature none other than Elizabeth I (in a detail for the C in "Constantine") in the dedication page of John Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (1563:B1r). A more cruel punishment is set aside for E, which, as Baret advises, must be "geld out . . . especially in the latter end of woordes . . . which signifie nothing" (1574:X5v). Once silent, now also castrated, it is hoped that the banishment of the final E will "amend a great deal of our corrupt writing."[9] Nevertheless, Baret keeps the much-abused E in his *Alvearie*, recognizing at last the impossibility for "any private man" to amend an orthography—he is content for the moment to wait "untill the learned Universities have determined upon the truth thereof," and for this truth to be "publickly taught and used in the Realme." In fact, as Baret (who was a teacher at Cambridge and then in London) admits in the address to his readers, the dictionary is largely a compilation of his "pupils at Cambridge studious of the Latin tongue" who, "within a yeare or two," had "gathered togither a great volume, which (for the apt similitude betweene the good scholers and diligent Bees in gathering their wax and hony into their Hive) I called then their Alvearie" (*5r).[10] So, although *An Alvearie* does not implement the phonetic spelling of the orthographic reformers, the source of its invective toward certain letters is—as it is in the works of Smith, Hart, and Bullokar—a yearning

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[8] Whatever the letter's intended purpose, the description of the Queen's summer progress to Kenilworth Castle in July 1575 is of great interest to historians and literary scholars. See also George Gascoigne's *The Princely Pleasures at the Court of Kenilworth* (1575), reprinted in various editions of his works.

[9] The assignment of corporeal metaphors for language was common practice in the Renaissance, with Ben Jonson's "speake that I may see thee" passage from *Timber* (1640) only the most famous: "Some men are tall, and bigge, so some Language is high and great . . . . Some are little, and Dwarfes: so of speech it is humble, and low." Language has "skinne," as well as "flesh, blood, and bones" (1925-63:VIII, 625-27), and Bruce Smith has described how Jonson's choice of conceit was "anything but arbitrary," since it involved the "mechanism that produces speech" (1999:97). While for Jonson this conceit elaborates style rather than grammar, it is employed with similar purpose in orthography. Hart and Mulcaster, though their opinions on the relationship between sound and writing differ, are yet in agreement that letters, in some form, are given the task to "mediate between sound-in-the-body and sound-on-the-page" (*ibid*.:121). "The common denominator in this transaction," writes Smith, "is body: paper and ink as material entities stand in for muscles and air as material entities." In the *Elementarie*, words have bone, sinew, and flesh, but they also have a "soulish substance" called "prerogative" (Mulcaster 1925:177), which turns out to be nothing more than speech.

[10] "Alvearie," from the Latin *alvearium* ("a range of bee-hives"), became, at least by the early eighteenth century, a term used in anatomy for the waxy "hollow of the external ear" (*OED*). In 1580, Baret added a fourth language, Greek, to his dictionary, and published it as *An Alvearie or Quadruple Dictionary*; his sentiments about the connection between letters and sounds (and resultant abuse for those letters that failed to sound), however, remained unchanged from the 1574 dictionary.

by its author to "devize so many severall characters, to shew . . . the very facion and sound of every title of our woordes in letters to the eie" (X5v).

The classroom is an abiding presence in sixteenth-century orthographies, both in the motives for reform and in the delineation of their bodied letters. On the Elizabethan stage, such associations between teaching and orthography took further inspiration from the *commedia dell'arte* tradition, with Shakespeare's Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost* being the classic example of a stock pedant. But, in spite of Richard DeMolen's argument to the contrary (1991:159-65), we must think of Hart rather than Mulcaster as the inspiration for Shakespeare's pedant, at least with respect to spelling and pronunciation. Holofernes' complaint that "rackers of orthography" pronounce "'dout' *sine* 'b', when he should say 'doubt', 'det' when he should pronounce 'debt'" is resonant with Hart's attempt to use only those letters that sound "and no more," rather than Mulcaster's rejoinder that even non-sounding letters can be kept for reasons of etymology and custom (5.1.19-21). In any case, Shakespeare's play highlights the strong identification between orthography and pedagogy, whose aims, it appears, were inseparable. Certainly, this appears to be the case for Mulcaster when he claims that his orthographic treatise, the *Elementarie*, has emerged, at least stylistically, "from the students forge" (1925:281). The "forge" in this case is not only Mulcaster's own experience as a student at Eton, Cambridge (B.A.), and then at Oxford (M.A.), but also his tenure as headmaster of Merchant Taylors' School, where he taught from the school's inception in 1561 until his resignation over a wage dispute in 1586.[11] Famous pupils during this period include the poet Edmund Spenser, the playwrights Thomas Kyd and Thomas Lodge, the preacher and translator Lancelot Andrewes (as well as five other translators of the 1611 King James Bible), both royal physicians (to Elizabeth I and James VI/I), and the politician and colonizer Edwin Sandys.[12] Mulcaster's pedagogical reforms, which he claims are based on "two and twentie yeares" of teaching (1994:16), are extant in two works, the first being *Positions* (1581)—a book that announces itself as the "very first foundation" (17) upon which his subsequent reforms will be built—and the second, published one year later, being the *Elementarie*. Superficially, however, it is somewhat misleading to include the *Elementarie* as part of Mulcaster's pedagogical reform, since the majority of this work is occupied with orthography. Indeed, although Mulcaster promises in *Positions* to provide a five-part elementary curriculum following the order of "Reading, Writing, Drawing, Musick by voice, and instrument" (37), its first installment, instead of reading (an oral exercise), "entreateth chefelie of the right writing of our English tung."[13] Justification for this reversal is provided by Mulcaster in the dedicatory epistle: "For can reading be right before writing be righted, seing we read nothing else, but what we se writen?" (1925:Epistle). Jonathan

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[11] Detailed descriptions of Mulcaster's life may be found in DeMolen 1991:1-42 and Barker (in Mulcaster 1994:lix-lxxviii).

[12] An extensive list of Mulcaster's distinguished alumni appears in DeMolen 1991:36-37.

[13] This quotation is from the title page of the *Elementarie*. In the dedicatory epistle to the Earl of Leicester, Mulcaster explains that he will publish each part of the elementary curriculum in separate volumes, "chiefelie for the printer, whose sale will be quik if the book be not big" (1925:Epistle). If they were ever written, the remaining divisions of his elementary (reading, drawing, singing, and musical instruments) are not extant. The contemporary influence of *Positions* and the *Elementarie* is discussed by Barker (in Mulcaster 1994:xxxv-viii).

Goldberg discovers in the *Elementarie*'s displacement of reading by writing a pattern that is replicated in the aims and strategies of Mulcaster's orthography and pedagogy: "Mulcaster's attempt to transfer an originary value from a secondary place . . . reveals the social, historical, and ideological work that is involved in the attempt to found an origin" (1990:30). The implications of such an attempt are, apparently, the brutality and inequality of a pedagogical system that is at once representative of and also subservient to the dominant power structures of society. However, while I follow an approach that identifies pedagogical theory and practice within an orthographical project, I believe the degree to which an "originary value" has been supplanted in the *Elementarie* is not as absolute as Goldberg claims—nor are Mulcaster's designs as sinister. Retracing the substance of Goldberg's argument, and articulating my reply, will involve the reevaluation of a key passage in the *Elementarie*, one that encapsulates Mulcaster's contribution to English orthography and, as we would both argue, a politics of pedagogy too.

With the *Elementarie*, Mulcaster effectively challenges the phonemic reforms of Smith, Hart, and Bullokar. And it is with an allegory of sound that he demonstrates not only the inadequacies of a phonemic alphabet, but also the principles that will underpin his orthography. Mulcaster prefaces his allegory of sound by announcing that a full account of the origins of writing would be "fruteles," as there can be no "certaintie . . . of so old a thing"—although he is willing to suggest that "deliuerie of learning by the pen to posteritie, was not the first cause that found out letters;" rather, he ascribes the cause of writing to be the carriage of sound over distance, which necessitated a "deuice . . . to serue the eie afar of, by the mean of letters, as natur did satisfie the ear at hand by benefit of speche" (1925:72). Writing, therefore, is the "aspectable figur of . . . an audible sound," but, as we shall see in the allegory, there is a distinction made between an "aspectable figur" and Hart's painted image of voice (73). Sound begins Mulcaster's allegory as king of the "scriueners prouince," but it soon becomes apparent that his position is contingent on the agreement of the province's magistrates, who, upon observing the imperfections in writing that have resulted from Sound's absolute rule, decide to attenuate his power through the creation of an oligarchy (71). Now Sound must share his rule with Custom and Reason, a triumvirate that succeeds in bringing a degree of stability to writing, though it infuriates the dethroned "Tarquinius" (71) that is Sound: "the fellow is passionat, in autoritie tyrannous, in aw timorous" (75).[14] Further stability is added when the magistrates assign a notary, Art, to record and therefore fix the rules for spelling that have been determined by Sound, Custom, and Reason. It is Mulcaster's conception of custom that really sets his orthography apart from those of Smith, Hart, and Bullokar, for "theie rate at custom as a vile corrupter" and, in "their desire of redresse, theie appeall to sound, as the onelie souerain, and surest leader in the gouernment of writing; & fly to innouation, as the onelie mean, to reform all errors, that be in our writing" (92-93). But, as Mulcaster explains, custom "is not that which men do or speak commonlie . . . but onelie that, which is grounded at the first, upon the best and fittest reason, and is therefore to be used, bycause it is the fittest" (80). Because language is shaped by usage or

[14] Given the terms and notions used by Mulcaster to delineate his province of writing, it is hardly surprising to find readings of the allegory that situate Mulcaster's political views within a republican framework (see O'Neill 1997). However, as will become evident, my reading of Sound's place in the *Elementarie* necessarily complicates any attempt to align Mulcaster to a specific republican or monarchist viewpoint.

custom, it cannot be altered by decree; furthermore, custom loosens the supposed isomorphic connection between sound and "aspectable figur" asserted by Thomas Smith and his protégés: "for what likenesse or what affinitie hath the form of anie letter in his own nature, to answer the force or sound in mans voice?" (73). In fact, as Mulcaster declares, "letters ca[n] expresse sou[n]ds withall their ioynts & properties, no fuller then the pe[n]cill ca[n] the form & lineame [n]ts of the face, whose praise is not life but likenesse" (110).

On the surface, Mulcaster's allegory seems fairly straightforward: an oral past represented by Sound's monarchy is gradually replaced by a written culture in which Art, according to the advice of Reason and Custom, fixes language into visual and spatial units. Goldberg, however, has rightly pointed out several problems with this scenario. In the first place, it is apparent that every phase in the transition from sound to writing is "ratified by writing; there is writing before writing" (1990:35). Sound's power, as I have noted above, depends from the start on the consent of the province's magistrates, who are quite clearly literate—here they are installing Sound as their governor: "whereunto theie subscribed their names, set to their seals the daie and year, when their consent past" (Mulcaster 1925:73). There is "no pristine orality," asserts Goldberg, and indeed, for Mulcaster, there is "nothing but writing, and the writing he would institute is ideally fixed" (1990:21, 36). This transfer of "an originary value from a secondary place" in the allegory follows, according to Goldberg, the general pattern of Mulcaster's pedagogical reforms (30). In other words, the displacement of reading by writing in the sequence of Mulcaster's curriculum is replicated in his account of the origins of writing, which, in turn, designates the "impossibility of describing 'mere' nature without having already assumed 'perfect' nature" (34). Confirmation of this account seems to arrive in Mulcaster's advice for the "choice of wits allyed naturallie to learning" (1925:13); only those children who display certain characteristics (that is, marks or inscriptions that the master reads for signs of aptitude) will be chosen. A well-inscribed boy is the first necessary step in re-inscribing him, because, as Mulcaster translates Plato, "the stamp is then best fashioned, and entreth deapest, wherewith ye mean to mark him, and the sequele will be such, as the foretrain shall lead" (25-26).

However, I read the *Elementarie*—and especially the allegory of Sound—as positing an ideal world of writing that is threatened by orality.[15] Goldberg claims that "writing is the troubling element in the elementary" (1990:29), but when the Province of Writing (putatively also the province of the *Elementarie*) decides to begin its tumultuous relationship with Sound, Mulcaster actually divulges the opposite scenario: Sound, not writing, is the troubling element in the *Elementarie*. The conditions of a pristine orality are not fully outlined in the *Elementarie*, since Mulcaster's interests lie rather with the dispensation of Sound in the scrivener's province, and despite the best efforts of the magistrates (and Mulcaster) to delimit Sound's power, this tyrant persists surreptitiously throughout the *Elementarie*. In fact, he slips out of his subjugation in moments that offer telling insights into Mulcaster's idea of writing as divorced from sound and yet wholly occupied with its concerns: "yet both the letters, and even sound himself, must be ruled by them, which both sound letters, and utter sounds" (1925:105-06). "[E]rror and misuse" are "sounds principal friend," but still the pen must register "the argument of reason, custom, and

[15] A similar reading of the *Elementarie* is offered by Hinchliffe 1994.

sound" (116). The idea of an ideal written past under threat from orality is arguably a somewhat ingrained notion in the Renaissance (despite the often overt references to speech as primary and personal), and one that is manifest in the doomed experiments with quantitative verse in English carried out by Sidney, Spenser, and Campion; indeed, their failure can be explained partially by the fact that quantities had "ceased to be a property of the spoken [Latin] language" since at least the fifth century (Attridge 1974:21). But there are other projects at whose roots exist a distrust, or at least ambivalence about sound or speech in relation to the perfection of writing. Neil Rhodes has found just such a project in *Hamlet*: "As it rejects the world of speech, performance, and the media as unstable and inauthentic, the play, through its different versions and through the meditations of its central character, seems to search for a new authenticity in the concepts of a unified inner self and a stable, written text" (2004:44). To a great extent, it is this attitude that impels sixteenth-century English orthographies. For Elizabethans, English was "learned mainly as a spoken language . . . the uncertain orthography of which would have made it difficult to think of in primarily written terms," whereas Latin "was a language which obeyed fixed rules of spelling and grammar (and hence a much more perfect language than English)" (Attridge 1974:76). Yet this pristine world of written Latin was under perpetual threat by English, since, as Halpern notes, the "speaking of Latin in schools—presumably the epitome of the Erasmian method—came under criticism because it produced bad habits of expression" (1991:31; see Simon 1966:89-90). In trying to teach grammar through "conversing and consorting with those who speak correctly" (McGregor 1978:669), Erasmus unintentionally allowed for the "linguistic properties of the vernaculars" to contaminate the writing and speaking of Latin (Halpern 1991:31-32).

One of the reasons that Erasmus, Smith, and Cheke wanted to excavate the ancient pronunciation of Greek and Latin was because it was being spoken with English voices.[16] The path to recovering these original sounds meant, paradoxically, placing sound in the position of an obstacle, while simultaneously giving texts the prominent or ideal role of guide in relation to sound; this helps to explain why an English phonetic alphabet emerges as a legacy of these men. For Smith, Hart, and Bullokar, then, their phonemic reforms, rather than privileging sound, actually make it a prisoner to an ideally fixed character. And, conversely, it is Mulcaster's "Tarquinius" Sound, so beset upon by the scrivener's magistrates, who emerges from sixteenth-century orthographies as conversant with the letter rather than subject to it. Letters are thus "certaine in their most vncertaintie," and "tho one letter be vsed in diuerse naie, in co[n]trarie sounds: or soundish effects, ye canot auoid it by anie change that wilbe liked, seing no one else hath bene liked hitherto, but this which we vse, which custom doth allow" (1925:110). Under these conditions, Mulcaster's treatment of Z is telling, particularly with respect to the letter's proliferation in the orthographies of Hart and Bullokar. That is, even though Z is "much heard," he is yet made subordinate to S, "which is becom lieutenant generall to z, as gase, amase, rasur, where z, is heard, but, s, sene" (136). Sound, for Z anyway, has no bearing on its usage in an

[16] Derek Attridge discusses the Elizabethan pronunciation of Latin in his *Well-weighed Syllables* (1974:21-29).

orthography, since custom has seen fit to use the written S for the [z] of Z.[17] The empowerment of sound thus relies upon its association with the bodies that produce it: "so likewise in the voice, tho in euerie one it passe thorough, by one mouth, one throte, one tung, one fense of tethe, and so furth, yet is it as different in euerie one, euen for giuing the sound, by reason of som diuersitie in the vocall instruments, as the faces be different in resembling like form" (77). A universal alphabet, in other words, ignores the fact that, no matter what letter is given, the vagaries of sound—whether contributed by geography, class, gender, age, or physiology—will mediate its pronunciation.[18]

Mulcaster experienced this particular aspect of sound's tyranny after only his first year in charge at Merchant Taylors' School. In August 1562, Merchant Taylors' entertained its first external examiners, who came to the conclusion that, although the pupils had "moche p[ro]fyted" under Mulcaster's care, too many "northern" accents were heard, and therefore the ushers and students "did not pronounce so well as those that be brought up in the scholes of the south p.tes of the realme" (Draper 1962:13).[19] The students, of course, were not from Cumbria, but the master was. Mulcaster (born in Carlisle) had preferred on the day of the examination to "lay sick in his bed," but in a significant way he was very much present during this auspicious occasion. In making Cicero speak, the children could only revive Mulcaster speaking Cicero. The training of delivery, then, was always liable to disturb the notion of a stable and unified text (Latin in this case), especially since it was a task left completely to the discretion of the master. Inevitably so, it would seem: the sound effects so crucial to delivery—accent, pitch, volume, rhythm, and the various physiological components that govern them all—by their very nature resist textualization, requiring instead a body-to-body pedagogical trajectory. Hence, we can understand Erasmus' advice regarding "conversing and consorting" as only tangentially relevant to grammar, of ultimate importance to rhetoric, but affecting both; or, as de Certeau might put it, the "problematics of enunciation" created with the rules or "propriety" of grammar an "interplay of forces" (1984:39).

Sound and writing were both unstable entities in the Renaissance, and a unidirectional master-servant relationship was not always in evidence. In the classroom, for example, the

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[17] Importantly, Z remains in Mulcaster's orthography because of both visual and aural exigencies, whereas in previous orthographies a sound that was already being served by two letters would have resulted in the expulsion of one letter. The main reason for keeping Z, according to Mulcaster, is that it provides an indication of a word's derivation from a foreign language, as in the medieval Latin and Old French etymology of "azur" (1925:136). Other letters, previously vilified, are restored by Mulcaster to their usual places. E, for example, cruelly used by Baret, is in the *Elementarie* "a letter of maruellous vse in the writing of our tung," and, even when silent, is given the job of "qualifying" the sounds of preceding vowels and consonants (123).

[18] The threat of puberty for a Renaissance boy actor's voice, for example, has been discussed by Gina Bloom (2007:21-65). Smith (1999) discusses more generally "brain-to-tongue-to-air-to-ear-to-brain communication, with a special interest in the middle part of that chain" (18-19).

[19] The details of this visitation are recorded in the Minutes of Court for Merchant Taylors' Hall, August 16, 1562. Sir William Harper (Lord Mayor) presided over this inaugural examination, which was carried out by Edmund Grindal (then Bishop of London), David Whitehead (puritan preacher), James Calfhill (then Canon of Christ Church), and Thomas Watts (then Archdeacon of Middlesex). Visitations like this one would last from early morning until dinner (which was provided for the examiners by the Merchant Taylors' Company in the Hall), and students were judged primarily on their oral performances.

transmission of a text from the master's mouth to the pen of the child was always under threat from his pronunciation, as Fred Schurink's discovery of an Elizabethan grammar school exercise book shows. The types of "shortcomings in spelling and punctuation" in the boy's exercise book indicate, as Schurink suggests, "either that he was taking down a dictation . . . or that he had heard or seen the words before and was writing them down as he sounded them out to himself" (2003:189). "If you pronounce the word false," warns a near-contemporary of Mulcaster's, "which you would haue your childe to spell, hee spelleth it false: for hee spelleth according as it is pronounced to him, or as he vseth to pronounce" (Brinsley 1612:D1r). Text and voice work together here to create an unstable written artifact as much faulted by the voice as it is by the text that supposedly reconstitutes the voice. At times, as when Roger Ascham declares in 1545 that "no man can wryte a thing so earnestlye, as whan it is spoken" (1904:27), we are faced with the widely held Renaissance commonplace that speech preceded and ruled writing, but, at a practical level anyway, writing is increasingly viewed as a guide to speech, as when Erasmus notes that "nowadays we acquire our way of speaking not from the community at large but from the writings of learned men, so usage does not have the same prescriptive power" (Knott 1978:312-13). However, in another related and burgeoning sphere of linguistic media, the idea that printed books could lend to writing an aura of legitimization is responsible for the complaint that "every red-nosed rhymester is an author, every drunken man's dream is a book" (R.W. 1591:A3v). A similar sentiment is expressed by Mulcaster when he suggests that, if Sound were to rule the pen, "everie mans brain" would be "everie ma[n]s book, and evrie priuat conceit a particular print" (1925:115-16). Bruce Smith observes in this passage a sign that "book-making technology has been thoroughly acculturated to orality, if not orality to book-making technology" (1999:127). Certainly, it is a ubiquitous feature of Renaissance texts that they conceived of themselves as speech. Metaphors of sound, for example, occur throughout the *Elementarie*, whereby the text is conceived as uttered or spoken; here Mulcaster refers to the points made in *Positions*: "being once handled there desire no further speche in any other treatis" (1925:1); and later, when referring to ancient authors: "But will ye hear the writers them selues speak?" (9); even the orthography, which supposedly deals in dead letters, speaks: "But the ortografie calls for me" (68)—its final chapter is titled "The Peroration," the formal rhetorical term for the conclusion of a speech. Barker has noted the various ways in which Mulcaster's antecedent work, *Positions*, is "a showpiece of studied rhetoric," and its "use of the figures of sound" lends a "closeness" to its style (in Mulcaster 1994:xlix-l); many of his observations may extend to the style of the *Elementarie* as well. Even in a text that claims to make writing primary—by its choice of form, topical matter, curricular order, and, as Goldberg has highlighted, in its "textual effects"—sound reverberates through its fixed characters.[20]

But sound persists in the *Elementarie* in other ways as well, and here I must return one final time to the example of the letter Z. Despite his claims regarding the "heard" Z and its subjugation to the "sene" S, the sound of Z creates a variety of problems for Mulcaster; in fact, its sound means Mulcaster must adjust the appearance and frequency of various other letters. One of the justifications for keeping the letter C (deposed by Baret), for example, is its

[20] Throughout the *Elementarie*, Mulcaster puns on every possible meaning of "sound" (nautical, acoustic, linguistic, exploratory, ontological, as noun, verb, adverb, or adjective), usually in connection with students. Typical is the statement "he that is soundlie learned, will streight waie sound a scholer" (1925:288).

usefulness in distinguishing between an S that sounds [s], and an S that sounds [z], as in the different pronunciations of "amase" and "ace" (1925:141); the use of the double S in spelling, as in "glasse," must be used to ensure the speaker does not mistakenly say "gla[z]e" (since S was also used for [z]) (144); and the silent E (castrated by Baret) is kept in Mulcaster's alphabet in part because it tells speakers to pronounce the S in certain words as [z], as one should in E-ending words like "cruse, excuse, abuse" (124). Z, then, continues to hold sway over spelling not because of or with its visual character, but rather because of its sound—the presence of C, S, or E occurs, in many instances, to meet the exigencies of [z]. Mulcaster's orthography continually oscillates in this manner between a conception of letters as completely divorced from sound, and one that finds sound and sight interacting (not always in conflict), as the effects of Z's guerilla tactics with its lieutenant general S suggest.

So far, I have tried to show that the notion of a pristine orality is not always self-evident in the *Elementarie*, though neither is an ideal written world, despite the perfection and permanence it promises for language; both sound and sight mediate each other. In Mulcaster's argument, then, orality and literacy can function in an adiaphoristic capacity, one contingent upon the various demands placed on sound and writing through the course of the treatise. Joel Altman's thesis in *The Tudor Play of Mind* (1978), namely that Renaissance minds were taught to argue habitually on both sides of the question (*in utramque partem*), is pertinent here, since it allows me to see, along with Rebecca Bushnell, "where one tendency of early modern humanist pedagogy always allowed for the realization of an opposite one, without undermining or effacing itself in turn" (Bushnell 1996:19). Though the pervasiveness of this ambivalence can risk blanket statements about Renaissance culture, it seems particularly relevant to Mulcaster's attitude about sound and writing, and, hence, I would argue to his conception of a child's nature. And here we return to Goldberg's statement that "what is, what existence is, literally, is writing" (1990:21). For the remainder of this paper, I would like to show that, in the *Elementarie*, something more than just writing creates speech.

The mind-as-wax analogy inherited by Mulcaster—from Plato, Plutarch, Quintilian, and Erasmus, among many others—informs his conception of a child's nature, and it is indeed the act of stamping or engrafting this wax that governs the metaphorical relationship between education and children (Mulcaster 1925:25-26). Questions remain, however, as to the nature of these inscriptions, and especially, their presence prior to the (re)inscription process of education. Quintilian thinks of these wax inscriptions as spoken, especially in connection with the art of memory (11.2.21 and 33); in connection with Christianity, Thomas More, for example, proclaims that God, just as he did for the apostles before they wrote their books, "is at his liberty to geue his word in to hys chyrch euen yet at thys daye, by hys owne mouthe, thorow thinspyracyon of hys holy spyryte," so that preaching will "wryte it i[n] ye hertes of ye herers" (1533:K3r-v). This conflation of sound and sight is also apparent in the *Elementarie* when Mulcaster advises parents to be wary of their voices in their home lest "vncomelie hearings" make the "pliable minde . . . vnwiselie writhen to a disfigured shape" (1925:25). The inevitable advice given in pedagogical treatises from classical times to the Renaissance is that the child's first caregiver must be chosen with care, since, as Mulcaster writes in *Positions*, children are apt to imitate "the maners and conditions of the nurse, with the fines or rudenes of her speeche;" similar justifications are

provided for the counsel to choose good playmates for children (1994:28). This last bit of advice especially takes us from the scrivener's province to the province of delivery, where language (spoken and written) represents only one side of the wax tablet.

In the reality asserted by the *Elementarie*, there are at least two provinces, for it is clear that Sound is a foreigner drafted into the scrivener's province by its magistrates. Sound's province is one where the "throte," "tung," and "fense of tethe" may live in peace, since their "diuersitie . . . hinder not the deliuerie of euerie mans minde;" only they must be kept away from "euerie mans pen in setting down of letters" (1925:77). The mistake made by the magistrates (and Mulcaster is clear that it is "by their own commission" that the magistrates "ouercharged" Sound [74]) is to allow a non-native of the written/writing province to rule what he could not by virtue of his disposition command. If it is true, as Goldberg suggests, that Mulcaster is unable "to lay out the course of education at its most elementary level," it is not "because of the troubling place that writing occupies in its program," but rather, I would argue, the troubling place that delivery occupies in its program (1990:7). That is, even before Mulcaster supplants reading with writing in his program of reading, writing, drawing, singing, and musical instruments, he has in fact supplanted the founding principle of this course (whether it be reading or writing) with exercise. Mulcaster's curriculum actually begins with a list of recommended physical exercises in *Positions*, the first of which is "Of lowd speaking" (Ch. 10). Before "speaking," we have its volume, "lowd;" before its use in "utterance of speech," it serves "for the deliverie of voice" (1994:65). It is to this regime that the *Elementarie* declares itself bound for performance (1925:1), and in spite of Mulcaster's claims in Chapter 5 of *Positions*—that he will deal first with reading, then writing, and so on—he begins Chapter 6 with an explanation for his inclusion of athletics in a school curriculum, followed by several chapters outlining specific exercises and their usefulness.

As many other scholars have noted, Mulcaster's enthusiasm for physical exercise is based on its role in preparation for the fifth part of rhetoric, *pronuntiatio et actio* (Barker in Mulcaster 1994:xxiii; Rhodes 2004:23; Potter 2004:147; Bloom 2007:31-39).[21] The tradition connecting athletics with speech delivery originates in classical Greek and Roman educational practice, and is set out most explicitly in Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* (1.11). No anecdote is more often quoted in defense of the well-exercised orator than Plutarch's account of Demosthenes, who remedied his speech faults through a variety of physical tasks.[22] Mulcaster, like many of his contemporaries, imagined Demosthenes as the ideal orator (1925:21), and he appears in *Positions* when Mulcaster justifies the usefulness of walking: "Demosthenes strengthened his

[21] For the course of his physical education program, Mulcaster borrows heavily from Girolamo Mercuriale's *De arte gymnastica libri sex* (1569), some important background for which is provided by Barker (in Mulcaster 1994:xxii-viii). There is no proof that Mulcaster ever implemented his regime, but, "unlike most earlier and contemporary writers, who consider sports to be extra-curricular in that they are normally unconnected with the formal academic curriculum, Mulcaster wishes them to be brought within the school" (xxii-iii). As well, although the statutes for Merchant Taylors' School were nearly an identical copy of John Colet's statutes for St. Paul's, there was a significant addition made by the Merchant Taylors' Company that no "tennys-play" would be allowed, as it was "but foolish babling & losse of tyme." The relationship between Mulcaster and his employers was nearly always strained, so the amendment may be understood in light of the Company's desire to quell Mulcaster's proclivities to recreation—there was, after all, "a tennis court in Suffolk Lane," near the school (Draper 1962:247).

[22] See Plutarch's "Demosthenes" in his *Lives* 1958:VII, 1-79 and Quintilian 11.3.54 and 130.

voice by it, pronouncing his orations alowd, as he walked up against the hill" (1994:93). But there are other activities called "exercises" by Mulcaster that pertain more directly to sound (even if they do not necessarily fit with a modern notion of athletics). "Of lowd speaking," for example, is "dwelt" on longer than any other exercise "bycause it is both the first in rancke, and the best meane to make good pronouncing of any thing" (68). Sound volume is in fact the chief concern of the first three of Mulcaster's exercises: "Of lowd speaking" (65-68), "Of loude singing" (68-69), and "Of loude and soft reading" (69-71); the fourth exercise, "Of much talking and silence" (71-72), pertains to speed of delivery and the strength of the tongue; and the fifth, "Of laughing, and weeping" (72-76), with expressing emotions, one of the most important activities of delivery. Furthermore, exercises that are not related ostensibly to sound are nevertheless validated in part because of their relationship to delivery: walking, for instance, will help to "deliver . . . long periodes" (93), and running, especially done while holding the breath, will prevent the "distorsion or writhing of the mouth" (97). Even the Galenic medicine that justifies all eighteen of Mulcaster's exercises is pertinent to sound: "The thing that maketh the voice bigge," insists Levinus Lemnius, "is partlye the wydenes of the breast and vocall Artery, and partly the inwarde or internall heate, from whence proceedeth the earnest affections, vehemente motions, and feruent desyers of the mynde" (1576:F5v). So, although these recommendations have language as their end, by focusing on non-linguistic qualities such as volume, rhythm, tone, and breathing, they tend always to de-contextualize sound from speech. Sound, in effect, trains sound: what is being spoken, sung, or read in the first three exercises, for example, is of secondary importance to the qualities of volume attached to it. Yet not only for oratory, but for learning in general, exercise will make a "dry, strong, hard, and therfore a long lasting body: and by the favour therof to have an active, sharp, wise and therwith all a well learned soule" (Mulcaster 1994:34). If Mulcaster's curriculum of physical education tells us anything, it is that perfect nature is not assumed before an inscription occurs; sound, divorced from language, can alter both imperfect and perfect nature through training (modulating sound) to render it amenable to the act of stamping or engrafting. Something other than writing creates speech, and the phrase "allyed naturallie to learning" must be held loosely.

It is with this politics of pedagogy in mind that we can understand Mulcaster's claim in the *Elementarie*'s dedicatory epistle to Leicester that he has "sou[n]ded the thing by the depth of our tung, and planted [his] rules vpon our ordinarie custom" (1925:Epistle). A tyrant sound is exercised throughout the *Elementarie*, and, as the author is at pains to declare, the work presents an orthography that cannot be divorced from *Positions*: "my former book, which I name Positions, did carie me on to promis it, and binds me to perform it. But for the better linking of this book to that, seing this is nothing else, but the performing of one pece . . . " (1925:1). The very premise upon which his curriculum of athletics is based turns out, in fact, to be the metaphor that guides Mulcaster's *Elementarie*, for this treatise is said to act in the same exemplary capacity as Demosthenes, Theodorus, and Roscius (20-23)—figures, in other words, all famous for their skill in delivery, or their ability to train orators in the skills of delivery: "the infinite commoditie of a good and perfect Elementarie, is as trew in the train to learning, as either Catoes was in husbandrie, or Demosthenes his in oratorie" (21). Therefore, by making the demands of the *Elementarie* analogous with the demands of Demosthenes, Mulcaster highlights

nurture rather than nature, for, as Plutarch records, Demosthenes was not naturally disposed to learning, and only through exercise was he able to succeed: "it was thought that he was not a man of good natural parts, but that his ability and power were the product of toil" (Perrin 1958:VII, 19). This is why, in spite of the displacement of reading by writing that Goldberg suggests, Mulcaster puns in the *Elementarie* on one inescapable feature of its birth: "And not to leaue exercise quite vntuched, seing it is mere Elementarie" (1925:28).[23] Just as the *Elementarie* cannot be taken in isolation from *Positions*, so writing—and an inscripted nature—can never quite escape from a sound that nurtures even an imperfect nature.

Like *Positions*, the *Elementarie* does not allege to embark on actual practice (not even on methods for teaching writing to children), but rather to "entreat . . . of certain generall considerations, which concern the hole Elementarie" (1925:Epistle), so that both sound and writing form the foundations of reading, writing, drawing, and music. (Or, at least the destabilization of the mere idea of "foundation" is one that occurs as much because of sound as writing, since both seem to undermine the curricular sequence that Mulcaster first asserts in *Positions*, Chapter 5.) Nonetheless, it bears mentioning that the fullest account we have of pedagogical practice for Mulcaster is his physical exercise regime, which describes the benefit of each activity, its relation to the curriculum, how often and when to embark on exercises in a school day, and how to adjust it to suit the needs of each child depending on their age, weight, height, inclination, how much they have eaten, and so forth. It is irrelevant to this paper whether Spenser, for example, ran up and down Suffolk Lane with held breath, but it is important to point out that the politics that lurk within the curricular reforms of *Positions* (as well as, then, the *Elementarie* that "performs" it) are such that brutality and inequality are not to be assumed as universal or absolute.[24] An exercise regime designed to ease the boredom of sitting still for eight hours a day,[25] to purposefully engage with juvenile interests (ball games, archery, spinning tops, fencing), to train the voice (for drama and oratory), to keep the humors appropriately balanced, and to make wits "allyed" to learning (rather than simply find such wits), includes dimensions of play and discipline, agency and inscription. It is this regime that is insinuated within every step

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[23] Erasmus imagines a similar trajectory in *De pueris instituendis* when he notes that English parents are known to teach children archery before the alphabet; however, he admires the ingenuity of one particular parent who combined exercise and language education by inscribing letters on his son's bow (Verstraete 1985:339). Archery is one of the physical exercises recommended by Mulcaster (1994:106-09), his particular interest in this sport owing perhaps to his involvement in Prince Arthur's Knights, a fellowship of archery enthusiasts "in and about the citie of London" (108). Elizabeth I's tutor, Roger Ascham, wrote a treatise on archery called *Toxophilus* (1545).

[24] With respect to class and ethnicity, there was obviously a great deal of inequality in terms of demographic representation in Elizabethan schools, but in the case of Merchant Taylors' School, the statutes read as follows: "There shallbe taught in the said schoole children of all nations & countryes indifferently" (Draper 1962:246). Mulcaster's school also stipulated that the master "shall not refuse to take, receave, and teach in the said schoole freely one hundredth schollers, parcell of the said number of two hundredth & ffyfty schollers, being poore men's sonnes" (*ibid.*:243).

[25] "Wherfore as stilnesse hath her direction by order in schooles, so must stirring be directed by well appointed exercise. And as quiet sitting helpes ill humors to breede, and burden the bodie: so must much stirring make a waie to discharge the one, and to disburden the other. Both which helpes, as I most earnestly require at the parent, and maisters hand" (Mulcaster 1994:35). The statutes of Merchant Taylors' School specify that the "children shall come to the schoole in the mornyng at seaven of the clock both winter & somer, & tarry there until eleaven, and returne againe at one of the clock, and departe at five" (Draper 1962:246).

of the *Elementarie*'s province of writing. To be sure, even the few attempts to dissociate his orthography from the sounding body of *Positions* are marked by failure; Mulcaster, for instance, is unable to distance himself from the importance of "nurture" that governs *Positions*, so that the impulse to assume "perfect" nature is frequently thwarted (1925:27):

> Neither is the question at this time of anie naturall inclination, but of artificiall helps, and those not for the bodie, which point is for Gymnastik and exercise of the bodie, but onelie for the minde, tho wrought by the bodie, which is for these principles, and the Elementarie learning: I saie therefore that these fiue principles . . . which make this hole Elementarie, besides exercise, which is Elementarie to, tho handled elsewhere, be the onelie artificiall means to make a minde capable of all the best qualities, which ar to be engraffed in the minde, tho to be executed by the bodie.

Children, therefore, were signs to be read, sounds to be heard, but they were also bodies that could shape themselves and be shaped in order to "frame their tender wits for the matter of their learning" (1925:4), an affirmation of the Aristotelian "common sympathie" between "soule and bodie" (1994:51). A pedagogy that supposedly sought only for those "allyed naturallie to learning" is thus continually disrupted by the fluid body—with its "throte," "tung," and "fense of tethe"—that always comes "bound" with the *Elementarie*, ready to toil like the unnaturally allied Demosthenes (13).

The idea that "what is, what existence is, literally, is writing" is related to the now common assumption that language constitutes all that we are, one that has been mapped on to literary projects for some time (Goldberg 1990:21). Agency thus becomes in all respects a myth, a convenient fiction with which we protect ourselves from the rather inconvenient truth that we are really just machines constructed by linguistic epistemes. "Orality" in this myth has generally tended to stand in for subjectivity, presence, movement; "literacy" for objectivity, absence, fixity.[26] However, in this analysis sound and writing overlap, and the opposition of orality and literacy breaks down to reveal a process of mutual mediation and construction, such that metaphors of inscription (and their attendant ontological effects of absolute determination) do not preclude agency and presence. Thus, despite Mulcaster's best efforts to delimit sound in detailing his methods of spelling, this tyrant persists within its proscribed medium in ways analogous to a "selfhood" within, as de Certeau puts it, "a terrain imposed on it and organized by the law of a foreign power" (1984:37). Furthermore, the *Elementarie* gives license to this "selfhood" by declaring its subjection to *Positions*, a work that cannot adhere to its promised course of study without first introducing into the curriculum a series of non-linguistic forms of expression (ones that turn out to be crucial to the construction of a nature able to receive and perform learning). These non-linguistic exercises of volume, tone, and rhythm are therefore

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[26] Bruce Smith's *The Acoustic World of Early Modern England* is concerned with the "existential moment" of "every act of speaking and listening," a moment that "affirms (1) the selfhood of the speaker, (2) the selfhood of the listener, and (3) the culture that conjoins them" (1999:21-22; paraphrasing from Zumthor 1990:60-63). Smith's first chapter provides useful background to the issue of orality and literacy in terms of presence or agency, most interestingly when he states, along with Harold Love, that presence "is what a given culture *takes to be presence*" (1999:12; see Love 1993:144).

linked inexorably to agency, since they bring to Mulcaster's orthography the same attribute (sound) that threatens the fixity and permanence of his spelling. What this teacher legitimates, then, is a space for children to be heard, even those children not naturally disposed to education, and even within an ideological framework that may want its reality seen and not heard. This is the story of a tactful, sounding [z] interacting meaningfully with its programmed, visual S.

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Shakespeare's Sound Government: Sound Defects, Polyglot Sounds, and Sounding Out

Patricia Parker

a sound, but not in government.
–A Midsummer Night's Dream

it cannot be sounded; my affection hath an unknown bottom . . . .
–As You Like It

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Quince's mispunctuated Prologue (which comically turns a potential compliment into an insult) is described by Hippolyta as "like a child on a recorder—a sound, but not in government" (5.1.122-24).[1] The line calls attention to the government of sound itself, by the "stops" of a recorder or the punctuating "points" of proper discursive "partition" (5.1.167). Far from yielding a simple joke at the artisans' expense, however, Quince's mispointing echoes that of other subjects of Theseus who put "periods in the midst of sentences" (5.1.96), subtly suggesting a connection between the government of sound and sound government of other kinds. In a Shakespeare canon that elsewhere evokes a "jesting spirit . . . govern'd by stops" (*Much Ado* 3.2.59-60), Hippolyta's "recorder" re-sounds in Hamlet's objection to attempts to "govern" his "stops" (3.2.357), in a tragedy whose potentially ungovernable instruments include players whose antic disposition Hamlet himself attempts to control or govern through a written script (3.2.38-45). *Sounding* in "you would seem to know my stops, you would pluck out the heart of my mystery, you would sound me from my lowest note to [the top of] my compass" (*Hamlet* 3.2.364-67) combines an instrument to be played upon ("a pipe for Fortune's finger / To sound what stop she please" [3.2.70-71]) with the sense of fathoming or sounding out, already exploited in Polonius's plan to "sound" out his son (2.1.42), in *Julius Caesar*'s "shall we sound him" (2.1.141), and in *As You Like It* in Rosalind's "that thou didst know how many fathom deep I am in love! But it cannot be sounded; my affection hath an

[1] The edition used for all quotations from Shakespeare is the Riverside 1974. Through Line Numbers, where used, are cited throughout as *TLN*.

unknown bottom" and Celia's "or rather, bottomless—that as fast as you pour affection in it, it runs out" (4.1.205-10).[2]

"Sound" in its multiple senses is repeatedly foregrounded in Shakespeare, including as the "whole," undiseased, or opposite of "unsound," as in the exchange on "diseases," syphilitic "French crowns," and "three thousand dolors" in *Measure for Measure* (1.2.53-56):

> [*1. Gent*.] Thou art always figuring diseases in me, but thou art full of error: I am sound.
>
> *Lucio*. Nay, not (as one would say) healthy; but so sound as things that are hollow.

Resounding with the "dollars" in "dolors" as well as the "hollow," sound registers simultaneously here as unaffected by sexual disease,[3] a claim to wholeness or soundness that ironically resonates in Berowne's "my love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw" (*Love's Labor's Lost* 5.2.415) together with the possibility of hollow or mere sound, not yet perhaps Macbeth's "sound and fury, signifying nothing" (5.5.27) but potentially only "Idle words . . . / Unprofitable sounds" (*The Rape of Lucrece* 1017). In a period when "to fall into a sound" designated its own homophonic double *swoon(d)*, not even the semantic boundaries of sound itself could be wholly governed.[4]

> Here's no sound jest . . . .
> —*Titus Andronicus*
>
> the eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen . . . .
> —*A Midsummer Night's Dream*

Impossible as it is to fathom the bottom of sound, we might here at least foreground some sound jests that have escaped attention, perhaps because they are not easy for the eye to hear. In *Titus Andronicus*, a "written" message to Chiron and Demetrius, whose rape of Lavinia has been "deciphered" (4.2.8), involves verses from "Horace" familiar from Lyly's Latin grammar (4.2.20-21): "*Integer vitae, scelerisque purus, / Non eget Mauri jaculis, nec arcu*" ("The man with integrity of life, pure of crime, needs not the arrows or bow of the Moor"). But Aaron the Moor not only comprehends that Titus has sounded out or "found their guilt" and "sends them weapons wrapp'd about with lines / That wound beyond their feeling to the quick" (4.2.26-28), but re-sounds the aural (or sound) jest within "Horace" itself (4.2.24-26):

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[2] See also Folkerth 2002:*passim* and 25. I am very grateful to Neil Rhodes for comments that prompted the revision of this paper and to Lorna Hutson, who both shaped and delivered it to the original conference held at St. Andrews in 2006.

[3] For this contemporary sense of sound, see also *A Mad World, My Masters* (4.2.12: "Recovered, well, and sound again") in Middleton 1995:312.

[4] See *OED* "sound," noun 4. In *Henry VI Part 2*, the stage direction in the Folio for the swooning of the king reads "*King sounds*" (*TLN* 1729). See Dessen and Thomson 1999:223.

> Ay, just—a verse in Horace, right, you have it.
> [*Aside*] Now, what a thing it is to be an ass!
> Here's no sound jest!

The lines turn on "sound": not only because what Aaron calls "no sound jest" could "not be sounder" (Bate 1995:220), because the scroll's "written" message is not "sound," or because "no sound" suggests the unsound or unhealthy, but also because of the familiar "sound jest" on "ass" and "whore" within the august Roman "Horace," in a period when Aeneas, Midas, and other names ending in "ass" were routinely subjected to such conflations of high and low through their ungoverned sounds. In a play whose "sound" (or unsound) conflations include "goats" and "Goths" or "Jupiter" and "gibbet-maker," and a translingual context where Latin *integer* itself ironically means whole or sound, "no sound jest" thus manages to sound out an action or "gest" that is anything but healthy or "sound," through the coupling of "whore" and "ass" that appears nowhere to the eye within the "written" script, ferreting or sounding out as the other parties to this "crime" the Moor and Tamora, the "witty Empress" who would herself "applaud Andronicus's conceit" (30).

Shakespearean sound effects (or sound defects) depend not only on hearing with the eye (as in Sonnet 23) but also on seeing with the ear, including through the vivid reports of the *nuntius* or messenger who produces not "ocular proof" but what might be called a (potentially unsound) "evidence effect," turning the ear into a substitute *oculus* or eye (Erasmus 1978:577). In *Much Ado About Nothing*, where sound jests on "nothing" and "noting" are joined by the *nothus* or Latin for "bastard," representing "reportingly" (3.1.116) generates a potentially tragic substitute for ocular proof that in *Othello* makes the messenger who puts hearers in "false gaze" (1.3.19) a forerunner of Iago (or Iachimo in *Cymbeline*), a dependence on "auricular assurance" (*King Lear* 1.2.92) that is strikingly foregrounded in *The Winter's Tale*, in a Recognition Scene wholly dependent on seeing with the ear ("that which you hear you'll swear you see" 5.2.32).

In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which begins by invoking things momentary "as a sound" (1.1.143), seeing with the ear is part of the apparent nonsense of a Bottom whose "bottomless" dream cannot be sounded, including in "I see a voice! . . . / To spy and I can hear my Thisby's face" (5.1.192-93).[5] But soundings beyond the reach of the eye are underscored repeatedly in this as in other plays, including in Hermia's "Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found; / Mine ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound" (3.2.181-82), in a scene where Lysander's defection realizes the earlier ungoverned sounds within his own name: "Lie further off yet; do not lie so near . . . / For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie. . . . / Lysander lied. . . ." (2.2.44-57). In a play where the Indian boy who is pivotal to the plot may never actually be seen on stage (Dessen 2002:75), his mother the Indian votaress is pure sound effect (2.1.123-35), like the vivid report of the death of Ophelia in *Hamlet* (4.7.166-83), whose "melodious lay" and "clothes spread wide" simultaneously resound with sounds not "in government," yielding the aural ghost-effect of "close spread wide" as well as a different kind of lying or "lay" (Parker 1996:255).

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[5] I am indebted here as elsewhere to Folkerth 2002:91-98.

a non est woman
—Barnabe Riche

I haue seene a Ladies Nose
That ha's beene blew . . . .
—*The Winter's Tale*

The sound defects produced by omitting stops that prevent sounds from running together have their counterpart in what might be called elision's "soundeffects." The "all ways" and "always" that sound within Titania's "Faieries be gon, and be alwaies away" (Q1, F3r; Dessen 1995:21) confound on the ear what is differentiated in print. The "all swell" that sounds within *All's Well That Ends Well*, a play preoccupied with dilation or swelling (Harris 2006), evades ocular proof like the "strumpet" within "The Moor! I know his trumpet" (*Othello* 2.1.178), in a tragedy whose re-soundings range from the "O" in Othello or "demon" in "Desdemon" to the "hideous" in the "hid," or "whore" within the "pliant hour" of Othello's speech on his wooing of Brabantio's daughter, just after the evocation of her "greedy ear" (1.3.149-51), contributing to the forging of its "preposterous conclusions" (1.3.329; Parker 1996:48). In *Hamlet*—where poisoning through the ear and Claudius's abusing of the "ear" of Denmark with a "forged process" or report of Old Hamlet's death (1.5.37) anticipates Iago's plan to "abuse" the "ear" of the "Moor" (*Othello* 1.3.395)—such ungoverned sound effects include the "poison ingest" that sounds in "poison in jest" (3.2.234) or the "causeandefect" resounding ironically within the lines that culminate in Polonius's "effect defective comes by cause" (2.2.103), as he promises to ferret or sound out the "cause" of the madness of Denmark's son (or sun).

Such "soundeffects" as well as polyglot soundings were endemic in the period. A "non est" yields an "honest" open to suspicion in Barnabe Riche's "May not a non est woman lodge men and women all together in one chamber" (1606:10v), while Middleton's *It's a Mad World, My Masters* depends for its bawdy not only on the familiar sounding of the low within the apparently high (including "de-*stink*-shuns" in "distinctions") but on the "hole and skirt" within the apparently innocent "Holland skirt" (1.1.110, 2.2.29; Middleton 1995:301, 305). Exploiting what Day's *Isle of Gulls* called the "baudry" of "an ell deepe, and a fathome broad" (Day 1980: Induction 65-71), Shakespeare's *Comedy of Errors* (3.2) elides the "kitchen wench" Nell with "an ell" (or span of 45 inches), potentially sounding to the ear as a "Nell" broad. In relation to the ear's notoriously open porches (*Hamlet* 1.5.63), the problem of governance or stops posed by such "soundeffects" includes whether there is any stop to potentially infinite jests (quite apart from the unfathomable issue of whether they are intended). Should we tell a student, for example, not to hear (as one recently did) another "Athenian eunuch" in "You Nick Bottom" (1.2.20; 5.1.45), in Shakespeare's comedy of a potentially "bottomless" sounding, when the line immediately preceding it is "Name what part I am for" (2.1.18-19)?

Yet another problem of "sounding out" involves not only regional inflections but also the impossibility of knowing how words in Shakespeare actually sounded, though we know now that it was not like Received Pronunciation or particular constructions of the Bard as an icon of Englishness from earlier colonial periods (projecting the "government" of "sound" across more imperial dominions). Personal histories of intimidation with regard to how Shakespeare "should" sound might be recounted by many of us from different geographies and generations. I remember

my embarrassment as a child when my Irish immigrant father taught me to pronounce "ache" the same way as the letter "H" and I was rebuked for my ignorance by a teacher, long before discovering that an entire exchange in *Antony and Cleopatra* (4.7.8) depends on the homophonic sounding of "ache" and "H."

Such divergent early modern soundings extend not only to homophones such as "one" and "own" or "sea" and "say" but also to sound effects obscured by differentiated spellings. The "eye," "ay," and "I" rendered in modern editions of *Richard II* as "Ay, no; no, ay; for I must nothing be" (4.1.200) appears in the Folio and other early texts as "I, no; no I" (Folio *TLN* 2122; Dessen 2002:21), just as "eye" and "I" (as well as "ay") resound throughout *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, from the opening scene's "Ay me! for aught that I could ever read" (1.1.132) to Hermia's "Methinks I see these things with parted eye" (4.1.189), in a plot where eyes, consent (or "ays"), and the problem of differentiating "I's" play such a major part.[6] Even the letters whose "alphabetical position" Malvolio attempts to construe in the Folio text of *Twelfth Night* ("O shall end, I hope. . . I, or Ile cudgell him, and make him cry O. . . And then I comes behind. . . I, and you had any eye behinde you . . . .") may resound with a Chaucerian "nether eye" in a play filled with arsy-versy inversions and "backtricks" of all kinds.[7]

In ways that differently underscore what may be obscured by editorial emendation or modernization, other sound jests that might be more visible even to the eye in the earliest texts are effaced by more modern standardizations of spelling and grammar. In *The Winter's Tale*, as Leontes' jealousy builds on conjectures that lack "sight only" (2.1.177), his newly suspected "boy," Mamillius, engages in an exchange that appears in modern editions as follows (2.1.13-15):

> *Mam*. What color are your eyebrows?
> [1.] *Lady.* Blue, my lord.
> *Mam*. Nay, that's a mock. I have seen a lady's nose
> That has beene blue, but not her eyebrows.

But what is here potentially obscured by the spelling of "blue" appears in the Folio as the double-meaning sound of "blew" (Folio: *TLN* 602-05):

> *Mam*. . . . What colour are your eye-browes?
> *Lady*. Blew (my Lord.)
> *Mam*. Nay, that's a mock: I haue seene a Ladies Nose
> That ha's beene blew, but not her eye-browes.

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[6] Though there is not room here to cite all of the treatments of this pervasive homophonic network, its importance within and beyond the sonnets is treated in Fineman 1986, while its relation to ears as well as eyes is foregrounded in Baldo 1996, espec. chs. 5 and 6.

[7] See the more detailed reading in Parker 2007b:46, with the 1623 Folio text quoted here from *TLN* 1139-43 of the Norton Facsimile of *The First Folio of Shakespeare* (1968:282).

Readers of modern editions may miss the "mock" (or confusion) entirely here, since it depends not only on the sound and early modern spelling of "blew" for the color we know as "blue" but on a construction that modern grammar would render as a nose that has been "blown" (not "blew"). But as with so many Shakespearean sound jests, what might seem only a marginal quibble has much larger resonances within the play as a whole. In the same scene as this sounding of things that can (or cannot) be "blew," Leontes assumes the legitimacy of his own sounding out of what is lacking in "sight" or ocular proof, and Hermione tells Mamillius (of his "tale" best for "winter") to "giv't me in mine ear" (2.1.32), in a plot whose Recognition Scene will depend on what is seen by the ear and a play whose very title begs the question of the "credit" (5.1.179) or credibility to be given to reports or "tales."

> Hermaphrodite phrases . . . halfe Latin and halfe English.
> —Nashe, *Strange newes*

> *Tailler*. To cut, slit, slice, hew, hacke, slash, gash; nicke . . . also, to geld.
> —Cotgrave's *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues*

As with the Latin lines from "Horace" in *Titus Andronicus* or the macaronic sounding of English "honest" in Barnabe Riche's "a non est woman," polyglot soundings resonate throughout the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries in ways we need to hear for interpretive and not just more narrowly linguistic reasons. In *The Merchant of Venice*, for example, the Clown who abandons the "Jew" for the service of a "Christian" is named not Lancelot (the spelling in modern editions) but "Lancelet" or "Launcelet," identifying him with the knife that Rabelais called "le lancelet qu'utilisent les chirurgiens" (1994:501), or the surgeons' "lancelet" associated with the bloodletting, circumcision, and castration that are central within the entire play (Parker 2007a). In *Othello*, the "Signior Angelo" on whom so much critical ink has been spilled in attempts to locate a precise historical referent for the messenger who puts the Venetians in "false gaze" (1.2.16) bears (like "Angelo" in *Measure for Measure*) a name that identifies him not only with the devil disguised as an "angel of light" (2 Corinthians 11:14), but also with the familiar generic term for such a bearer of reports (from Greek *angelos* or messenger), exploited in Nashe's description of Harvey as "no Angell but ANGELOS, id est, Nuntius, a Fawneguest Messenger" (Nashe 1592:sig. B4r).

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, whose transvestite staging is foregrounded when the Egyptian queen evokes the "boy" actor who plays her (5.2.220), "Salt Cleopatra" (2.1.21) resonates not only with Latin *sal* or "salt" but also with the *saltator* or dancer familiar from Plautus's and other descriptions of seductive transvestite dancers (Parker 2004:233), a term Shakespeare repeats (with a different inflection) in the "Saltiers" or dancers of *The Winter's Tale* (4.4.327). Antony's wearing of Cleopatra's "tires and mantles" (2.5.22) involves not just a gendered but a cultural cross-dressing, in a period where the "tyres of the head" (Geneva 1560: Isaiah 3.20) came (like the English *attire*) from "the Latine word *Tiara*, which is an ornament of the heads of the Persian Kings, Priests, and Women . . . such as the Turkes weare at this day" (Minsheu 1617; Parker 2004:244). And in this play where the "captainship" of Antony is described as emasculated or "nicked" (3.13.8), "tailors of the earth," in a passage that includes "members" and "cut" (1.2.168-176), turns on the French sense of *tailleur* (cutter or gelder) as well as on the

familiar sexual sense of "tail" exploited in *Romeo and Juliet* (1.2.40) or the Tailor scene of *The Taming of the Shrew*.

The Shakespeare who would later become an icon of "Englishness" but whose language reflects the more polyglot resonances of early modern London is thus frequently more easily heard by students or interpreters who may be less narrowly anglocentric. My Spanish-speaking students in California can hear not only the market sounding in the "Mercatio" of *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* but, in contrast to my English-only students from San Diego, the Santiago or St. James in whose name the Moors were driven out of Spain, evoked by the name of Iago in *Othello*, in a period when Dekker in *The Whore of Babylon* could refer to St. James's in London itself as "St. Iago's" and a linguistic environment in which the related name of King James could be alternately sounded as Jacobus, Jacob, Jacques or Jaques **(**Parker 2001:43).

Such polyglot soundings also made it possible for Shakespeare and his contemporaries to exploit the ear's ability to hear sounds simultaneously and macaronically in multiple linguistic registers. Nicholas Udall could play on the vernacular "rice pudding cake" sounding within the more august Latin *respublica* (Woodbridge 2001:141). Thomas Nashe could hear Latin *moechus* (fornicator or adulterer) as well as the "Mecca" where "Mahomet was hung up" sounding within the English "mechanicall" (G. Williams 1994:2:249). *Twelfth Night* and *Much Ado* depend on the sound of the French "cinquepace" (or "five steps" dance) as the "sink-a-pace" (or "sink-a-piss") of its vernacular resonance. A man's "good foot" in *Much Ado* (2.1.14) and the wordplay in *Love's Labor's Lost* on "Loves her by the foot . . . He may not by the yard" (5.2.668-69) turn on the sounding of French *foutre* in English "foot," while French *fautre* compounds this sound (or unsound) nexus with the sense of female (or sexual) "faults" crucial to *Hamlet*, *Merry Wives*, and other Shakespeare plays. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the comic rendering of "Ninus's tomb" as "Ninny's tomb" turns on yet another bilingual "sound jest"—since in the Ovidian Latin when Pyramus and Thisbe plan to meet "ad busta Nini," the genitive *Nini* for this Babylonian ruler already sounds like "ninny" or fool. In *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Shakespeare's only "English" comedy), the genitive case itself famously sounds as "Jinny's case" to the vernacular ear of Mistress Quickly or Quick-lie, in a scene of translation where "vocative" is heard as "focative," Latin *horum* as English "whore'um," *qui*'s, *quae*'s, and *quod*'s as sexually double-meaning "keys," "case," and "cods," *pulcher* as "polecats" or prostitutes, *caret* (or "lacks") as phallic "carrot," and Latin *lapis* as English "pebble" or the ungoverned sound of "peeble" or testicle (4.1).

In the linguistic borderland of Navarre that provides the setting for *Love's Labor's Lost*, the "feast of languages" repeatedly depends on such polyglot or translingual soundings, including not only the Latin *quis quis* heard as English "kiss kiss," *haud credo* as "old grey doe," and *ad unguem* as "ad dunghill" (already glossed by editors), but also polyglot sound jests that may be more difficult for us to hear, including the French "sign of she" (or *elle*) in the wordplay on "sorel" (4.2.58-60), or the *sorella* or sister that was the familiar *lingua franca* for a less than "honest" woman in the scene that also features a "pricket" (4.2.12-59; Parker 2001:51).

In *Henry V*, where the fiction of a defective Welsh sounding produces the comparison of the English king to "Alexander the Pig" and undermining faultlines, breaches, or "leaks" continue to sound even in ostensibly faithful (and successfully subordinated) Welsh "leeks," macaronic soundings that are themselves compounds or hybrids (like the "compound…boy," half

French, half English) undermine the very sense of secure boundaries or dominion that the play's rhetoric of mastery and containment labors to construct, simultaneously suggesting (in "Anglois" or "Anglish") the angles or breaches that threaten the England described as a "nook-shotten isle" **(**Parker 2002a). Even the ungovernable, uncontainable, or incontinent sound of "leek" (or "leak") may be echoed in the play's bilingual rendering of the Salic Law as the "Law Salique" (1.2.11), or "Sal-leek," generating the curious scene of "salt" and "leek" inserted between the triumphant Chorus of Act V and the final "Wooing" scene **(**Rubinstein 1995:145), where (in a reminder of the past and future vulnerability of inheritance through a "female" line) Henry both marries the French king's daughter and insists that he be named son (or "fils") and heir or **"**Héritier de France" (5.2.339-40).

Together with the likelihood that Shakespeare read the narrative source for *Othello* in Italian (Neill 2006:22), the evidence of other sources accessed in French, and the echoes of Ovid's Latin (and not just Golding's Englishing) elsewhere in the canon, *Henry V* provides the most striking staging of a Shakespeare who was clearly not "English only." But not even this play's macaronic or polyglot soundings have been exhaustively sounded out. Deanne Williams has recently argued, for example, for even more interlingual connections within its famous Language Lesson, including its sounding in "arma" (for "arm") of the famous opening of the *Aeneid* (*Arma virumque cano*, "I sing of arms and the man"), appropriate for a play that repeatedly invokes the "Roman disciplines" of war (3.2.73) as well as the expansion of English empire or dominion (2004:218-19). At the same time, the language lesson of *Henry V* provides in its re-sounding of English "gown" as the sexally suggestive "count," a clue to its sounding elsewhere in Shakespeare, in the "loose-bodied gown" described as "quaint" (another homophone of "count") in *The Taming of the Shrew* (4.3), in the scene where Petruchio threatens to beat the tailor with his "yard" and Grumio concludes (of "Take up my mistress' gown to his master's use!") that "the conceit is deeper than you think" (4.3.86-162).

In relation to the translingual soundings of French and English, *Henry V* may also provide a useful language lesson. The French-English scenes of *Henry V* include the English Pistol and his French prisoner, whose very name ("Monsieur Le Fer" or "Master Fer") not only occasions bawdy sound jesting on English "fer and ferret and firk" (4.4.26-31) but macaronically sounds the *ferre* at the root of the play's insistent harping on ferrying, translating, or conveying (including the sense of "convey" as "steal"), together with the French "iron" (or *fer*) that makes this scene a comic declension not only from any sense of a "golden" age but even from the "brass" sounding just before it in the King's claim that the English victory will "live in brass" (4.3.97), ironically re-sounded when Pistol hears the prisoner's French "bras" (or arm) as "brass" ("Offer'st me brass?") and, expecting gold, contemptuously rejects it (4.4.16-20). Even within an apparently English-only range, sounds are difficult enough to govern, as Quince's misstopped Prologue makes clear. But in a linguistic environment that exploited the translative sounding of French "Dieu" in Pistol's English "Dew" (4.4.6-7) or, in a much higher register, could sound an "adieu" in Hamlet's "a dew" (1.2.130), putting a stop to the macaronic effects of sound or sounding a bottom is even more uncertain.

In a canon where the Folio's "Fortinbras" (which we might at first think should be pronounced as in modern French "bras" or "-BRA") appears in the Second Quarto as "Fortinbrasse" (Bertram and Kliman 1991:24), the fact that not only English but French could

sound differently from the way we have been trained to pronounce it may also affect other sound effects in Shakespeare and his contemporaries, as well as our ability to sound them out. Lines in *As You Like It* turn on a French-English pun on "boys" and "bois" (or woods) that is difficult to sound out because we do not hear "boys" in modern French "bois" (even though it is the sound still heard in the pronunciation, for example, of the name of the twentieth-century writer W. E. B. Du Bois). But the sounding of "boys" within "bois" may provide not only an instructive language lesson for *As You Like It* (a play that after all foregrounds both a "Ganymede" and the French-sounding "de Boys"), but also for the "boys" (or "damn boys") sounding within Chapman's *Bussy D'Ambois* (a name we are used to pronouncing instead as modern French "d'AmBWA"), a play whose "B" text exploits the "ambo" (or "both") within Bussy's last name "D'Amboys" and a plot that moves in both directions across the hetero-homo divide.[8]

At the same time, far from being mere verbal "quibbles," such polyglot or homophonic soundings frequently forged larger cultural associations in the period. The pervasive discursive network that conflated Barbary and the "barbarous" with barbering or cutting of all kinds, including castration and circumcision, was compounded by translingual influences to which the best guides are the period's own polyglot dictionaries, though they are still not widely used by cultural historians or critics. Minsheu's *Guide unto the Tongues* (1617) observes that "Barbers shoppe" appears in other languages as "Barberie" or "Barberia," while Cotgrave's *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (1611) notes that French "Barbarie" simultaneously designated a "barbarisme," "the trade of a Barber," and "a port, or Province, of Affrike." Florio's Italian-English *Worlde of Wordes* (1598) records that *Andar in barberia* meant "to go and be cured or laide of the pocks," while *Barbiera* was not only a "shee-barber" but a "common harlot" (1598) or "strumpet" (1611), an important contributor to contemporary associations of "Barbary" with the loss of hair through syphilis. When Ben Jonson treats of "A half-witted Barbarism! which no Barber's art, or his balls, will ever expunge out," Sir John Harington combines "barbarous" Latin with "Mydas Barber," or Joseph Swetnam compares a lascivious woman to "a Barbers chaire, that so soone as one knaue is out another is in"—a connection likewise evoked in the "barber's chair" of *All's Well That Ends Well* (2.2.17)—the nexus of associations is one that was enabled by such homophonic and macaronic crossings, in a period when "barbe" itself was used in English for the beard (as in Shakespeare's variant sounding of Roman Enobarbus as "Enobarbe"), even though "barbe" and "beard" do not come from the same root.[9]

The sound (or unsound) conflation of "barbarous" and "barberous" or Barbary with "Barbery," its contemporary variant spelling, may be heard not only in the "barberous" Moor of *Titus Andronicus* (5.1.97; 5.3.4; 1594 Quarto) who engineers Lavinia's barbaric cutting or in Enobarbus's description of Antony as "barber'd ten times o'er" at his first meeting with the Egyptian Queen (*Antony and Cleopatra* 2.2.224), but also in the "barbers of Barbary" identified with castrating or gelding in Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West* (Pt. 2:1.1.49-53); in the "Barbor" named Nick in Beaumont's *Knight of the Burning Pestle* (3.2.78), who by calling himself

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[8] For a more extended reading of these connections, see Parker 2001:45-46, with DiGangi 1997:55 and Parker 2007b:46-47.

[9] For detailed citation and discussion of the texts and contexts here and in the next paragraph, see Parker 2004:201-44.

"Barbarossa" (3.3.28) echoes the famous Barbary corsair and the barber (or *barbero*) Nicolas from Cervantes' *Don Quixote*, and in Dekker's *Gull's Hornbook*, which glosses its extended discussion of hair and the shaving of captives by the "Mahumetan cruelty" of the "Turks," in a new chapter that professes to be wearied by sailing along these "shores of *Barbaria*" (17). But the contemporary association also sounds within non-literary reports of the North African or Barbary coast, in descriptions of the shaving, circumcizing, or castrating of Christian captives by "barbarous" (or "barberous") others, including the description in Hakluyt of the voyage in which Englishmen were forcibly "circumcised" as well as "most violently shaven, head and beard" by "infidels" in "Barbarie" (Hakluyt 1904:v, 301).

Such polyglot soundings traverse even the most famous Shakespearean tragedy, *Hamlet*, whose early texts bear the traces of a much less "English" production than its subsequent edited version might suggest. Spanish-sounding terms include the *malhecho* of the Folio's "Miching Malicho" (140-41);[10] "student" is spelled "studient" in both Q1 and Q2 (34-35), influenced by what we render into modern French as *étudiant*; the variations between the Folio's "wee coated them on the way," Q2's "we coted them on the way" and Q1's "We boorded them a the way" (100-101) depend on the French *aborder* and *à côté* that likewise sound within the passage of *Twelfth Night* on "Mistress Accost" ("'Accost' is front her, board her, woo her, assail her," 1.3.52-59). The French-sounding "car(r)iage(s)" of all three texts of the speech of the figure known in conflated modernized editions as "Osric" (252-53) may take us back to the first scene's "carriage of the article desseigne" (Q2; "Article designe" in F), a phrase that may bear the trace of French *desseigné* (18-19) in the lines (on a "Moity" or "moitie competent" and other French-inflected terms) whose spellings of "Fortinbras" (F), "Fortinbrasse" (Q2), and "Fortenbrasse" (Q1) summon the complex that Pistol had already evoked in his iteration of French *bras* as English "brass."

Similarly, toward the end of *Hamlet*, the "gentleman of Normandy" who is himself seen only through the ear is called in the Second Quarto "Lamord," a French (or Norman) name that combines the sounds of both "amor" and "la mort"—anticipating the multiple corpses of the Graveyard and final dueling scenes. Q2's "Vpon my life *Lamord*," with the description of this figure in both Q2 and F as "incorps't" in the compound senses of "embodied" and "corpse," makes the sound jest even more pointed. At the same time, in a play that is filled with reminders of blackness, including the "Moor" that sounds within the Closet Scene's contrast of the Queen's two husbands, in Hamlet's condemnation of his mother for battening on "this moor" (3.4.67: Q2, Folio "Moore"), "Lamord" resonates with the familiar contemporary homophones of "Moors" and Latin "death" or *mors*, foregrounded in the description of death itself as a "black word" in *Romeo and Juliet* (3.3.27), in the death's head of the casket chosen by "Morocco" in *The Merchant of Venice* (2.7.63), in the visualization of Black Death as a Moor, and in the skulls that appeared on maps of Africa in the period (Parker 2003:140-41).

Within the wider Shakespeare canon, the polyglot sounds of *amor* and *à mort* resonate not only in the "grove of sycamore" (Folio, "Sycamour") identified with the love-sick Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* (1.1.121), but also in the "sycamore" (Folio "Sicamour") of *Othello* (4.3.40-45), as part of a rich network of multilingual soundings that forged connections in the

[10] All citations here are to page references in Bertram and Kliman 1991.

period between *amor*, the "more" or "Moor" tree, *Mors* or "black" death, and *Moria* or folly (Parker 2002b), resounding in this tragedy in which a Moor who describes himself as having "loved not wisely but too well" (5.2.344) is also, by the end, abjectly identified by Emilia with the moronic or "Dull Moor" (5.2.224) and the "coxcomb" of the fool (5.2.233). In the culture beyond the plays, the sound (or unsound) conflation of *amor* and "Moor" that can be heard as well in the overtones of "T'amo" and of *mora* or dark woman in the name of "Tamora," paramour of the Moor in *Titus Andronicus*, influenced the representation of Moors in visual as well as in verbal contexts, from the demonizing description of "the great seducer Mahomet" as "a lustfull *Amoroso*" (Vitkus 2003:86) to the decorative artistry of the Gresley Jewel, where a "Mora" or female Moor is surrounded by "Amoretti" or figures of Amor that were originally colored black (Hall 1995:218-21).

In resonances that were so culturally charged—including the sounding of "wrath" as well as of "Amor" and "Moor" in the contemporary rendering of the Ottoman Amurath as "Amourath" or the conflating of "Muly" with "mules" in multiple texts of the period, including Middleton's *Spanish Gypsy* ("is it a mule? send him to Muly Crag-a-whee in Barbary")—sound forged connections beyond logic or even etymologic, producing conflations that re-sounded both within and beyond the literary or fictional.[11] Such soundeffects—far too pervasive and numerous to sound out here—likewise conflated "Moorian" with the "murren," "murrain," or "murrian" (the plague or pestilence associated with the biblical Egypt as the Land of Ham), assimilating blackness itself (described as an "infection") to a contagion identified with Ham's Moorish or black descendants. The threatened infection of "white" by such "murrion" contagion is evoked in a scene of Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West*, for example, when a Moroccan ruler attempts to kiss a virginal English Bess: "Must your black face be smooching my mistress's white lips with a Moorian?" (*1FM* 5.2.80-81: Heywood 1967:87). But it was, at the same time, part of a culturally much more pervasive nexus, conflating the blackness of "Moors" not only with the sound of a miscegenating or "murrian" contagion but with the polyglot overtones with which it was further compounded, reflected in Florio's 1598 Italian "*Moria*, an infection, a pestilence, a murrian, a rot or mortalitie that comes among sheepe. Also used for follie and taken from the Greeke." In such cases, unless we, as textual critics and editors or as historians of early modern culture, endeavor to hear the multiple soundings that contributed to such culturally overdetermined connections, we may not be able to see (with the eye or the ear) elisions of other kinds that were crucially important in the period.

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[11] See Middleton 1985:6:184 for *The Spanish Gypsy* (4.1.22-23), with Parker 2004:226 (on the *mula* or "mule" and *Muley* also sounded in *Don Quijote*).

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On Speech, Print, and New Media: Thomas Nashe and Marshall McLuhan

Neil Rhodes

2006 was a good year for Marshall McLuhan. He finally got his Ph.D. dissertation published, 63 years after completion, and the *Times Literary Supplement* ran a lead review article by Paul Barker on a new collection of his work with a cover illustration featuring Chantelle, a manufactured celebrity from the *Big Brother* TV program (Barker 2006:2-3). The full page close-up of Chantelle's bleached blond hair and crimson pout was not what *TLS* readers might have expected from this highbrow publication, but the image (and its context) were undoubtedly, as the caption stated, "Pure McLuhan." McLuhan himself, of course, was not around to enjoy this triumphant moment, having died in 1980, but it was an eloquent sign of his continuing modernity. Since other intellectuals who made their reputations in the 1960s have not worn very well in recent years, that is a remarkable achievement, and anyone reading McLuhan today will be struck by the extraordinary prescience of his observations on the media and the way they shape our cultural environment. It is difficult to believe that the statement "The new electronic interdependence recreates the world in the image of a global village" could have been made in 1962, long before the advent of the personal computer and the Internet. This is among his most famous pronouncements, but it is also entirely typical. Typical, too, is its formulation as a soundbite, a term that he did not invent but that nonetheless captures a wide range of McLuhanite themes: oral and aural media, the TV interview, acoustic space, and knowledge as aphorism.

What I want to focus on here, however, is not the subject of the *TLS* article, which was a boxed set of twenty pamphlets from various points in McLuhan's career, but the subject of his Cambridge Ph.D. thesis, the Elizabethan writer Thomas Nashe. Since Cambridge University Library will not lend out the thesis in any form, and also imposes a strict embargo on quotation from it, this work has understandably not featured much in discussions of McLuhan and his subsequent intellectual development,[1] but it does raise some very interesting questions both for early modernists and historians of the media. Why Nashe? What continuity is there between Nashe and the themes of McLuhan's later work? How might this early investigation of late sixteenth-century cultural conditions point us towards McLuhan's future role as the founding father of media studies?

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[1] McLuhan's biographers (Marchand 1989; Gordon 1997) do, of course, discuss his Ph.D., and it is referred to in Renaissance literary scholarship by Kinney (1986:315-19) and Norbrook (2002:286).

McLuhan went to Cambridge to study English in 1934 and was able to experience the development of "Cambridge English" in its dynamic early phase. The most important influence on him there while he was doing his Tripos (the undergraduate degree course) work was I. A. Richards, and he was to acknowledge his intellectual debt to Richards in correspondence with him later in life (Gordon 1997:332). At the time of his arrival in Cambridge, Richards had recently published *Practical Criticism* (1929), one of the seminal texts of modern English Studies. This book set out the techniques of literary close reading, focusing on the words on the page, but Richards also stressed the performative aspects of language, something that is evident from records of his teaching. In January 1935 McLuhan enrolled in Richards' "Philosophy of Rhetoric" class, which had been conceived as a sequel to the "Practical Criticism" class, but with prose passages rather than poems set for close analysis. It was probably this coursework that provided the immediate stimulus for his Ph.D. topic. What he originally proposed to write was a thesis called "The Arrest of Tudor Prose," consciously reworking R. W. Chambers' *The Continuity of English Prose*, which had appeared in 1932, but like many embryonic Ph.D. proposals he found that it was going off in different directions: "Abandoning, therefore, my original thesis, I turned to consider Nashe the journalist" (McLuhan 2006:3).[2]

McLuhan's consideration of Nashe, however, only occupies the last quarter of the thesis. The rest of it is devoted to a history of the trivium—the arts curriculum covering grammar, logic, and rhetoric—from antiquity through to the early seventeenth century. Nashe is taken as a representative of a cultural moment at the end of this period. McLuhan explains: "if Nashe appears to be a kind of appendix to a chapter in the history of education, he is really intended to be a focal point. Bacon or Donne would have served this function better in some ways than Nashe" (*ibid*.:6). This is certainly an odd kind of admission to make. If Nashe is unsuitable to act as a representative figure, and most readers of him would agree that he is a rather strange choice for this purpose, then why choose him? Again, McLuhan explains: "Nashe's sophisticated awareness of the precise nature of his activity and function as a writer gradually impressed itself upon me. His pretence of drawing only on his 'extemporal vein,' his appearance of unstudied coruscation is not only a pose, but a conventional pose" (4). He illustrates the conventionality by pointing out Nashe's debt to the highly mannered rhetoric of Lyly's *Euphues*. This is true, but only just. Nashe imitated Lyly in his first work, *The Anatomie of Absurditie* (1589), and thereafter struck out on his own highly experimental course. What I want to argue is that while McLuhan presented Nashe in his Ph.D. thesis as the conservative defender of the traditional arts curriculum, he was also deeply impressed by the extraordinary vitality of Nashe's style and realized that some of its features could be updated for a modern, freewheeling approach to popular culture and the media. From *The Mechanical Bride* (1951) onwards, McLuhan cultivated his own "extemporal vein," emulating Nashe's showmanship, his preference for oral forms of expression, and his appearance of improvisation. What Nashe called "gallimaufry" (motley, medley), McLuhan called "mosaic": "*The Gutenberg Galaxy* develops a mosaic or field approach to its problems," runs the opening sentence of that book (McLuhan 1962). Nashe, I would argue, is the model for the paradox of McLuhan's ultra-conservatism and ultra-modernity.

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[2] I cite the published text of the thesis. Its title, "The Classical Trivium," is an addition to the original thesis title, "The Place of Thomas Nashe in the Learning of his Time."

The experimental quality of Nashe's style, with its mixture of neologism, acoustic effect, and a sliding between high and low elements, has prompted comparisons with much later writers, notably Joyce. These comparisons may be specious or misleading, but the point here is that they show that Nashe may give the *appearance* of modernity to the modern reader. As far as education was concerned, however, Nashe himself was eager to assert his conservatism, praising the traditionalist values of his alma mater, St. John's College, Cambridge, and its luminaries such as the Greek scholar and ardent Ciceronian, Roger Ascham. So when McLuhan uses the terms "pretence" and "pose," and refers to Nashe's "sophisticated awareness" of what he was doing, he points to a fundamental contradiction in the literary persona that Nashe adopted for himself. Here is somebody who took pride in his elite academic and social status (he advertised himself as "Thomas Nashe, Gent" on the title-page of *Pierce Penilesse*), but also wanted to create the impression of being sharp, street-wise, and avant-garde—the cutting edge of the London literary world in the 1590s.

He did this by simulating oral techniques drawn from contemporary culture. It is true that Euphuism was one early influence on Nashe, but his involvement in the Marprelate controversy was another (Summersgill 1951). "Martin Marprelate" was the name adopted by the Puritan author(s) of a series of satirical pamphlets attacking the bishops, printed at secret locations between September 1588 and October 1589. The effectiveness of these satires was largely due to their aggressive use of low speech idiom, designed to ridicule inflated episcopal style. The pamphlets are a cornucopia of oral forms and other elements of popular culture: jokes, insults, ballads, maygames, parodies of formal rhetoric, and clever impersonations. Martin tells his readers that the Bishop of Winchester has a face "made of seasoned wainscot, and will lie as fast as a dog can trot" and threatens to "bumfeg the Cooper," while his "father," in the persona of "Martin Senior," relates how the parson of Stepney "played the potter's part in the Morrice Dance" ("Marprelate" 1911:72, 230, 369). The arena of religious debate becomes a fairground where we are treated to the verbal equivalent of fire-eaters and dancing bears, and what is on show is a performance of the arts of the trivium, dumbed down, as it were, for popular entertainment. Martin Senior acts as showman for his son, promising the audience that they will "see such grammar, such art, such wit, and conveyance of matter, as for the variety of learning, and the pleasantness of the style, the like is not elsewhere to be found" (*ibid.*:363). The Marprelate pamphlets are a series of oral performances that reconstruct the formal arts in terms of popular culture.

Clearly alarmed by the success of Martin's ridicule, the authorities decided to employ some young professional writers to a respond in a similar manner, among them Lyly and Nashe. Exactly who wrote what has not been firmly established, but it seems likely that Nashe was responsible for *An Almond for a Parrat* (1589), which is dedicated to the clown, Will Kemp, and alludes to "that merry man Rablays" (Nashe 1958:III, 341). Although he is suitably indignant about Martin's "intemperate style," Nashe shows that he can master the idiom at least as effectively as his opponent, complaining about "his auncient burlibond adiunctes that so pester his former edition with their unweldie phrase, as no true syllogisme can haue elbowe roome where they are" (*ibid.*:347). At the same time as he attacks Martin for his abuse of rhetoric and logic, Nashe's own demotic style tips the language of the classroom out on to the street. Lyly's likely contribution to the battle, *Pap with a Hatchet* (1589), does something very similar, though

in a more sinister way, vowing that he and the other Martinist writers won't stop until "we have brought *Martin* to the ablative case, that is, to bee taken away with *Bull's* voider … O here were a notable full point, to leave Martin in the hangman's apron" (Lyly 1902:III, 404). (Bull was the Tyburn executioner, and the man identified as Martin, John Penry, did indeed meet that fate.) Lyly adds grammar to Nashe's rhetoric and logic, and together they translate the three parts of the trivium into the kind of concrete, physical expressions that characterize the language of popular culture. Many people at the time found this contamination of high with low extremely offensive, though on account of the debasement of religion, of course, not the dumbing down of the trivium. Francis Bacon, for example, thought that it was dangerous "to intermix Scripture and scurrility" and observed (in Latin, appropriately enough, though with a following translation) that "there is no greater confusion than the confounding of jest and earnest" (Bacon 1857-74:VIII, 77). But for Nashe the controversy provided an ideal brief. It enabled him to practice new writing strategies—invective toughened by the idioms of popular culture—while maintaining a conservative political position, working for the establishment. He was also able to see how his earlier model, John Lyly (Oxon), inventor of Euphuism, could slum it in style.

Nashe's negotiations between elite and popular cultures are reflected in his agile interweaving of features from oral and print media. Again, this is a tactic that he may well have picked up from Martin, who used the print convention of the marginal insertion not for academic glossing, but as a vocal intervention, where the author becomes the shouting bystander: "Ha, priests, I'll bang you, or else never trust me"; and he produced absurd colophons such as "Given at my Castle, between two whales; neither four days from Penniless Beach, nor yet at the West End of Shrovetide" ("Marprelate" 1911:44, 101). Commenting on the relationship between theatrical performance and printed text, D. F. McKenzie observes that "we have to think of other essentially theatrical places—the fairground and the market—for example—to recall that some oral modes are even less compatible with print" (McKenzie 2002:240). Yet translating the language of fairground and market into print is exactly what Nashe, and Martin before him, do. Street cries, for example, become book titles, such as Martin's *Hay Any Work for Cooper,* and Nashe grumbles about the book market's constant demands for novelty in similar terms: "Newe Herrings, new, wee must crye, every time wee make our selves publique, or else we shall bee christened with a hundred newe tytles of Idiotisme" (Nashe 1958:I, 192). McKenzie (2002:240) rightly points out that in these popular arenas speech is accompanied by physical action, props, and other rhetorical supports that cannot be reproduced in print, but Martin and Nashe do nonetheless try to recreate a vigorously physical environment in print form where adjuncts (that is, epithets) are burliboned and syllogisms have elbow room.

The figure who most completely blends the speech performances of fairground and market is the mountebank or charlatan, the traveling salesman who sets up his platform in places of popular resort in order to peddle cures, potions, and other marvelous nostrums. Antidote for snakebite was a favorite product, while some of the more ambitious performers claimed knowledge of alchemy. But whatever they were selling, they attracted audiences who came to enjoy their speech skills. Although the alternative term for the mountebank—charlatan—is now used only of someone who fakes professional knowledge, its derivation from the Italian *ciarlare*, to chatter or "spin a line," indicates how closely the role is identified with a particular kind of

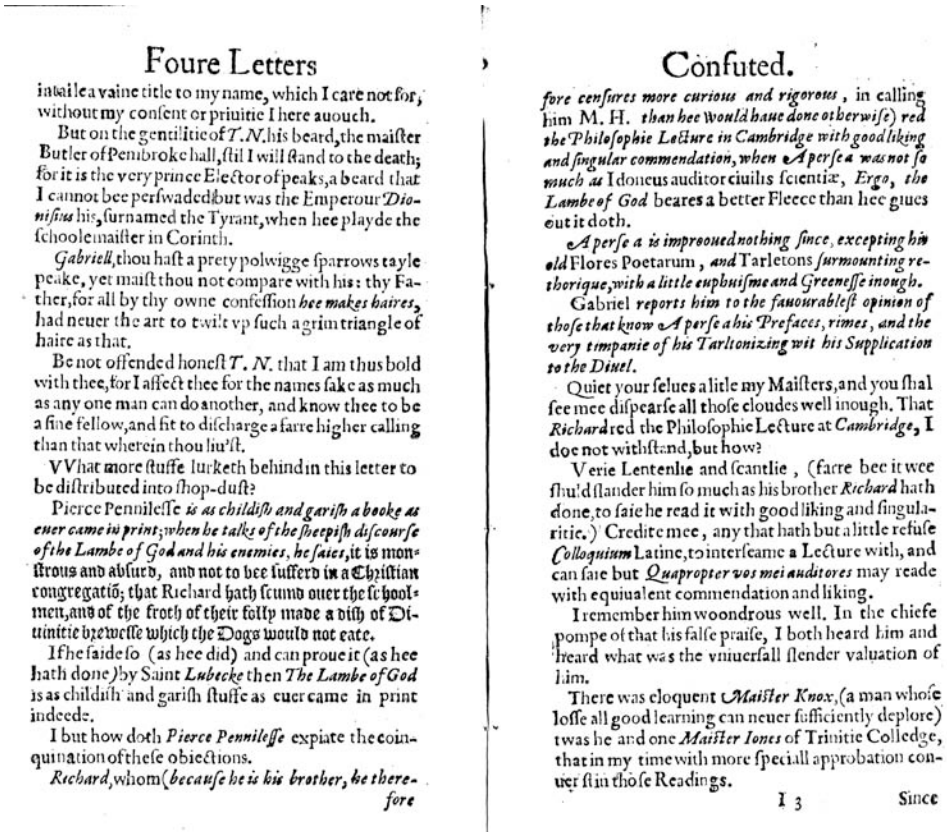
oral performance.[3] The same is true of the "quacksalver," another term for "mountebank," which derives from Dutch *quacken* (to prattle) and *salve* (ointment). The Italians themselves were thought to be masters of charlatanry, especially by the English. The traveler Thomas Coryat records how he "often wondred at many of these naturall Orators" and admired their "extempore" performances (C. Clark 1979:540-41), while the gullible Sir Politic Would-Be in Jonson's *Volpone*—a fictional version of Coryat, perhaps—describes them as "the onely languag'd-men of all the world" (3.2.132; C. Clark 1979:540-41). Shakespeare's Coriolanus, on the other hand, is disgusted at having to "mountebank" the crowd by advertising his wounds and selling himself through speech in the marketplace (3.2.132). Either way, Elizabethan writers used mountebank eloquence as the type of a particular form of commodified speech, and its basic elements were well-known: the incomparably efficacious power and sovereign virtue of this hitherto unavailable medicine was one, but other features of the oration, in addition to these superlatives, included travelers' tales (to emphasize the exotic nature of the product and the difficulty with which it had been obtained) and the issuing of challenges to competitors. Since all this is sales talk, it is ultimately directed to a purpose, but as Carol Clark has pointed out, mountebank rhetoric is "not so much the art of persuading or of speaking well, as simply the art of keeping going" (545). The remarkable feats of improvisation assume an almost magical aura, which the mountebank hopes will be transferred in the minds of the audience to the product itself.

In his descent from highbrow Latinate eloquence, nurtured at Cambridge, to what Alexandra Halasz (1997) has described as the marketplace of print, mountebank rhetoric offered itself to Nashe as a model of popular oratory. But as far as he was concerned, it was one to be strenuously avoided. In an attempt to dissociate himself from the taint of charlatanry, he began *Pierce Penilesse* (1592), the work that made his name, with the disclaimer that he had no intention of making "a tedious Mountebanks Oration" (Nashe 1958:I, 153), but the form that his pamphlet takes of "news from hell" clearly connects it to that ignominious model. In Rabelais, for example, Epistemon brings back news from hell after his beheading and subsequent reheading following the application of a wonderful resuscitating ointment (C. Clark 1979:544). It is a form that combines travelers' tale and magical remedy in characteristic mountebank style, and despite Nashe's disclaimer his work goes on to reproduce distinctive features of the mountebank *spiel.* The exotic sights and happenings of *The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594) are a natural amplification of the travelers' tale *topos*. The title of *Strange Newes* (1592) is a variation on the same theme, while its content, like its sequel, *Have With You To Saffron-Walden* (1596), has very much to do with the issuing of challenges to competitors, mainly Gabriel Harvey, the Cambridge academic who is the butt of both these polemics. It is Nashe's last work, however, *Lenten Stuffe* (1599), that produces his most sustained piece of charlatanry. Framed as a eulogy to the town of Great Yarmouth, where Nashe hid out to avoid arrest in the autumn of 1597, *Lenten Stuffe* is an elaborate advertisement for the town's staple product, the red herring (as well as being a work in praise of digression). In true mountebank vein, all sorts of marvelous qualities

[3] "Charlatan" was, in fact, a term frequently applied to McLuhan himself. With regard to his performance techniques the label is not unjustified, but he did of course make it his business also to analyze sales talk and the language of advertising. Paul Barker does not address the point directly, but he concludes his article with the observation, "[h]e was never *only* a snake-oil merchant" (2006:4).

are attributed to this lowly fish: "it will embrawne and Iron crust [a person's] flesh, and harden his soft bleding vaines as stiffe and robustious as branches of Corrall"; it will act as a prophylactic against the stone; and it even has alchemical qualities (Nashe 1958:III, 191; 221). The virtues of the red herring are extolled in extravagant hyperbole interlaced with digressions into the exotic and the fabulous, and this continues for more than seventy pages. Whatever else it is, Nashe's final fling is certainly a masterpiece in the art of keeping going.

But it was designed for print, not performance. Paradoxically, this most oral of writers, who plied his trade during what is probably the most exciting decade in the history of the English theater, was only marginally interested in drama. If it is true, as Lukas Erne (2003) has argued, that his most famous contemporary, Shakespeare, wrote literary dramas for the reading public that were then revised and stripped down for oral performance, what we have in the case of Nashe is almost the reverse: an academically trained rhetorician who deliberately uses print to reconstruct the kinds of popular oral forms that D. F. McKenzie (2002) regarded as most intractable for that purpose. He is, in fact, highly alert to the ways in which type might be used to create a sense of vocal performance, perhaps most obviously in the polemics against Gabriel Harvey.[4] In *Strange Newes* he mixes Roman, italic, and black letter fonts to signal quotation within quotation and mark out the different voices of Gabriel Harvey, his brother Richard (whose book Nashe had ridiculed in *Pierce Penilesse* in a passage quoted again here), and Nashe himself.[5] In *Have With You*, Nashe takes the vocalization a step further. Here, various characters are assembled who take it in turns to extract passages from Harvey's book, *Pierce's Superogation* (a lengthy and pedantic reply to Nashe's attacks), which are highlighted in italic



Foure Letters

intaile a vaine title to my name, which I care not for, without my consent or priuitie I here auouch.

But on the gentilitie of *T. N.* his beard, the maister Butler of Pembroke hall, stil I will stand to the death; for it is the very prince Elector of peaks, a beard that I cannot bee perswaded but was the Emperour *Dionisius* his, surnamed the Tyrant, when hee playde the schoolemaister in Corinth.

Gabriell, thou hast a prety polwigge sparrows tayle peake, yet maist thou not compare with his: thy Father, for all by thy owne confession *hee makes haires*, had neuer the art to twilt vp such a grim triangle of haire as that.

Be not offended honest *T. N.* that I am thus bold with thee, for I affect thee for the names sake as much as any one man can do another, and know thee to be a fine fellow, and fit to discharge a farre higher calling than that wherein thou liu'st.

VVhat more stuffe lurketh behind in this letter to be distributed into shop-dust?

Pierce Pennilesse *is as childish and garish a booke as euer came in print; when he talks of the sheepish discourse of the Lambe of God and his enemies, he saies*, it is monstrous and absurd, and not to bee suffered in a Christian congregatiõ; that Richard hath scumd ouer the schoolemen, and of the froth of their folly made a dish of Diuinitie vnewesse which the Dogs would not eate.

If he saide so (as hee did) and can proue it (as hee hath done) by Saint *Lubecke* then *The Lambe of God* is as childish and garish stuffe as euer came in print indeede.

I but how doth *Pierce Pennilesse* expiate the coinquination of these obiections.

Richard, whom (*because he is his brother, he therefore*

Confuted.

fore censures more curious and rigorous, in calling him M. H. *than hee would haue done otherwise*) *red the Philosophie Lecture in Cambridge with good liking and singular commendation, when A perse a was not so much as* Idoneus auditor ciuilis scientiæ, *Ergo, the Lambe of God* beares a better Fleece than hee giues out it doth.

A perse a is improoued nothing since, excepting his old Flores Poetarum, *and* Tarletons *surmounting retho rique, with a little euphuisme and Greenesse inough.*

Gabriel *reports him to the fauourableſt opinion of those that know A perse a his Prefaces, rimes, and the very timpanie of his Tarltonizing wit his Supplication to the Diuel.*

Quiet your selues a litle my Maisters, and you shal see mee dispearse all those cloudes well inough. That *Richard* red the Philosophie Lecture at *Cambridge*, I doe not withstand, but how?

Verie Lentenlie and scantlie, (farre bee it wee shu'd slander him so much as his brother *Richard* hath done, to saie he read it with good liking and singularitie.) Credite mee, any that hath but a little refuse *Colloquium* Latine, to interseame a Lecture with, and can saie but *Quapropter vos mei auditores* may reade with equiualent commendation and liking.

I remember him woondrous well. In the chiefe pompe of that his false praise, I both heard him and heard what was the vniuersall slender valuation of him.

There was eloquent *Maister Knox*, (a man whose losse all good learning can neuer sufficiently deplore) twas he and one *Maister Iones* of Trinitie Colledge, that in my time with more speciall approbation conuer sin those Readings.

I 3 Since

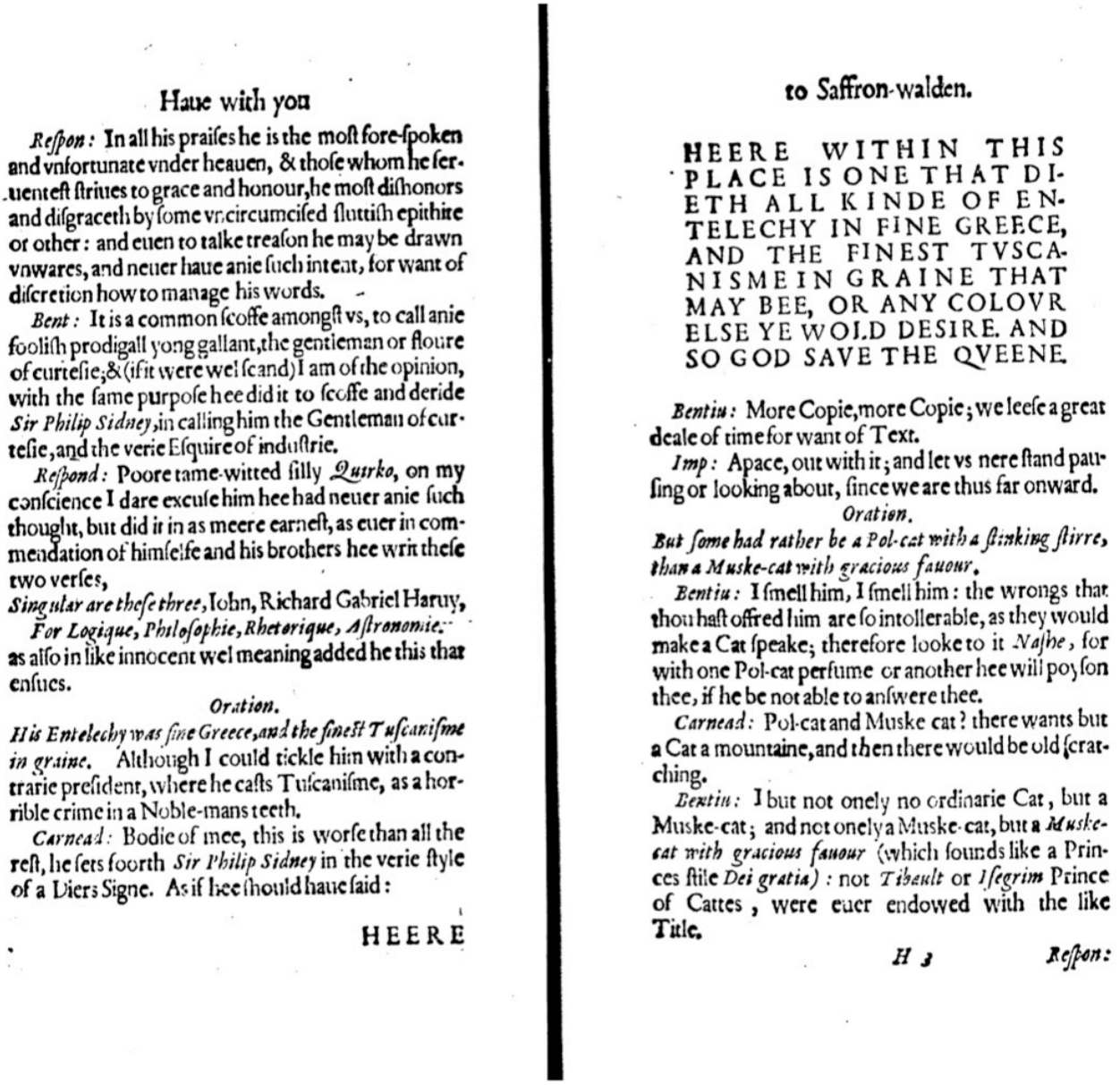
Thomas Nashe, *Strange Newes* (1592), sigs. I2v-I3v

[4] Alexandra Halasz also points out Nashe's awareness of "the graphics of the page" (1997:97).

[5] Images 1-4 are reproduced by permission of The Huntington Library, San Marino, California and the Early English Books Online (EEBO) database.

and then subjected to facetious comment. These comments are presented as vocal interpolations from a set of disputants and we shall return to them in a moment.

Nashe's awareness of the semiotic possibilities of print is not limited to the simulation of oral forms of expression. A little later in *Have With You* he uses a block of Roman capitals to re-create one of Harvey's "sentences" in marketplace terms as a dyer's sign.



Haue with you

Reſpon: In all his praiſes he is the moſt fore-ſpoken and vnfortunate vnder heauen, & thoſe whom he ſeruenteſt ſtriues to grace and honour, he moſt diſhonors and diſgraceth by ſome vncircumciſed ſluttiſh epithite or other: and euen to talke treaſon he may be drawn vnwares, and neuer haue anie ſuch intent, for want of diſcretion how to manage his words.

Bent: It is a common ſcoffe amongſt vs, to call anie fooliſh prodigall yong gallant, the gentleman or floure of curteſie; & (if it were wel ſcand) I am of the opinion, with the ſame purpoſe hee did it to ſcoffe and deride *Sir Philip Sidney*, in calling him the Gentleman of curteſie, and the verie Eſquire of induſtrie.

Reſpond: Poore tame-witted ſilly *Quirke*, on my conſcience I dare excuſe him hee had neuer anie ſuch thought, but did it in as meere earneſt, as euer in commendation of himſelfe and his brothers hee writ theſe two verſes,

Singular are theſe three, Iohn, Richard Gabriel Haruy,
For Logique, Philoſophie, Rhetorique, Aſtronomie.

as alſo in like innocent wel meaning added he this that enſues.

Oration.

His Entelechy was fine Greece, and the fineſt Tuſcaniſme in graine. Although I could tickle him with a contrarie preſident, where he caſts Tuſcaniſme, as a horrible crime in a Noble-mans teeth.

Carnead: Bodie of mee, this is worſe than all the reſt, he ſets foorth *Sir Philip Sidney* in the verie ſtyle of a Diers Signe. As if hee ſhould haue ſaid:

HEERE

to Saffron-walden.

HEERE WITHIN THIS PLACE IS ONE THAT DIETH ALL KINDE OF ENTELECHY IN FINE GREECE, AND THE FINEST TVSCANISME IN GRAINE THAT MAY BEE, OR ANY COLOVR ELSE YE WOLD DESIRE. AND SO GOD SAVE THE QVEENE.

Bentiu: More Copie, more Copie; we leeſe a great deale of time for want of Text.

Imp: Apace, out with it; and let vs nere ſtand pauſing or looking about, ſince we are thus far onward.

Oration.

But ſome had rather be a Pol-cat with a ſtinking ſtirre, than a Muske-cat with gracious fauour.

Bentiu: I ſmell him, I ſmell him: the wrongs that thou haſt offred him are ſo intollerable, as they would make a Cat ſpeake; therefore looke to it *Naſhe*, for with one Pol-cat perſume or another hee will poyſon thee, if he be not able to anſwere thee.

Carnead: Pol-cat and Muske cat? there wants but a Cat a mountaine, and then there would be old ſcratching.

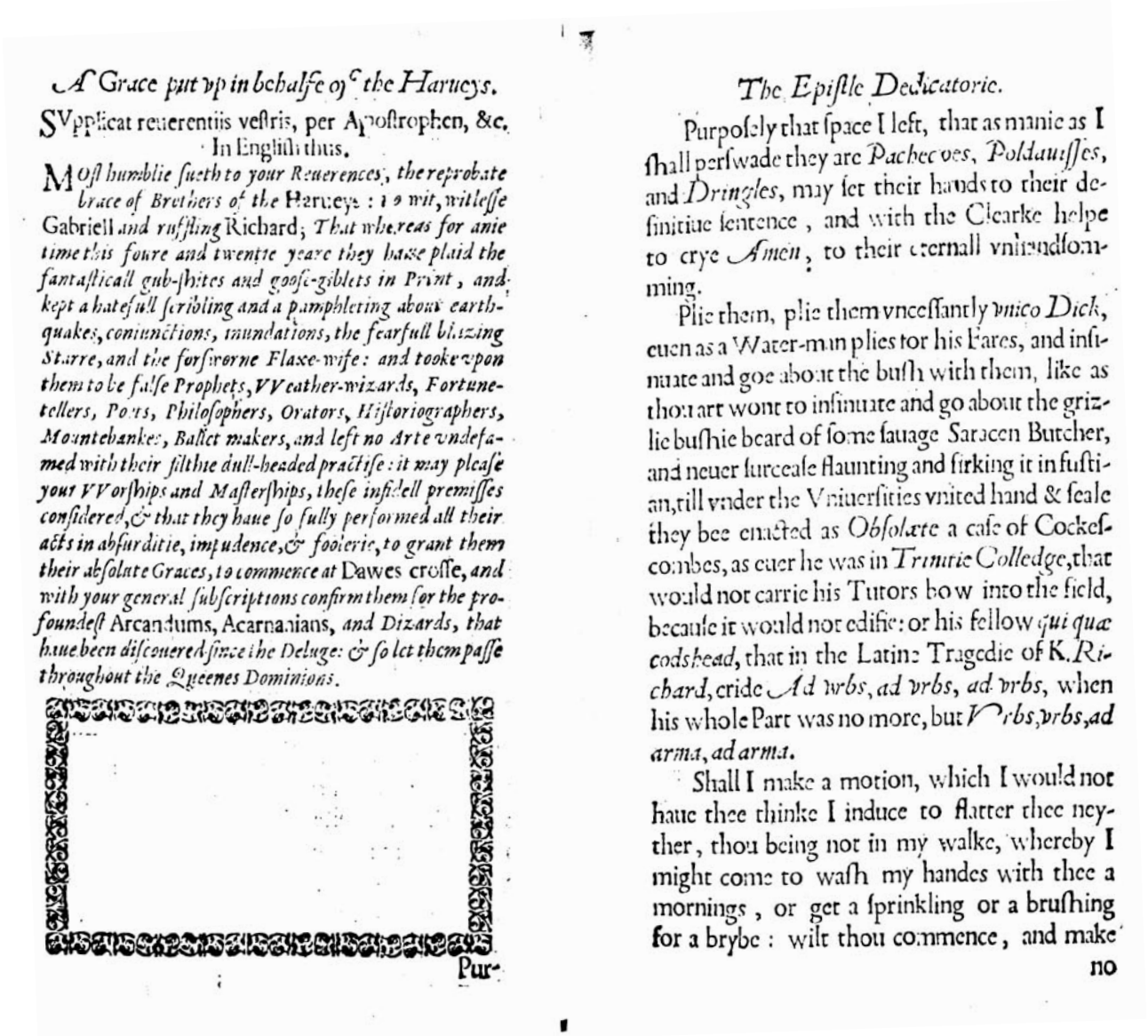
Bentiu: I but not onely no ordinarie Cat, but a Muske-cat; and not onely a Muske-cat, but a *Muske-cat with gracious fauour* (which ſounds like a Princes ſtile *Dei gratia*): not *Tibault* or *Iſegrim* Prince of Cattes, were euer endowed with the like Title.

H 3 *Reſpon:*

Thomas Nashe, *Have With You to Saffron-Walden* (1596), sigs. H1v-H3v

This is the visual equivalent of the street cries, and if fairground and market are important contexts for understanding the oral character of Nashe's writing, they are also important in determining its material form in print, as they show him experimenting with what we would now

call multimedia. The most remarkable instance of this is the blank space inserted in the epistle dedicatory that preludes *Have With You*.[6]



A Grace put vp in behalfe of the Harueys.

SVpplicat reuerentiis vestris, per Apostrophen, &c.
In English thus.

MOst humblie sueth to your Reuerences, the reprobate brace of Brothers of the Harueys: I o wit, witlesse Gabriell and ruffling Richard; That whereas for anie time this foure and twentie yeare they haue plaid the fantasticall gub-shites and goose-giblets in Print, and kept a hatefull scribling and a pamphleting about earthquakes, coniunctions, inundations, the fearfull blazing Starre, and the forsworne Flaxe-wife: and tooke vpon them to be false Prophets, VVeather-wizards, Fortune-tellers, Poets, Philosophers, Orators, Historiographers, Mountebankes, Ballet makers, and left no Arte vndefamed with their filthie dull-headed practise: it may please your VVorships and Masterships, these infidell premisses considered, & that they haue so fully performed all their acts in absurditie, impudence, & foolerie, to grant them their absolute Graces, to commence at Dawes crosse, and with your general subscriptions confirm them for the profoundest Arcandums, Acarnanians, and Dizards, that haue been discouered since the Deluge: & so let them passe throughout the Queenes Dominions.

Pur-

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

Purposely that space I left, that as manie as I shall perswade they are *Pachecoes*, *Poldauisses*, and *Dringles*, may set their hands to their definitiue sentence, and with the Clearke helpe to crye *Amen*, to their eternall vnfrendfomming.

Plie them, plie them vncessantly *vnico Dick*, euen as a Water-man plies for his Fares, and insinuate and goe about the bush with them, like as thou art wont to insinuate and go about the grizlie bushie beard of some sauage Saracen Butcher, and neuer surceasse flaunting and firking it in fustian, till vnder the Vniuersities vnited hand & seale they bee enacted as *Obsolete* a case of Cockescombes, as euer he was in *Trinitie Colledge*, that would not carrie his Tutors bow into the field, because it would not edifie: or his fellow *qui quæ codshead*, that in the Latine Tragedie of K. *Richard*, cride *Ad vrbs, ad vrbs, ad vrbs*, when his whole Part was no more, but *Vrbs, vrbs, ad arma, ad arma.*

Shall I make a motion, which I would not haue thee thinke I induce to flatter thee neyther, thou being not in my walke, whereby I might come to wash my handes with thee a mornings, or get a sprinkling or a brushing for a brybe: wilt thou commence, and make

no

Thomas Nashe, *Have With You to Saffron-Walden* (1596), sigs. B3v-B4v

Here Nashe invites his audience to add their own abuse of the hapless Harveys: "that space I left, that as manie as I shall perswade they are *Pachecoes*, *Poldauisses*, and *Dringles* may set their hands to their definitive sentence" (Nashe 1958:III, 13). We might see this in staunchly Elizabethan terms as an analogue of the stocks, though Nashe reminds us that "[s]pittle may be wip't off . . . but to be a villaine in print . . . is an attainder that will sticke by thee for euer" (Nashe 1958:III, 27). Or we might imagine the blank space as a wall waiting to be covered

[6] Nashe may well have borrowed the idea from the 1590 edition of Sidney's *Arcadia*. Here Basilus composes an "Epitaphe" for Amphialus, which is represented by a decorative border that occupies three-quarters of the page but with no content (sig. Rr7v). In the 1593 edition, it is filled in. (I am indebted to Alex Davis for this point.)

in graffiti. But if we give due credit to the resourcefulness of Nashe's manipulation of the media, then its true analogue would be the Facebook message board.

Nashe's inventiveness embraces both rhetorical and material form, and while it may be a little fanciful to present him as an Elizabethan precursor of Web 2.0, we can certainly see him as a practitioner of polyphonic technique. This is evident in the attacks on Harvey, as we have seen, and he provides an explicit account of his oral method in *Have With You To Saffron-Walden*: "I frame my whole Booke in the nature of a Dialogue," he explains.[7] The four disputants who share this dialogue are termed "interlocutors," while Nashe himself appears as an additional character in his "Piers Penniless" persona: "These foure, with my selfe, whom I personate as the Respondent in the last place, shall . . . clap up a *Colloquium* amongst them" (Nashe 1958:III, 23). We are back again in the world of fairground and market as Harvey's text is turned into a faux "oration" introduced by Nashe as "respondent": "Hem, cleare your throates and spit soundly; for now the pageant begins, and the stuffe by whole Cart-loads comes in." The interlocutors who throw in their abusive comments ("Marke, marke, a sentence, a sentence," "Theres two; keepe tally") also shout back warnings to the author himself: "looke to it, *Nashe*, for with one Polcat perfume or another hee will poyson thee, if he be not able to answere thee" (Nashe 1958:III, 42-43, 50). *Have With You* is peculiar in the lengths that it goes to in transforming written text into oral context, and it is polyphonic in the most obvious terms. But this polyphonic quality is apparent throughout his writing, including the proto-novelistic *The Unfortunate Traveller* (Jones 1983), which is structurally very different from the anti-Harvey polemics. Here Nashe interrupts his narrative with asides that are both oral: "There did I (soft, let me drinke before I go anie further)"; and physical: "my principal subject plucks me by the elbow." At one point, in a sudden flight of fancy, he switches into the persona of a church warden trying to get the bell ringers to stop pealing away: "Peace, peace, there in the belfry, let the service begin" (Nashe 1958:II, 209, 266, 234). Even as he calls for silence, Nashe conjures up the background clamor of his crowded, noisy texts.

Nashe's experimentation with the media of speech and print is intimately connected with his highly unstable relationship to both elite and popular culture, and I am certainly not suggesting that we should identify the oral only with popular culture. It would be quite wrong to think that in the sixteenth century there was a simple, hierarchical relationship between orality and literacy, and perhaps even more wrong to imagine a one-way direction from orality to literacy in terms of education. People who were unable to read nonetheless had access to printed texts and the extensive cross-fertilization between oral and literate cultures has been richly illustrated in studies by Adam Fox (2000) and by Fox and D. R. Woolf (2002). But we are also confronted by the paradox with regard to media evolution that the age in which rhetoric enjoyed its highest prestige since the early Roman empire coincides with the development of print culture in Europe. So there is not only a cross-fertilization between oral and literate cultures at the lowest level, in the market for printed ballads, for example, but also at the highest level, in the form of the academic disputation and the printed oration. University examinations were conducted orally. Some of the earliest books printed in England were collections of sayings.

[7] The Marprelate pamphlets are also referred to as a "Dialogue" in *Pasquill and Marforius* (1589), possibly also by Nashe (1958:I, 103).

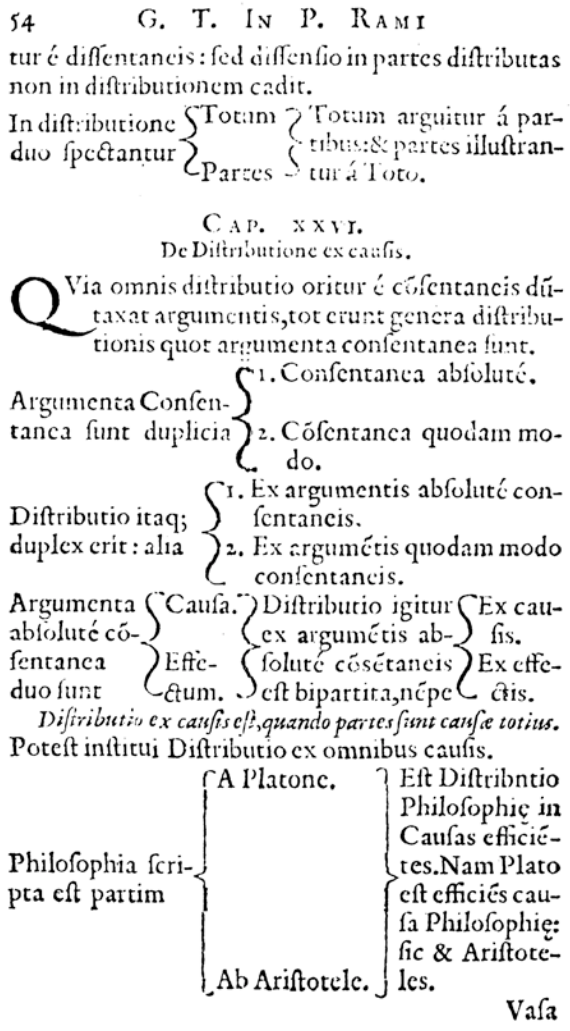
Erasmus's great publishing project, the *Adagia*, represented the full social range of this protean form from elite, well-chiseled aphorism to gloomy peasant wisdom.

All this is well known in general terms. The point of emphasizing it here, in the context of Nashe, is to show that while he might at first seem far too idiosyncratic to function as a representative figure in the way that McLuhan intended, his negotiations between elite and popular cultures and between orality and print in fact make him almost an exemplary figure for late sixteenth-century England. On the one hand, he can confide in the reader that "When I was a little childe, I was a great auditor of . . . aged mumping beldams as they sat warming their knees over a coale" (Nashe 1958:I, 369), advertising his delight in oral tradition. On the other hand, he can proudly lecture the students of Oxford and Cambridge on the "perfect methode of studie" advanced by scholars such as Cheke and Ascham (Nashe 1958:III, 317). What is surprising as far as McLuhan is concerned is that his interest in Nashe at this stage was largely confined to the elite aspects of his work. Certainly, he recognized the oral character of Nashe's writing. He begins the section on Nashe and rhetoric with the statement that "Nashe regarded himself as a professional orator and so did his contemporaries" (McLuhan 2006:235). But his Ph.D. shows little awareness either of Nashe's devotion to old wives' tales or of his more sophisticated simulation of popular oral forms in print. Instead, he quotes Nashe's claim to be "*tragicus Orator*" and asserts that "wherever one looks in Nashe, one encounters the figures of the high style" (Nashe 1958:III, 152; McLuhan 2006:242). For the young McLuhan, then, the importance of Nashe did not lie in his complex engagements with popular culture.

Coming to McLuhan's thesis with knowledge of all his subsequent interests in popular culture and the media, this will seem rather paradoxical. He does, after all, begin by calling him "Nashe the journalist." But a key sentence of the introduction to the thesis points us to an explanation: "When we have witnessed the extraordinary anti-Ciceronian movement which emerges in Machiavelli, Vives, Ramus, Montaigne, Muret, Lipsius, Descartes and which gives us our post-Renaissance world, we shall have completed our survey of the revolutions in education and culture which carry us from Isocrates to Nashe" (McLuhan 2006:8). What McLuhan wanted to do was to trace the development of a humanist curriculum based upon the language arts from antiquity through to the late Renaissance. Nashe represented the continuity of that tradition, and McLuhan claimed, revealing his Catholicism, that "Nashe's writings present an almost uninterrupted texture of patristic implication" (213). In the list of writers McLuhan identifies as being responsible for the post-Renaissance world, the important one in the present context is Ramus. McLuhan saw Nashe as the defender of patristic humanism against Ramist dialectic and its Puritan supporters. It is Nashe's anti-Ramist stance that provides McLuhan with the main theme of his final chapter, from the quarrel with Harvey onwards. In fact, despite apparently changing the subject, you could say that he did write his original "Arrest of Tudor Prose" thesis after all.

It is true that Nashe was fiercely antagonistic to Ramus. He attacks his "newe found toyes" and his "rayling" in *The Anatomie of Absurditie* (there is undoubtedly a case of the pot and kettle here); he mocks him for taking sixteen years to write his *Dialectic* in the preface to *Menaphon*; and, assuming that Nashe is the author of *An Almond for a Parrat*, one of the accusations he makes against John Penry, the man he identifies as Martin Marprelate, is that he has been "such a new-fangled friend unto Ramus" (Nashe 1958:I, 43; III, 313; 368). For

McLuhan, Ramus is the key to the quarrel between Nashe and Harvey: the latter was "tied to the scholastic Ramus, whereas Nashe belonged to the party of the ancients who were defending the cause of the reformed grammatical theology of Erasmus" (McLuhan 2006:211).[8] What Nashe was defending, in McLuhan's view, was the essential unity of the trivium, which had been broken up by Ramus when he transferred the first two parts of rhetoric (invention and distribution) to logic: "Nashe marks out for especial attack the Ramists 'who woulde separate Arts from Eloquence,'" McLuhan writes (Nashe 1958:I, 45; McLuhan 2006:214). The threefold unity of the trivium held special significance for McLuhan because it mirrored the Holy Trinity, a resemblance implied in the phrase "grammatical theology." Theology provides the backbone of McLuhan's argument that Nashe stood for the wholeness of the arts curriculum, now under threat from Ramus, and it also permeated his later ideas about media and environment. Here, though, the crucial point has to do with orality and literacy.



54 G. T. In P. Rami

tur é diſſentaneis: ſed diſſenſio in partes diſtributas non in diſtributionem cadit.

In diſtributione duo ſpectantur: Totum / Partes — Totum arguitur á partibus: & partes illuſtrantur á Toto.

Cap. xxvi.

De Diſtributione ex cauſis.

QVia omnis diſtributio oritur é cõſentaneis dũtaxat argumentis, tot erunt genera diſtributionis quot argumenta conſentanea ſunt.

Argumenta Conſentanea ſunt duplicia: 1. Conſentanea abſoluté. 2. Cõſentanea quodam modo.

Diſtributio itaq; duplex erit: alia 1. Ex argumentis abſoluté conſentaneis. 2. Ex argumẽtis quodam modo conſentaneis.

Argumenta abſoluté cõſentanea duo ſunt: Cauſa. Effectum. — Diſtributio igitur ex argumẽtis abſoluté cõsẽtaneis eſt bipartita, nẽpe Ex cauſis. Ex effectis.

Diſtributio ex cauſis eſt, quando partes ſunt cauſæ totius.

Poteſt inſtitui Diſtributio ex omnibus cauſis.

Philoſophia ſcripta eſt partim: A Platone. Ab Ariſtotele. — Eſt Diſtribntio Philoſophię in Cauſas efficiẽtes. Nam Plato eſt efficiẽs cauſa Philoſophię: ſic & Ariſtoteles.

Vaſa

Petrus Ramus, *Dialecticae libri duo* (Cambridge, 1584), p. 54

One remark of Nashe's that neither McLuhan nor Nashe's great editor, R. B. McKerrow, commented on is the apology he makes to his readers at the end of *The Anatomie of Absurditie*, "for setting down such Rams horne rules of direction" (Nashe 1958:I, 48). This is surely a pun on "Ramus" and it seems to allude to Ramus' other most famous innovation, which was the introduction of "method" whereby the arts were separated according to their special functions through a series of binary divisions. In printed textbooks the most characteristic feature of Ramist method is the profusion of curly "rams horn" brackets.[9] We have seen how Nashe used typography to reconstruct an apparently oral medium, something that McLuhan was to emulate in his 1960s publications. Here, however, Nashe's reference to the ram's horn brackets points in exactly the opposite direction: to the emergence of a print culture that would obliterate the old

[8] The text of the Ph.D. reads "party" here (McLuhan 1943:354).

[9] There are other ways of reading the image: Ramist brackets resemble the horns of highland cattle more closely than they do rams' horns, which spiral like the "at" sign of an e-mail address. If Nashe is imagining the latter, then "Rams horne rules of direction" would take you round in circles. However, the phrase seems to me more likely to suggest linearity. I am grateful to Sarah Knight for pointing out that hornbooks used rams' horn, which is almost certainly part of the pun.

oral world. This is ultimately what was at stake in McLuhan's thesis, but it was not McLuhan who pursued the point to that conclusion. He wrote his thesis not at Cambridge but at St. Louis University, where he had secured a post in the English department. There in 1937 he supervised the young Walter Ong for his Masters thesis on sprung rhythm in Gerard Manley Hopkins and then saw him off to Harvard with the germ of an idea for a quite different topic.[10] This work, eventually published as *Ramus, Method and the Decay of Dialogue* (1958), is the source of the now familiar ideas (ones that have been frequently re-examined, I should add) that the print medium created a new sense of space, developing the visual at the expense of the oral, encouraging linear thinking, closure, and the interiorization of the world. "From the Art of Discourse to the Art of Reason" was the subtitle of Ong's influential work. But it was McLuhan who suggested Ramus to Ong in the first place, and it was Nashe who suggested Ramus to McLuhan. Nashe is really the source of the central theses of what is sometimes called the Orality/Literacy school.

Four years after the appearance of Ong's work, McLuhan published *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, where both Nashe and Ramus resurfaced in strikingly antithetical roles. Ramus' exploitation of the new medium of print had a "homogenizing" effect on students, he claimed: "students processed by print technology in this way would be able to translate every kind of problem and experience into the new visual kind of lineal order" (1962:146). Linearity is what Nashe himself detected in his reference to those ram's horn *rules of direction* [my italics], and McLuhan adopted what he called his "mosaic" approach in *The Gutenberg Galaxy* specifically to do battle against the great enemy of linear thinking. Here, Nashe is his champion. McLuhan represents him with the bravura passage on the drowning of Leander from *Lenten Stuffe*, comparing it with a Louis Armstrong trumpet solo. The analogy develops the point about Nashe's "extemporal vaine" made at the very start of his thesis at the same time as it translates Nashe's writing into sound effect in precise contrast to the new visual order for which he holds Ramus responsible. The headline for his section on Nashe runs "The oral polyphony of the prose of Nashe offends against lineal and literary decorum" (1962:201-2).[11] This is McLuhan's last word on Nashe, the distillation of his entire Ph.D., twenty years on, after its premises had been filtered through Ong's research on Ramus and McLuhan's own thinking about the modern media. But it also takes him into new territory, completely unexplored in the thesis. The oral polyphony that McLuhan recognized in Nashe, and which we glanced at earlier, is what Bakhtin recognized first in Dostoevsky and later in Rabelais as he merged his own theory of polyphony with a concept of the carnivalesque. But McLuhan seems to have reached this point quite independently of Bakhtin, since his Rabelais study was first translated into English in 1968 and Dostoevsky in 1973.

The Gutenberg Galaxy was the book that launched McLuhan as a 1960s intellectual celebrity. In 1968, at the radical climax of the sixties, Penguin published *McLuhan Hot & Cool*, subtitled "a primer for the understanding of . . . McLuhan," which offered a symposium of

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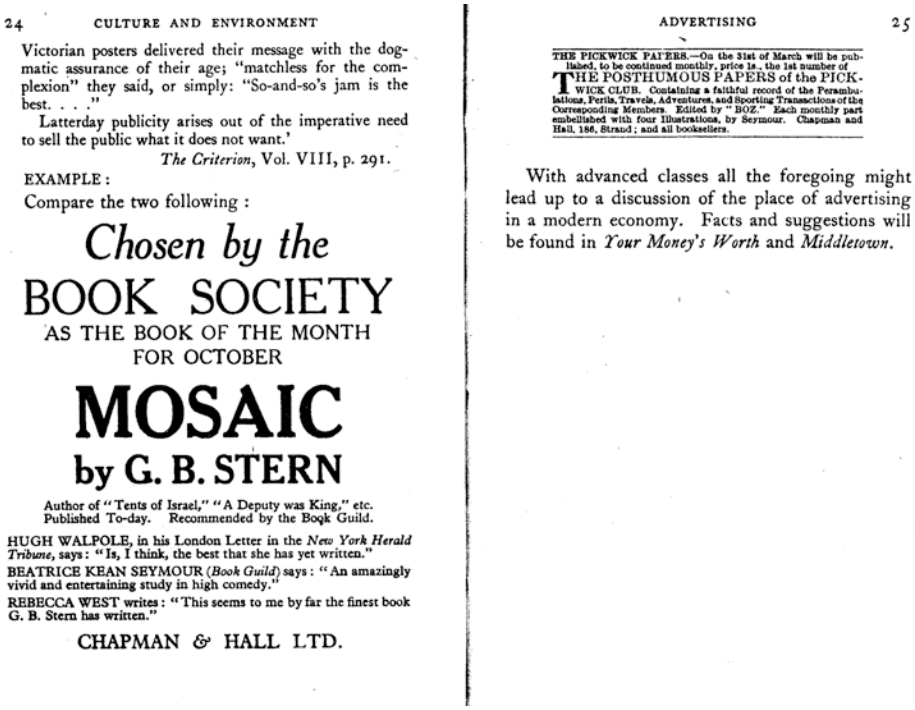
[10] Ong dedicated his *Ramus and Talon Inventory* (1958a) to McLuhan and recalled McLuhan's early days as a teacher of English in Sanderson and Macdonald (1989).

[11] The previous section is captioned "The divorce of poetry and music was first reflected by the printed page."

commentary on the semiotics of popular culture, media and society, the death of the book, and the new orality of the electronic age (Stearn 1968). The following year, in an interview with *Playboy* magazine (which had some intellectual pretensions in those days), McLuhan himself commented on the apparent discrepancy between his earlier self and his re-invention as an exponent of media and popular culture (McLuhan and Zingrone 1995:265):

> For many years, until I wrote my first book, *The Mechanical Bride* [on the semiotics of advertising, in 1951], I adopted an extremely moralistic approach to all environmental technology. I loathed machinery, I abominated cities, I equated the Industrial Revolution with original sin and mass media with the Fall. In short, I rejected almost every element of modern life in favor of a Rousseauvian utopianism. But gradually I perceived how sterile and useless this attitude was . . . I realized that artistic creation is the playback of ordinary experience—from trash to treasures. I ceased being a moralist and became a student.

This is a rare moment of insight into the two sides of McLuhan—his extreme conservatism and his ultra-modernity, his devotion both to high art and to popular forms of expression. The origins of this division can be traced back to McLuhan's Cambridge period and, in particular, to Leavis and Thompson's *Culture and Environment* (1933). This book laments the "Loss of the Organic Community" and explains that "the great agent of change, and from our point of view, destruction, has of course been the machine," and it is almost certainly this that McLuhan was recalling in the *Playboy* interview (Leavis and Thompson 1933:3; Marchand 1989:35). But *Culture and Environment* is also centrally concerned with the language of advertising and applies close reading techniques to this aspect of modern mass culture. What is more, it reproduces examples of commercial typography to support its arguments. This book is undoubtedly a source for McLuhan's first foray into media studies with *The Mechanical Bride*, but it is quite possibly, and fortuitously, also a source for McLuhan's adoption of the term "mosaic" in *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (see image 5).



24 CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Victorian posters delivered their message with the dogmatic assurance of their age; "matchless for the complexion" they said, or simply: "So-and-so's jam is the best. . . ."

Latterday publicity arises out of the imperative need to sell the public what it does not want.'

The Criterion, Vol. VIII, p. 291.

EXAMPLE:

Compare the two following:

Chosen by the
BOOK SOCIETY
AS THE BOOK OF THE MONTH
FOR OCTOBER
MOSAIC
by G. B. STERN
Author of "Tents of Israel," "A Deputy was King," etc.
Published To-day. Recommended by the Book Guild.

HUGH WALPOLE, in his London Letter in the *New York Herald Tribune*, says: "Is, I think, the best that she has yet written."

BEATRICE KEAN SEYMOUR (*Book Guild*) says: "An amazingly vivid and entertaining study in high comedy."

REBECCA WEST writes: "This seems to me by far the finest book G. B. Stern has written."

CHAPMAN & HALL LTD.

ADVERTISING 25

THE PICKWICK PAPERS.—On the 31st of March will be published, to be continued monthly, price 1s., the 1st number of THE POSTHUMOUS PAPERS of the PICKWICK CLUB. Containing a faithful record of the Perambulations, Perils, Travels, Adventures, and Sporting Transactions of the Corresponding Members. Edited by "BOZ." Each monthly part embellished with four Illustrations, by Seymour. Chapman and Hall, 186, Strand; and all booksellers.

With advanced classes all the foregoing might lead up to a discussion of the place of advertising in a modern economy. Facts and suggestions will be found in *Your Money's Worth* and *Middletown*.

Leavis and Thompson, *Culture and Environment*, pp. 24-25

There are other, more general kinds of overlap between McLuhan's

traditionalist and modern personae. He himself reminded his audience from time to time that there is really no great contradiction in studying both classical communications theory and the modern media; in the end, it's all rhetoric. He was, anyway, halfway there when he referred in his thesis to "the revolutions in education and culture that carry us from Isocrates to Nashe," where to many ears "Nashe" might have sounded a note of *bathos* in such elevated company. Nor did he put this work behind him after discovering modern popular culture. His son, Eric McLuhan, recalls that in June 1974, after bursting a blood vessel and being admitted to hospital with spectacular bleeding, his father still wanted to go back to the Ph.D.: "Between nurses, we went through Nashe" (Gordon 1997:275).

Although Nashe himself disappears from view in McLuhan after *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, the effects of his early immersion in Nashe's writing can be seen to pervade his work in ways that go far beyond the rather limited role assigned to him in the Ph.D. Perhaps the most specific link between McLuhan's thesis and his later interests lies in the concept of secondary orality. The term itself was invented by Ong, but the idea is fundamental to much of McLuhan's commentary on the modern media. It appears in Ong's book, *Rhetoric, Romance, and Technology*, where he uses it to distinguish between the pristine orality of pre-literate cultures and the kind of orality produced by the electronic media in advanced technological cultures (1971:20; 285), and the distinction is at work throughout his later, summative volume, *Orality and Literacy* (1982). What I want to argue here is that Nashe uses print itself as a form of secondary orality. That he does so will be apparent, I hope, from my discussion of the anti-Harvey pamphlets where Nashe reconfigures his own book as performance in order to contrast it with the ponderous materiality of Harvey's printed tome. But as well as using print to reveal oral literary form, Nashe is also interested in print as a medium for communicating the aural qualities of speech—in the sound effects of print, in fact. Ramus's rules of direction point towards the silent reader, but Nashe's polyphony creates voices in the head. Rhetoric had always recognized the importance of sound effect in the importance it attached to *pronuntiatio*, but even when it was designed for writing instruction and for print, rather than for speech performance, rhetoric retained its oral and aural character. Ong himself recognized this when he wrote that the styles of both Lyly and Nashe "are clearly devised for their effect on the ear and thus are oral in a real sense, but . . . titillation of the ear is not necessarily residual oralism: it can be a new and conscious sophistication" (Ong 1971:42). Though he does not say so, this *aural* sophistication, delivered through print, is what he defines elsewhere as secondary orality, and it is succinctly illustrated in McLuhan's characterization of Nashe's prose as jazz.

The work of both McLuhan and Ong has been attacked from very different positions. On the one hand, anthropologists such as Ruth Finnegan have claimed that it represents a kind of technological determinism in which orality is viewed as an essentially primitive condition to be superseded by writing and print, which are then claimed as the precondition for democracy, individualism, and all the other characteristics of Western civilization (Finnegan 1988:141, 146). Literary scholars, on the other hand, have tended to see—for good or ill—an underlying sentimentalization of the oral in McLuhan and Ong. David Norbrook, for example, writes rather acidly: "Literary critics seem particularly susceptible to the charm of an era before the curse of mass literacy. The writings of Mikhail Bakhtin, Marshall McLuhan and Walter J. Ong have given renewed authority to the argument that the best features of Renaissance literature derived not

from intellectually innovative currents, but from residual elements of the old 'oral' culture" (Norbrook 2002:8). The point about "the curse of mass literacy" is well made, and Norbrook is right to see affinities between McLuhan and Bakhtin. But it also attributes a naivety to both McLuhan and Ong that is unwarranted. Ong stated quite clearly in his most widely read book: "Orality is not an ideal, and never was. To approach it positively is not to advocate it as a permanent state for any culture. Literacy opens possibilities to the word and to human existence unimaginable without writing" (1982:175). McLuhan's own self-appraisal with regard to the unspoiled wholeness of pre-technological man is evident in the *Playboy* interview.

A more extensive critique of the Orality/Literacy school has been offered by another literary scholar, Timothy Clark, from a Derridean standpoint. Clark argues that the idealization of oral culture by McLuhan and Ong derives from late eighteenth-century ideas about communal forms of expression and cultural wholeness that combine with print culture to produce "a kind of internalised oratory" (T. Clark 1999:62-63).[12] This Romantic reinstatement of the oral as the basis for restoring our fully human selves is predicated upon an "essentialist anthropocentrism" that our modern understanding of the relationship between biology and technology must now deconstruct (67). Clark's argument is historically detailed and much of his discussion of McLuhan and Ong is persuasively aligned with the proto-Romantic cult of the oral in Rousseau, Herder, and elocutionists such as Thomas Sheridan. His account of the conflation of oral "affect" with the internalizing features of print culture in the later eighteenth century is particularly deft. But his conclusion that Ong refused to countenance "a potentially deconstructive understanding of the human as an unstable hybrid of the psychic and the technic" through the advance of prosthetics could not fairly be extended to McLuhan (*idem*). McLuhan's premise was that "speech was the first technology," and he also recognized that "the very instantaneous nature of co-existence among our technological instruments has created a crisis quite new in human history. Our extended faculties and senses now constitute a single field of experience" **(**McLuhan 1964:63; 1962:5**)**. And there are many points where McLuhan explicitly resists the charge that Clark makes against Ong; for example, "You are the content of any extension of yourself, whether it be pin or pen, pencil or sword, be it palace or page, song or dance or speech . . . . The meaning of all these is the experience of using these extensions of yourself" (McLuhan and Zingrone 1995:280). McLuhan was a Catholic, like Ong of course, but it would certainly be untrue to suggest that he was unaware of the implications of technology for our very concept of the human. Indeed, the subtitle of *Understanding Media*—"The extensions of man"—is an indication of how central the idea of the prosthetic was to McLuhan's thought.[13]

This would seem to have taken us a long way from Nashe, but it was Nashe who pointed McLuhan in this direction and the experience of reading him in depth for his Ph.D. had a slow burn. Nashe's opposition to Ramus helped to formulate the oral culture/print culture distinctions of both McLuhan and Ong, while Nashe's own experiments with print culture had an impact on McLuhan's later ideas about the oral and acoustic aspects of the media and (as Ong termed it)

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[12] For Ong's own critique of Derrida on words as sounds and words as signs, see Ong 1982:75-77.

[13] The essay "The Gadget Lover: Narcissus as Narcosis" is an especially good source of illustration: "With the arrival of electric technology, man extended, or set outside himself, a live model of the central nervous system itself . . . . Man becomes, as it were, the sex organs of the machine world" (McLuhan 1964:47, 51).

"secondary orality." Nashe's oral personae of showman and mountebank, derived from fairground and marketplace, do not simply provide stylistic models for McLuhan (though they probably do that too); they also direct him toward popular culture and the language of advertising. It is Nashe who informs McLuhan's understanding of textual polyphony. And when we put McLuhan's thesis in the context of 1930s Cambridge English, with I. A. Richards on close reading and Leavis and Thompson on culture and environment, it is not difficult to trace the path that led to what might have seemed a complete intellectual makeover. It would be stretching the point too far to suggest that Nashe, even with his blank message board, was responsible for McLuhan's anticipation of the electronic interdependence of the global village, though other aspects of his thesis, such as his interest in the medieval Book of Nature, point very much in that direction.[14] Ultimately, perhaps the most fundamental affinity between Nashe and McLuhan lies both in their complex relationships with both elite and popular culture and in their ability to face in opposite directions at the same time: backward to the imaginary wholeness of oral tradition and the world of discourse and dialogue, and forward to the world of secondary orality and the modern media.

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[14] On McLuhan and the Internet, see Levinson 1999; on the Internet and the Book of Nature, see Rhodes 2000.

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Oral Tradition, 24/2 (2009): 393-414

James Macpherson's Ossian Poems, Oral Traditions, and the Invention of Voice

James Mulholland

The Invention of Voice and the Intimacy of the Oral Text

When James Macpherson's *Fragments of Ancient Poetry, Collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and Translated from the Galic or Erse Language* appeared in 1760, it was greeted with widespread approval. Macpherson's collection purported to translate the work of Ossian, a semi-mythical third-century C. E. Scottish bard in the mold of Homer, who preserved his culture's traditions in song. The claim that this collection was the "genuine remains of ancient Scottish poetry" attracted passionate adherents (Macpherson 1966:A2). For nationalistic Scots, Ossian provided a tantalizing image of an advanced culture comparable to and contemporaneous with those of classical Greece and Rome. For many English authors, Ossian served as an example of native British creativity that superseded the neoclassicism of the early eighteenth century.[1] Thomas Gray declared, for example, that he was in "extasie" after reading the Ossian poems and characterized Macpherson as a thrilling "demon" of poetry (Gray 1935:ii, 680). This "extasie" partly inspired Gray to compose his own imitations of Norse and Celtic folktales. Ossian's popularity traveled widely outside of Great Britain; prominent literary and political figures, including the German author Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Thomas Jefferson, and Napoleon Bonaparte offered enthusiastic assessments of the sentimentality and humanity that they saw in the poems.

The fervor of such readers was met with equally forceful skepticism. Many critics suggested that Macpherson fabricated Ossian and forged his poems to succeed in a literary marketplace that had largely ignored his earlier publications.[2] Samuel Johnson unequivocally asserted that the poems cannot be "genuine remains" because, he believed, it was impossible for oral transmission to preserve poetry of any considerable length or cultural traditions of any complexity (Johnson and Boswell 1984:113-14). He argued that they were "too long to have been remembered" by an ancient people who, he thought, had not developed writing and therefore must have been uncivilized (Johnson 2000:637-38). He insinuated that the Scots' desire

[1] For the most complete consideration of this "native" British tradition, see Weinbrot 1993.

[2] For a description of these assessments, see Stafford 1988:40-60, 79-80.

to reclaim ancient traditions, and thus neutralize the intense English colonialism that followed the failed Jacobite uprising in 1745, made them susceptible to Macpherson's cunning forgery.

Controversies over the legitimacy of Macpherson's Ossian poems are an essential part of their literary reception and cultural meaning. These persistent debates, however, obscure the role that Macpherson plays in the emergence of modern British poetic voice. Macpherson's Ossian is more than an example of native creativity or Scottish nationalism; the Ossian poems are the best-known instance of a wider tendency shared by many mid- and late eighteenth-century authors to make oral traditions—considered politically and geographically marginal to civilized Britain—central to the period's most innovative poetic experiments. These experiments sought out alternate modes of inspiration in folk culture as a way to counteract what Susan Stewart calls the eighteenth century's crisis in authenticity (Stewart 1991:105). Enlightenment Britain is often associated by modern scholars with the emergence of a viable literary marketplace and the category of the professional writer.[3] But many authors felt that the impersonality and rationality of the marketplace increasingly disconnected them from their readers and eroded the vibrancy of their creative imagination. Authors like Gray, Macpherson, William Collins, Robert Burns, and Felicia Hemans, among many others, responded to this crisis by encompassing oral traditions and embodying its voices within their printed texts. Oral voices presented models of authentic speech that defused the sense that authors were anonymous and distanced from their readers. They were so appealing, therefore, because they promoted an image of artistic expression based on the shared intimacy of communal relationships and the immediacy of face-to-face contact. Collins, for example, depicts the speaker of his 1749 "An Ode to a Friend on his Return &c" as a medium for the songs of ancient Scottish bards whose voices he records in his text and transmits to English readers (Lonsdale 1977:167-73; 52-58). Collins insinuates that by reading his poem the audience is able to "hear" these bards sing again. Thematizing the English poem as a conduit for bards' voices also structures Gray's 1757 "The Bard. A Pindaric Ode," in which he imitates the prosody of Welsh oral poetry, thereby impersonating the bardic voice while distinguishing it from other voices in the poem through quotation marks, tense shifts, and metrical variation. Gray attempts to reform the way that authors and readers relate through texts by offering them an aural experience of the bardic past.[4] These idealized depictions of oral performance as collective belonging are an alternative to the detached feeling associated with print circulation.

Eighteenth-century authors resolve this feeling of detachment by developing "printed voices" that try to transfer to the text the passion, the wildness, and the sense of connection that they perceive to exist in oral performance. The term "printed voice" refers to the process whereby readers create a voice during the act of reading that renders the lines of the poem as verbal enunciations. This voice is not the same as the author's speaking voice, but is an essential

[3] See Zionkowksi 2001:1-23 and Hess 2005:1-34. Zionkowski discusses the "professionalization" of authorship and the rejection of the marketplace by certain authors, like Gray, and the embracing of the marketplace by others, like Johnson (23).

[4] For a fuller exposition of this argument, see Mulholland 2008.

part of the imaginative act that aims to turn readers into auditors.[5] By transforming the content of folk traditions and by approximating the perceived effects of oral voice in their printed poems, authors position themselves as mediators of oral cultures' authenticity. Printed voices, however, cannot duplicate the advantages of embodied performance and vocalized sound. Instead, authors must simulate presence, which requires that they generate literary and typographical techniques alert to the representation of different voices.

The Ossian poems are an essential turning point in this century-long experiment. Within the complicated interaction of oral performance and printed media, Macpherson elevates the storytelling traditions of the Highlands to the level of impassioned art. While Macpherson claims that he uncovers and translates the traditions of Scotland, examining the Ossian poems as a printed object reveals that he actually reconstructs these traditions by using literary devices such as personification, mode of address, and diacritical indicators like quotations marks. He then fashions printed voices that emulate bardic speech and the intimacy of their implied audiences. The narrative style of the *Fragments*, and of Macpherson's two-volume expansion of the Ossian myth *Fingal* (1762) and *Temora* (1763),[6] elaborates conventions that imitate the characteristics of oral discourse, particularly the use of repetition and tense shifts, to create "restored voices," those moments when the text approximates the experience of aural reception for its readers. Through these highly deliberate techniques, Macpherson imbues the act of reading with the illusion of a distinctly aural/auditory dimension.

In summoning the spirit of bardic voice, Macpherson's Ossian poems give rise to a new conceptualization of poetic voice, of how it functions, and of its derivative relationship to oral traditions. Macpherson, by using printed voices to invent an oral tradition, simultaneously fashions a historical context and a series of readerly effects caused by and circumscribed within the text. And by reproducing the relationship between oral performers and their auditors, Macpherson seeks to access the specificity of exotic cultures to create a literate medium that reinvigorates readers' experiences of text. His emphasis on making texts that look back to traditional cultural forms is a crucial point in the emergence of modern British poetry and provides an alternate understanding of the "reciprocal" relationship between orality and literacy.[7]

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[5] I have borrowed the term "printed voice" from Eric Griffiths, who argues that the "provision of voices for lines of print has to be done with every text" and that this is fundamentally an "exercise of imagination" (1989:7). He points out the "poet's voice is not the voice of the person who is the poet" and the "voice is that which is decided in reading a text" (67). It is this act of "imaginative voicing" that turns readers into an audience (38).

[6] Both *Fingal* and *Temora* are cited from Moore 2004.

[7] Increasingly, orality and literacy have been seen as existing in a reciprocal relationship. For more, see in particular Fox 2000 and Hudson 2001.

Poetry Addiction: Primitive Passion and the Ideology of Authentic Voice

As print became the dominant mode of cultural production in eighteenth-century Britain, scholars of the period identified it as separate from oral traditions. The difference between oral and literate became linked to other binaries, including the perceived dissimilarity between the past and the present, between uncivilized and civilized, and between the primitive and the refined.[8] As authors began to consider the manner in which print could capture and represent these traditions, their interest in orality coincided with (and occurred in response to) the complex perceptions they held of more peripheral locales like the Scottish Highlands, Scandinavia, Persia, and India as oral counterparts to Britain's printed modernity. In the context of an expanding literary marketplace, eighteenth-century writers reflected on the process of cultural mediation whereby poetry could translate oral difference into a printed medium.

The interest in translating cultural differences through literary forms produced what the eighteenth-century antiquarian William Shenstone described as an enormous "appetite" for "foreign poetry," particularly Scottish Gaelic poetry as well as translations of Norse, Welsh, and Germanic folk traditions.[9] This "appetite" was aided by the publication of scholarly tools—such as dictionaries and grammar books—that spurred new concern with and comprehension of non-English verse. The Gaelic ballad traditions that motivated the Ossian poems had existed in Scotland for centuries, but the success of Scottish verse and song collections like Allan Ramsay's *The Ever Green* (1724) and *The Tea-Table Miscellany* (1724) popularized these traditions among English readers outside of Scotland. While growing up in the Highlands, Macpherson, a native Gaelic speaker, may have come into contact with these ballads. As an adult, he traveled extensively through the Highlands where he said he collected manuscripts and interviewed other Gaelic speakers. After publishing the *Fragments*, a series of fifteen brief prose poems that were supposedly extracts of a larger Scottish epic, Macpherson went back to the Highlands to conduct more research, returning to Edinburgh with "two ponies laden with manuscripts" (Stafford 1988:115-23).[10] These manuscripts, he claimed, allowed him to expand his earlier collection, the *Fragments*, into *Fingal* and *Temora*, an epic poem that depicts the Scottish past as replete with supernatural voices, honorable warfare, and a sentimental warrior-king, Fingal, whose heroic accomplishments were recorded and memorialized by his son, Ossian, who acts as the original bardic performer of these poems.

It is impossible to confirm the veracity of Macpherson's claim that his Ossian poems originate in Scotland's oral traditions, but there is ample evidence for the continued existence of these traditions during the eighteenth century. Gaelic ballads, which provide much of the source material for the characters and plots of Ossian, had endured for over seven hundred years by the time Macpherson arrived in the Highlands for his proto-anthropological trip. This tradition, Donald Meek argues, was an important source of cultural creativity in Scotland and thus "enjoy[ed] a conspicuous place" of "respect" (1991:20). Despite significant revisions between

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[8] For a discussion of many of these oppositions, see McDowell 2007.

[9] William Shenstone made this remark in a letter; see Ross 2001:7.

[10] For more on this episode, see Groom 1999:78, 113-32.

the medieval period and the eighteenth century, these ballads maintained their "intrinsic vitality" (*ibid.*:43). Macpherson drew on this vitality as he composed the printed voices of his poems.

While traveling in the Highlands collecting manuscripts and speaking with Gaelic ballad performers, Macpherson likely heard songs such as "La Tha Dha'n Fhinn Am Beinn Iongnaidh." This song is part of a subset of the Gaelic ballad tradition that dates from twelfth-century Ireland and recounts the deeds of Fingal.[11] "La Tha Dha'n Fhinn Am Beinn Iongnaidh" tells of "the day when the Fenians [Fingal's people] were in the Mountain of Marvels."[12] It repeats images of ferocious warriors (the Fenians are described as "fierce men") and beautiful women (the song contains references to a "lovely maid" and a "honey-sweet girl with beguiling eyes"), chivalric characterizations that reappear throughout Ossian. Though performed by one singer, "La Tha Dha'n Fhinn Am Beinn Iongnaidh" contains multiple voices, and the song oscillates between first-person and third-person address as the singer moves between the subjectivities of its characters. In the version included here, the performer chants the words and regularizes the tempo.[13] As her voice urgently rushes through the song, she negotiates a series of related speaking positions, each of which possesses its own grammatical procedures and storytelling conventions. While there is no evidence that Macpherson heard this specific ballad on his trip, it provides insight into the tone and formal complexity of the folktales that are an imaginative origin of his Ossian.[14]

"Latha dha'n Fhinn am Beinn Iongnaidh." In *Music from the Western Isles*. Scottish Tradition Series, 2. Edinburgh: Greentrax Records, 1992.

By claiming that the *Fragments* (and the Ossian poems more generally) are "genuine remains," Macpherson invests these folk traditions with the sense that they are an authentic historical record of ancient Scotland. For Macpherson and his supporters, oral traditions function both as an artistic performance and as an accurate account of the past. The ideology of the Ossian

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[11] There was a significant connection between the folk cultures of Ireland and Scotland during the medieval period. As Alan Bruford has remarked, these Fenian lays are narratives upon related subjects that participated in both literate and oral modes. Composed in the "literary syllabic meters" of the medieval period, "though perhaps not to the standards required of poets of the first rank," they "were probably not written down until they were recorded from oral tradition in the past two centuries" (1987:27). Bardic poetry of this period was designed, Bruford says, "primarily to be learned and chanted publicly by a professional reciter (*reacaire)*, not normally its composer, and might or might not then be written down in a manuscript book of poems (*duanaire*) by a scribe, to preserve it for future generations in case it died out in the more highly valued oral tradition" (27).

[12] This particular version is sung by Mrs. Archie MacDonald. There is little evidence of how eighteenth-century epic traditions sounded. What records remain exist primarily as written transcriptions of ballads that may have been sung primarily in the Scottish Highlands. See MacInnes 1971 and the eCompanion accompanying this article for a complete transcription of this song.

[13] As John MacInnes (1971) notes, while evidence indicates that Ossianic ballads were "sung in a rhythm that observed normal speech stressing," MacDonald tends to "regularize the tempo" (n.p.). He claims that this version might be a twentieth-century break from the conventional ways of performing this song and might help to explain the lack of auditory cues within the song itself.

[14] The best study of these connections remains Thomson 1952:espec. 79-83.

poems establishes that his voice is the "voice of the past" operating "at the point where history and poetry fused" (Haywood 1986:77). Singing preserves the past because it performs what Ossian collects in his memory and passes it on to future generations. Ossian *is* history, Macpherson suggests; historical events and their commemoration by a bard are indistinguishable, and the audience is linked to this history because of its participation in the performance.[15]

Macpherson thematizes the cultural importance of performed memory repeatedly in Ossian. The climax of *Fingal*, for example, explicitly signals the formation of historical context; during the feasting that follows Fingal's final victory, the speaker recounts that "we sat, we feasted, we sung" (Moore 2004:ii, 84). "—A hundred voices at once arose," he states, "a hundred harps were strung; they sung of other times, and [of] the mighty chiefs of former years" (81). Collective singing is figured as an act of remembrance and bardic voice functions as a custodian of traditions, which leads one critic to see the innovation of the poems as their ability to reproduce what readers could imagine is a credible version of oral culture (Haywood 1986:79). Macpherson establishes this credibility by aligning his poems with these songs "of other times." Macpherson's printed voices repeatedly dramatize their status as spoken chronicles (*idem*).

The credibility of this depiction of collective singing and performed memory, however, depends on the use of archaic diction and obsolete syntax to construct a sense of historicity. Macpherson claims that an accurate translation necessitates that he use antiquated English forms. But the inclusion of antiquated English reveals that the authenticity of his poems is a textual effect. For example, in *Fingal* Macpherson recounts a triangular love scene in characteristically outdated English (Moore 2004:ii, 8):

> From the hill I return, O Morna, from the hill of the dark-brown hinds. There I have slain with my bended yew. There with my long bounding dogs of the chace.—I have slain one stately deer for thee.—High was his branchy head; and fleet his feet of wind.
>
> DUCHOMAR! calm the maid replied, I love thee not, thou gloomy man.—Hard is thy heart of rock, and dark thy terrible brow. But Cathbat, thou son of Torman, thou are the love of Morna.

Using "thee," "thou," and "thy" pointedly recalls the speech patterns of medieval and Renaissance English. But by the end of the seventeenth century, these pronouns were extremely rare and largely confined to ornate literary discourse (Lass 1999:153).[16] Macpherson composes

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[15] As Stafford has pointed out, it was the historical claims of the Ossian poems that raised scepticism among many knowledgeable readers. She argues that Macpherson increasingly insisted upon the historical accuracy of his poems—adding footnotes to *Fingal* and *Temora*, for example—which raised alarms among his less approving readers (1988:166).

[16] The history of the second person case is "intricate . . . not well understood" and "possibly incoherent," but the prevailing thought is that in Middle English the second person included both "ye/you" and "thou" (Lass 1999:148). The former suggested formality and the latter familiarity. By the end of the sixteenth century the "th-" forms of speech ("thou" and its possessive "thee" or "thy") were increasingly rare, and by the eighteenth century "*you* was the only normal spoken form; *thou* . . . [was] restricted to high-register discourse" (*ibid.:*153) even though it had once signified more broadly when speakers felt a "heightened emotional tone" or "intimacy" (*ibid.*:149). See also Burnley 1992:200; Stevick 1968:140; and Pyles 1964:201.

this passage, like many others, in metrical prose. Together with self-consciously epic epithets—such as the reference to hunting dogs as "dogs of the chace"—his cadenced writing and uncommon lexicon imparts some sense of Ossian's alien and exotic history, and hints at its performative origin. All of these elements of Macpherson's style are meant to appear as the linguistic manifestation of historical distance.

Macpherson couples his use of archaic diction with equally outmoded syntax that inverts the rules of contemporary English to reinforce the antiquity he associates with his speakers. He uses inverted phrasing to compose one scene from *Temora*, which describes the vastness of Fingal's army as a lengthy dramatic monologue like those found in the *Iliad*: "Do the chiefs of Erin stand . . . silent as the grove of evening? Stand they, like a silent wood, and Fingal on the coast? Fingal, who is terrible in battle, the king of streamy Morven.—Hast thou seen the warrior, said Cairbar with a sigh? Are his heroes many on the coast? Lifts he the spear of battle? Or comes the king in peace?" (Moore 2004:ii, 6). Stilted phrases like "Do the chiefs of Erin stand," "Stand they," and "Lifts he" are obsolete, and they strengthen the sense that *Temora* must be old. Macpherson satisfies the expectation for otherness by creating archaic English equivalents for the speech readers imagine might once have existed in ancient Scotland.

Composing the Ossian poems in this antiquated register is part of Macpherson's strategy to substantiate textually the heroic, passionate nature of Scotland's past. These characteristics were felt by many of his contemporaries still to exist, especially in the Highlands. Because the Highlands' peasants are "far removed from what may be call'd the modern Taste of Life," as the Scottish author Jerome Stone states in 1756, they retain the "custom of singing the praises of their ancient Heroes" (15).[17] These performances, he gushes, are "tender," simple, and "affecting to every mind" but also "daring and incorrect, passionate and bold" (Crawford 2001:39). "For sublimity of language, nervousness of expression, and high spirited metaphors," Stone asserts, these peasants are "hardly to be equalled [*sic*] among the chief productions of the most cultivated nations" (15). Stone reverses the prevailing system of aesthetic value by suggesting that the artistry of an ethnic group on the margin of the British nation surpasses the "cultivated" productions of its literary and cultural center in London.

Hugh Blair, the influential critic, university lecturer, and ally of Macpherson, perceives a similar antithesis between the primitive past and the civilized present and between culturally peripheral locales like the Highlands and the more influential English south. He advises that "in the infancy of all societies, men are much under the dominion of imagination and passion" (Blair 1965:113). In its "ancient state," Blair insists, language is "more favorable to poetry and oratory," while in "modern times," he laments, language is "more correct" and more "accurate" but also "less striking and animated" (124-25).

The Ossian poems become a central example of language and customs in this "ancient state." For Blair, the Highlands are an artifact, a location out of step with modern time and thus a repository of unchanged artistic vitality. Since the "manners" of Scottish peasants are "uncultivated," their language is "full of figures and metaphors, not correct, indeed, but forcible

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[17] Stone makes these claims in a prose preface to an "Irish Tale" he published in *The Scots Magazine*. Elsewhere, he asserts that he had personally heard a few of these performances and had acquired a "pretty large" collection of them. See further Crawford 2001:37.

and picturesque" (112). Blair even goes so far as to claim that the inhabitants of the Highlands were "addicted" to poetry (Macpherson 1765:i, 24). For him, like Stone, the Highlands are one of the few remaining places where a sentimental relationship remains to the landscape and to history; this relationship is evident, Blair claims, in "sublime" and "metaphorical" oral performances (51). Highlanders' natural propensity for bold poeticizing, he believes, involves a style of expression that is more potent than the tepid productions of civilized culture. By assuring readers that Ossianic voices originate in a context like the one that Blair describes, Macpherson accesses the notion that his poems reflect an imaginative past that has never been corrupted by rational thought.

Yet Macpherson's portrayal of Scottish oral traditions is also indebted to mid-eighteenth-century aesthetic categories of the Enlightenment, as recent scholars have pointed out. His poetry, Adam Potkay notes, is a "palimpsest of savage and enlightened knowledge and manners," and Fingal repeatedly exhibits "civilized compassion" and "delicate affectations fostered by domesticity" (Potkay 1992:121, 125, 127). The refined manners of Ossian and his contemporaries are a source of sharp contention for skeptics like Johnson, who insist that ancient Scotland is coarse and brutish, not compassionate and sophisticated (Johnson and Boswell 1984:118). Through the impersonation of bardic voice, however, Macpherson reconciles his nostalgia for a fierce Scottish past with his desire for domestic virtues and for the Enlightenment's "most cherished ideals of polity and manners" (Potkay 1992:127). The affecting voices of the Ossian poems recreate an "intimate social intercourse" (McGann 1996:35) based both on idealized depictions of oral performance and on values of eighteenth-century philosophy like sympathy and humanism. The addiction to poetry that Blair and Stone recount becomes a model for a "lost paradise of sensibility" (*ibid.*:34) located not in England but in early Scotland and in the vibrant folk traditions of the Highlands. Macpherson reinstates this "paradise" of social intimacy by simulating performances like that of "La Tha Dha'n Fhinn Am Beinn Iongnaidh" in his printed texts. For Macpherson, therefore, oral voices are more than relics of past traditions; they emanate into the present, via textuality, and revive a civic intercourse modeled on the bond thought to exist between oral performers and their listening audience. The aura of authenticity that Macpherson disseminates with his texts allows and requires that he reinvent the primitivism and refinement that are the contradictory traits of Scottish bardic culture as it is perceived during the mid-eighteenth century.

Ambiguous Speech: Print and the Re-Conceptualization of Voice

Understanding how Macpherson re-creates the idealized social intercourse of a cultured Scottish past requires a reexamination of the role of printed techniques and literary figuration in his depiction of oral voices. Although Macpherson portrays the intimacy and sentimentality of his Ossianic texts as a reflection of ancient customs, in order to do this he detaches voicing from its association with human speech. Many scholars have described the landscape of Ossian as "desolate" or "inanimate" (McGann 1996:35; Stafford 1988:107). Instead, it is alive with voices that often penetrate the land or erupt out of it. The characters of his poems, far from being isolated, are perpetually conversing with this landscape and with the human spirits that populate

it. Macpherson creates a vocal world of speakers, all of whom are embedded within an animistic culture of performance in which everyone and everything seems to be involved in acts of enunciation.

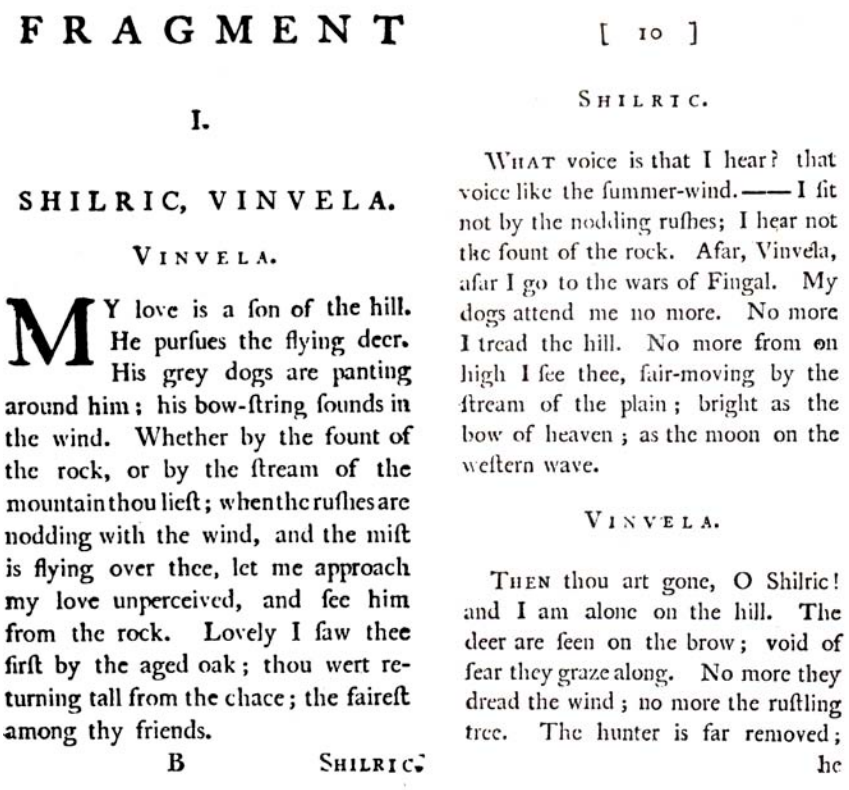
The proliferation of voices makes it apparent that Macpherson exceeds any simple identification between the literary voice operating in his texts and his claim that he translates oral voices. It is often overlooked, for example, that in Ossian the term "voice" encompasses more than collective history or oral performance; that is, voice, as a term, designates more than oral tradition in the process of creation or verbal narration modulated by a singing bard. Not just a function of social memory, voice also appears as a defining characteristic of the geography and a property of inanimate objects. In Macpherson's fourth fragment, for instance, one speaker asks "whose voice is that, loud as the wind, but pleasant as the harp" (Macpherson 1966:19). Later, one speaker claims that another's voice is "like the streams of the hill" (38). These two references demonstrate the close relationship between human voices and natural processes, where the former becomes coherent only by referring to the latter. The speaker of Fragment III, moreover, sets the scene by stating that "no voice is heard except the blustering winds" (16). In another fragment, the speaker mourns a friend who has drowned by wondering "if we might have heard, with thee, the voice of the deep" (16) and states that "there, was the clashing of swords; there, was the voice of steel" (29). Significantly, in these last three instances inanimate objects and natural processes are personified—they're given voice—in a way that relates them to the articulate human speakers found throughout the poems.

Voice is even associated with ghosts. This link dramatizes the difficulty and the potential involved in creating printed texts that try to establish more intimate connections to readers. By making voice independent of human bodies and detaching it from its common alliance with verbal articulation, Macpherson enlarges the range of objects that can possess voice and thus redefines what it is. In the process, he imagines new possibilities for what it can do. These possibilities are revealed most fully by the *confusion* about who speaks that pervades the Ossian poems, especially the *Fragments*. Speakers often ask "what voice is that?" or "whose voice is that?" The "Preface" to the *Fragments* hints that a single bardic speaker organizes the various voices of the poems. In *Fingal* and *Temora* Macpherson solidifies this idea by more obviously figuring Ossian as the primary speaker. But these questions demonstrate that voice exists in a perpetual state of uncertainty.

The purposeful absence of typographical marks and the rapid shifts in temporality and point of view reinforce the uncertainty about who speaks when. This confusion, which is particularly salient in Fragment I, hints at the importance of literary technique for Macpherson's textualized depiction of oral performance. Although presented visually as a dialogue between two lovers, Shilric and Vinvela, they seem not to be in each other's presence when they first speak. Vinvela describes Shilric in the third person, as if he is not there and she cannot directly address him. She begins by stating "My love is a son of the hill. He pursues the flying deer" (Macpherson 1966:9). Even though Shilric repeats many of Vinvela's images, the separation between the two lovers is confirmed when he replies "What voice is that I hear? that voice like the summer-wind" (10). That voice is Vinvela's from the stanza-paragraph before,

which, like the summer wind, traverses the physical distance that separates her from Shilric and the graphic space that distinguishes each voice in this dialogue.

A change occurs toward the middle of the fragment when Shilric, away at war and concerned about its dangers, asks Vinvela to remember him if he dies. She responds to his request as if she has heard his statement, suggesting that some kind of direct discourse has commenced between them. Voice is particularly acrobatic here. The distance between the speakers that is formalized in their initial third-person address is overcome through a shift in point of view. Macpherson reunites the two speakers across the physical distance that is implied by the white space that blocks off their individual enunciations. A narrative for this first fragment is created from these graphical cues and variations in mode of address. At their widest separation, Shilric's and Vinvela's voices likewise could be said to be at their most grammatically distant—that is, in the third person—while a sense of immediacy is made evident at the end of the dialogue by the transition from third-person to second-person address, as when, in response to Shilric's request to remember him, Vinvela says "Yes!—I will remember *thee*" (11; emphasis mine).



FRAGMENT

I.

SHILRIC, VINVELA.

VINVELA.

MY love is a ſon of the hill. He purſues the flying deer. His grey dogs are panting around him; his bow-ſtring ſounds in the wind. Whether by the fount of the rock, or by the ſtream of the mountain thou lieſt; when the ruſhes are nodding with the wind, and the miſt is flying over thee, let me approach my love unperceived, and ſee him from the rock. Lovely I ſaw thee firſt by the aged oak; thou wert returning tall from the chace; the faireſt among thy friends.

[10]

SHILRIC.

WHAT voice is that I hear? that voice like the ſummer-wind.—— I ſit not by the nodding ruſhes; I hear not the fount of the rock. Afar, Vinvela, afar I go to the wars of Fingal. My dogs attend me no more. No more I tread the hill. No more from on high I ſee thee, fair-moving by the ſtream of the plain; bright as the bow of heaven; as the moon on the weſtern wave.

VINVELA.

THEN thou art gone, O Shilric! and I am alone on the hill. The deer are ſeen on the brow; void of fear they graze along. No more they dread the wind; no more the ruſtling tree. The hunter is far removed; he

James Macpherson, Fragment I

Much of the separation described in Macpherson's *Fragments* results not from physical separation, as in Fragment I, but from death. The distinction between the living and the dead, however, is significantly eroded in the *Fragments,* since the landscape and the social order are populated by the spirits of those who have died. These ghosts are an important part of Macpherson's conceptualization of literary voice because they occupy a liminal point between literacy and orality. Their voices are unmoored from the constraints of human corporeality, allowing them to circulate more widely than living speakers, much as Macpherson introduces printed voices to extend the range of the oral voices in Ossian.

The confusion about who is speaking and how one is meant to read these ghostly voices is an explicit effect of the *Fragments*' form, and readers' delight or consternation arises in part from puzzling over these moments. The second fragment, which continues the narrative of Shilric and Vinvela, provides an excellent example of this dynamic. The majority of the fragment

appears in Shilric's voice. It recounts a sequence of events that illustrates the disordered temporality of the *Fragments*: Shilric returns from abroad only to learn that Vinvela committed suicide after mistakenly believing that he was killed. While he meditates on this tragedy, the spirit of Vinvela appears to him. Her voice intrudes into his first-person reminiscence (Macpherson 1966:14-15):

> BUT is it she that there appears, like a beam of light on the heath? bright as the moon in autumn, as the sun in the summer storm?—She speaks: but how weak her voice! like the breeze in the reeds of the pool. Hark!
>
> RETURNEST thou safe from the war? Where are thy friends, my love? I heard of thy death on the hill; I heard and mourned thee, Shilric!
>
> YES, my fair, I return; but I alone of my race. Thou shalt see them no more: their graves I raised on the plain. But why art thou on the desert hill? why on the heath, alone?
>
> ALONE I am, O Shilric! alone in the winter-house. With grief for thee I expired. Shilric, I am pale in the tomb.
>
> SHE fleets, she sails away; as grey mist before the wind!—and wilt thou not stay, my love?

Vinvela's voice irrupts into Shilric's narrative, just as her spirit encroaches upon his solitude. When she disappears, Shilric returns to his monologue, referring to Vinvela again in the third person, demonstrating that her spirit has left and their direct conversation has ceased. His question "wilt thou not stay, my love?" seems addressed to her absence.

Unlike the first fragment where dialogue is demarcated more clearly, confusion arises from the fact that the text supplies nearly no signs to specify when these shifts happen or to identify the transition between different voices—there are no character titles in this fragment to signify who is speaking, and there is no standard punctuation, such as quotation marks, to differentiate one individual's speech from another's or from the narration. How are readers to know which voices are speaking and which are narrating? How are readers supposed to distinguish verbal conversation from the characters' internal thoughts? Readers must intuit these details from the content, the syntax, and the use of names. The lack of diacritical marks is a deliberate strategy to amplify the sense of ephemerality surrounding Vinvela's voice; the absence of printed conventions reinforces Vinvela's uncertain corporeality. By reserving indicators of reported speech, the text lets readers decide if her voice is "real" or not. Her voice may simply be a hallucination produced by Shilric's grief. Or it could be Macpherson's way of indicating the disconnection between her voice and her body, when the former does not depend upon the existence of the latter. In both of these scenarios, the text's printed form is the vehicle that

addresses these possible interpretations. Identifying and comprehending these spectral voices requires a high degree of literacy and the ability to attend closely to the form of the text.

In the *Fragments*, therefore, humans could be thought of as constituted primarily by their voices, by the conditions under which they enunciate. These conditions—whether a speaker is alive or dead or whether the voice comes from a living person or an inanimate object—cannot be taken for granted because they are under persistent scrutiny in the *Fragments*. The ghosts of the *Fragments*, who drift into and out of the narrative like Vinvela, reveal most clearly the motive behind making humans equivalent to their voices. These apparitions are literary voice in its most rarefied, even purified form in that they transcend the restrictions of human corporeality. For Macpherson, these ghosts are attractive because they are not limited by the body or by the seeming impermanence of oral dissemination: they range across physical states and temporal boundaries. The mobility of these ghostly voices and their survival after death exemplifies the advantages of print. In a sense, Macpherson does not just re-create oral culture but invents a printed voice that first reenacts and then surpasses bardic voice—and indicates his text's tenuous connection with actual bards—by deemphasizing the significance of living bodies.

Speak Memory: Writing, Re-Performance, and Restored Voices

Detaching speaking voices from human bodies is a metaphor for the operation of printed voice. Macpherson's printed voices are inspired by bardic performance and the immediacy of a listening audience, but they do not depend on actual singers or auditors. Instead, by simulating oral traditions Macpherson instills into his text the passion and authenticity associated with performance while maintaining print's ability to preserve and widely disseminate voices. And by filling his history of Ossian with the ghosts of heroes or the songs of bards, Macpherson carefully excludes the role of writing from the origin of his poems and maintains the consistency of Ossian's oral traditional setting.[18]

But these ghosts reveal the numerous ways that Ossian's voice requires writing, if not within the imaginative logic of the poems, then at least within their printed manifestation. This becomes especially clear in Fragment VI, in which the present tense of Ossian's song brushes up against its thematization of memory. This fragment begins with an appeal by an interlocutor, who is referred to as the "son of Alpin," for Ossian to tell a tale (Macpherson 1966:26):

> SON of noble Fingal, Oscian, Prince of Men! what tears run down the cheeks of age? What shades thy Mighty soul?
>
> MEMORY, son of Alpin, memory wounds the aged. Of former times are my thoughts; my thoughts are of the noble Fingal. The race of the king return into my mind, and wound me with remembrance.

[18] Ghosts come to represent this situation because Ossian's world is meant to be a "preliterate, and therefore prehistorical, attempt to think about history" (Underwood 2002:238).

> ONE day, returned from the sport of the mountains from pursuing the sons of the hill, we covered this heath with our youth . . . .

As with many of the Ossian poems, here the transition between voices and tenses is abrupt. But unlike the dialogues between Shilric and Vinvela, the Son of Alpin's appeal to Ossian fosters a sense of a present performance within which a tale from Ossian's memory is embedded. The explicit invocation of a listening audience is a consistent feature of the Gaelic ballad tradition (Meek 1991:28), and Macpherson signals this convention in the way he composes and relates the printed voices of this fragment. When Ossian begins to remember (which is also when he begins to perform), the fragment shifts into the past tense.

While Ossian's stories concern his memories, and thus appear in the past tense, the voices of his story's characters often appear in the present tense. These tense shifts presumably denote the way that he recalls and performs voices from the past, acting them out for his listeners. Fragment VII, which recounts the death of Ossian's son Oscur, begins like Fragment VI with an invocation of memory, and changes quickly into the past tense signifying the beginning of Ossian's reminiscence. But the present tense returns again when the fragment introduces the voices of other characters, such as Oscur, his friend Dermid, and the daughter of their enemy Dargo, whom they both love. When Dermid learns that Dargo's daughter is infatuated with Oscur and not him, he asks Oscur to kill him and end his misery (Macpherson 1966:33).

> SON of Oscian, said Dermid, I love; O Oscur, I love this maid. But her soul cleaveth unto thee; and nothing can heal Dermid. Here, pierce this bosom, Oscur; relieve me, my friend, with thy sword.
>
> MY sword son of Morny, shall never be stained with the blood of Dermid.
>
> WHO then is worthy to slay me, O Oscur, son of Oscian? Let not my life pass away unknown. Let none but Oscur slay me. Send me with honour to the grave, and let my death be renowned.

This passage reinforces what many scholars have noted is the affinity between the Ossian poems and actual techniques of oral performance, such as the use of epithets, the repetition of phrases, and what Joseph Roach has described as "re-performance," a process whereby culture is perpetuated through pairing "a collective memory with the enactments that embody it through performance" (1996:13).[19] According to Roach, re-performance operates through "surrogation,"

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[19] Roach's argument about performance as re-performance is based in part on Richard Schechner's description of performance as "'twice behaved behavior'" or "'restored behavior'" (Roach 1996:3). For a fuller discussion of the features of oral traditions in Macpherson, see Fitzgerald 1966:22-33; Stafford 1988:103-11; Groom 1999:77. The scholarship on oral traditional techniques is vast. For a general introduction to the idea of oral tradition, see Lord 1968; Finnegan 1970; Ong 1982; Jousse 1990; Foley 1995, among others.

which is the idea that culture has no beginning or end but simply reproduces itself by filling vacancies as they appear.[20]

Surrogation's continuous temporality of endless substitution is, for Roach, a constitutive characteristic of oral traditions. But in the seventh fragment, written techniques, and the temporality that they denote, are a critical part of invoking Ossian's re-performance of bardic voice. Ossian, in the present of the poem, turns to the past tense to tell the historical events surrounding his son's death. The interjection of "said Dermid" conveys the sense that Ossian is "restoring" the characters' voices through his song. "Said Dermid" delineates Ossian's position in regard to other speakers; it clarifies whose voice is speaking when Ossian is not acting as a narrator. It qualifies Dermid's words as reported speech for an audience who presumably has not heard what Dermid said or witnessed his actions. The shift into the present tense reanimates these voices for the listeners and accentuates the sense of immediate dramatic action.

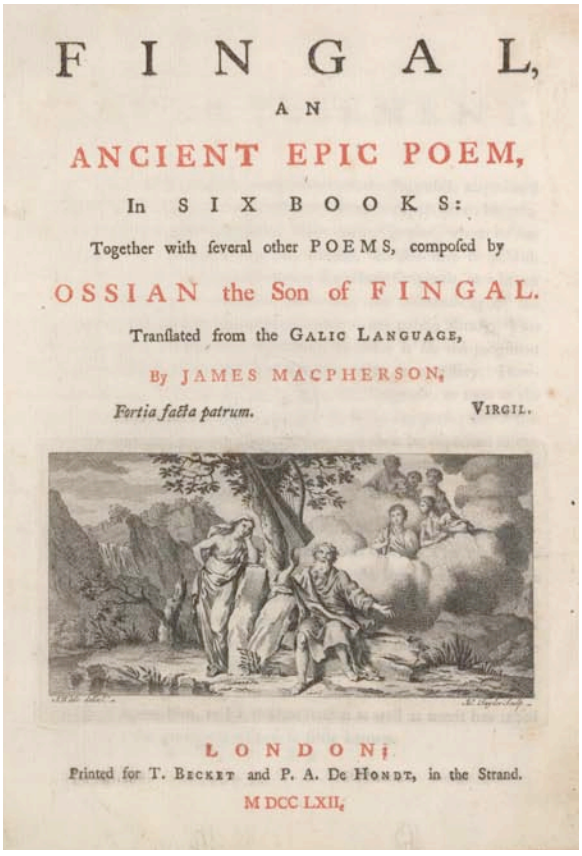
These indicators of reported speech gradually diminish, however, as the fragment becomes interested in displaying the characters' voices on their own. The jarring shifts between past and present become more pronounced as the fragment switches quickly between the voices of the characters and the voice of their performer and narrator, Ossian, who frames their speech: "And fallest thou, son of Morny; fallest thou by Oscur's hand! Dermid invincible in war, thus do I see thee fall!—He went, and returned to the maid whom he loved; returned but she perceived his grief" (Macpherson 1966:34). Only a single dash divides the present-tense description of Oscur murdering Dermid from the reminiscent narration of his father, Ossian. In this complicated framing of voice, Ossian sings to an audience and in the process re-performs Oscur calling out to Dermid. The past and present mingle ambiguously at such moments, pronouns become elusive and perplexing, and writing's ability to manifest or withhold tense changes, speakers' identities, typographical marks, and framing gestures is an essential part of representing how voice functions in these poems and how readers experience it.

Changes in temporality and the presence (or absence) of prompts such as "said Dermid" encourage readers to read Macpherson's poems as auditors would supposedly listen to Ossian's storytelling. This framing structure insists that readers understand that they are removed from the oral telling described in the poems while nonetheless being addressed as a participating public. It allows Macpherson both to reassert and to revoke the distance—temporal and spatial—involved in the act of writing these poems and in the act of reading them. Macpherson refines this structure in later volumes of the Ossian poems. In *Temora*, for example, Ossian recounts Fingal's revenge for his son's death. Quickly shifting between the past and present tense disorients readers by forcing them to consider two different temporal moments—the past of Fingal's actions and the present of Ossian's tale. Macpherson writes that "Fingal heard the son; and took his father's spear. His steps are before us on the heath. He spoke the words of woe. I hear the noise of war. Young Oscar is alone. Rise, sons of Morven; join the hero's sword" (Moore 2004:ii, 14). By shifting between tenses, Ossian seems to experience these events (again) and recollect them for his listeners. The simultaneity of telling and retelling, of original event and its

[20] Roach writes that "the process of surrogation does not begin or end but continues as actual or perceived vacancies occur in the network of relations that constitutes the social fabric" (1996:2). This process, he notes, is inexact, and happens through trial and error.

remembrance by a bard, make the plot described in this passage seem present and distant all at once. Fingal's actions are narrated in the past tense—he "heard the son" and "took his father's spear"—but the speaker also slips into the present tense, raising the figure of Fingal as if from the dead for his audience—"His steps are before us on the heath"—and enjoining his listeners to see him, hear him, and "rise up" to help him. It is unclear whether "us" refers to the implied auditors of Ossian's performance or Fingal's loyal warriors, among them Ossian, who are intent on aiding their king. Nonetheless, the imperative mode that Macpherson uses—"rise . . . join"—addresses readers as if they are present at the site of the battle and Ossian is imploring them to action. The grammar of the passage makes readers into present(-tense) witnesses of what Ossian tells. By swaying back and forth between tenses, these sentences reposition readers as listeners—as those "sons of Morven" who should respond to Ossian's act of oral telling. Macpherson's use of literary devices like direct address, imperative mode, and the collapsing of temporalities converts distant readers into participants who share in Ossian's performed history.

The multiple forms of direct address that Macpherson employs throughout his Ossian poems create a participatory mode of reading that is reinforced by the visual illustrations and engravings that accompany many of his publications. These illustrations depict Ossian performing to an audience. The title page of his 1762 *Fingal*, for example, shows Ossian in a rugged mountainous setting surrounded by attentive listeners. Ossian is dressed in loose, almost Roman robes; he is bearded and blind, features that recall Homer and that had become associated with British bards by the mid-eighteenth century. His arms are in motion, his mouth is opened wide, presumably singing or chanting exactly those poems that are collected in the volume that follows this image. The figures in the engraving peer over Ossian's shoulder or leisurely rest on a rock outcropping. The key aspect of this image is the placement of the audience members behind Ossian; they look as though they are oriented toward readers rather than the performer in the engraving. The image thus makes the audience visible not to Ossian but to readers, a visual cue that suggests the engraving functions as a model for what it means to be an auditor hearing Ossian perform.


FINGAL,
AN
ANCIENT EPIC POEM,
In SIX BOOKS:
Together with several other POEMS, composed by
OSSIAN the Son of FINGAL.
Translated from the GALIC LANGUAGE,
By JAMES MACPHERSON,
Fortia facta patrum. VIRGIL.
LONDON:
Printed for T. BECKET and P. A. DE HONDT, in the Strand.
M DCC LXII.

1762, *Fingal* Frontispiece

An image from 1787 is equally emphatic in its presentation of Ossian's performance (Christensen 1972:17). Here, Ossian is alone, facing out toward the volume's readers. The scene is more foreboding than that of the 1762 title page. Ossian is shown as an oracular bard. The angled tree in the background amplifies the lines

formed by the ribs of his harp and the diagonal of his spear. The rotting tree that he rests upon and his blowing cape and beard imply gothic surroundings. While this setting differs noticeably from the 1762 engraving, once again Ossian is shown declaiming with one hand and strumming his harp with the other. He seems to direct his singing out from the page toward readers. His wide-open mouth insinuates that he is mid-song, and that those who open the volume are presented with his sound.

These images encourage readers to consider themselves as listeners rather than just as users of a silent printed book. They are visual representations of the intimacy that Macpherson seeks to inculcate between text and readers. These images give a sense of what Macpherson was also trying to accomplish with his poems; that is, make readers feel like they are participating in the ancient Scottish past and listening in on Ossian's heroic tales. Even if readers cannot hear these poems being performed, as nearly none of them would, they are asked to imagine themselves as the listeners represented in these engravings. The popularity of these poems, therefore, stems not just from the heroic manners and pleasing sentimentality described in them, from the sense that they are sophisticated remnants of an indigenous Scottish culture, or from the feeling of national pride sparked by asserting a cultural tradition worthy of Homer. Ossian enters into Scottish mythology—adorning lavish estates like Penicuik House near Edinburgh (which had an entire room painted so that it portrayed Ossian singing)[21] and inspiring a budding tourist industry that brought travelers to remote

1787, Ossian Singing, Clemens Engraving

[21] For more information on Penicuik House, visit http://www.penicuikhouse.co.uk/history-penicuikhouse.aspx.

Fingal's Cave, Library of Congress

locations like Fingal's Cave on the island of Staffa—because Macpherson permits readers to indulge in the fantasy that they are inheritors of heroic Scottish values. His texts re-create the intimate intercourse of an imaginary ancient past that is reclaimed and made present again through reading. Print culture, as scholars have observed, provokes a shift in understanding about the difference between the past and the present by its ability to preserve and codify accounts of historical events;[22] Macpherson's printed forms reject this shift by deliberately, even inevitably interpenetrating past and present. The Ossian poems thus establish continuities between the past and the present that elide the rupture that occurred in Scottish culture subsequent to its historic defeat at Culloden in 1746. Macpherson draws readers to his poems by offering them the possibility of reading differently—that is, of reading as ancient listeners might have heard the sounds of Ossian.

[22] For more on the way that the shift from oral and manuscript to print-based culture changed notions of past and present, see Eisenstein 1979.

Reading and Hearing Differently

In the Ossian poems, poetic voice is the effect created by Macpherson's highly deliberate literary practices. Evoked through print, his voice is authenticated by its alignment with the oral. At the same time, the bardic voices of the Ossian poems are unveiled as a literary technique akin to personifying the north wind or the ocean's depths. Voice is embedded within the literary, waiting to be invented so as to create a connection to readers that is like the communal intimacy of embodied oral communication. Macpherson's figuration of his poems as an extended instance of oral voicing transforms readers' relationship to his text by consistently asking them to imagine themselves as auditors. This figuration, and the innovative printed techniques that articulate it, are an illusion intended to offset print's potential for solitariness and alienation.

Bardic voice functions, therefore, as an alternative to prevailing models of eighteenth-century authorial voice. By striving to recreate in print the primitivism of ancient oral voices, Macpherson stages poetic innovations that reconnect authors and readers. He extends aural transmission—which is tied to human performers, whether real or imagined—by cultivating an oral sensibility in a textual environment. In lieu of the corporeality of actual human speakers functioning in a living oral tradition, Macpherson offers the "body" of the text—a set of conventions that materially structure the representation of voice on the page so as to enact aural reception and turn readers into auditors. Therefore, the "invention of voice" referred to in the title of this article is not intended to suggest that authors before the eighteenth century do not have poetic voices or that voice is a concept that exists only after this historical moment. Rather, voice becomes clarified as authors like Macpherson explore the ways that print constructs the semblance of traditional speech. Thus the cultural notions and literary devices typically seen as nostalgic for an oral world before print are in fact the ways that eighteenth-century authors suggest a new mode by which they can connect with readers through print.

The popular reaction to the Ossian poems in many ways confirms the success of Macpherson's experiment. The Scottish intellectual Blair fondly calls Ossian "the poetry of the heart" and describes him as having "an exquisite sensibility of heart" (Macpherson 1765:ii, 340, 349, 389). The emphasis on the "heart" as the location of feeling and sentiment appears in readers' responses as well. The playwright Frances Sheridan, wife of the elocutionist Thomas Sheridan, claims that a person's reaction to Ossian fixes their "standard of feeling"; Ossian, she remarks, is "like a thermometer by which [one] could judge the warmth of everybody's heart."[23] Werther, Goethe's hero of sensibility, reads Ossian and promptly pronounces that Ossian has "ousted" Homer from his heart (Lamport 1998:98). As these reactions demonstrate, Ossian elicits sentimentalized effects from readers who imagine themselves to be absorbing bardic voices. Hence, for many, Ossian is a text that is meant to be heard and then internalized within the body. Their revivified hearts express the immediate connection they feel between their internal sensibility and the history recounted by the texts. Their bodily reactions to the authenticity of oral voices in turn legitimize the feelings provoked by those voices. Macpherson's poems propose the satisfying delusion that by reading one can hear Ossian speaking and can feel the

[23] This reaction was recorded by James Boswell in his journal during his early years in London (1992:182). See also Stafford 1988:171-73. She claims that reactions like these "belong to the 'age of sensibility'" and demonstrate that Ossian expertly elicited sentimentality from its readers (172).

emotions that listeners in the exotic world of ancient Scotland would have felt when they heard his voice burst into song. So while the debate continues about the claim that the Ossian poems are "genuine remains of ancient Scottish poetry," Macpherson seems to have inculcated a sense of intimacy and passionate expression that eighteenth-century authors and readers perceived to be characteristic of traditional art forms and the experience of oral performance.

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Theorizing Orality and Performance in Literary Anecdote and History: Boswell's Diaries

Dianne Dugaw

In memory of Morris Brownell (1933-2007)[1]

The diaries of the eighteenth-century literary figure James Boswell supply a rich source of materials useful not only for delving into period songs and their role in daily life, but also for interrogating our theoretical framework for reading such materials. Boswell's renderings of popular singing and song culture in the course of his activities—literary, political, amorous, familial, domestic, traveling, business, leisure—demonstrate in example after example the mixing of oral and written, of *belles lettres* and popular culture, in the life and discursive self-fashioning of one lively eighteenth-century gentleman. Recent theoretical framings propose that we rethink those assumptions and inclinations in the study of songs and oral performance that have often inclined to separate the oral and orality from literature and the literary. Such a conceptual division skirts the truly interpolated character of expressive modes, especially those that are customary and quotidian. In addition, the study of cultural expression came into being with a history of conceptualizing "folk" music in terms of misleading notions of a "purer" oral culture, in contrast to a less "authentic" realm of literacy, print, and media-infused popular culture. A further tendency in some studies of orality has at times been a focus on the present with a lack of historical depth in analysis, which gives less access to understanding the oral dimension of the arts and experience of the past. The anecdotes that Boswell recorded prompt us to take up newer models and tools for analysis as we explore his detailed panorama of oral contexts, informal musical performance, and collective cultural reference and experience in eighteenth-century Britain.

In March of 1776 James Boswell, Scottish barrister and literary figure, reports a rowdy coach ride through Oxfordshire. In his rendition, the rambunctious scene resembles a William

[1] Morris Brownell, scholar of eighteenth-century English literature and art, invited me to collaborate with him many years ago on a lecture performance on the singing of James Boswell. That collaboration, when I was a student, was the wellspring of this essay. In our performance at the Huntington Library, we sang and discussed a sampling of songs and conversations from Boswell's diaries, having located the texts and tunes. In the decades that followed, Morris and Melita Ann Brownell expanded this early investigation of a sampling to encompass all of the songs and song references that pepper the diaries, compiling a richly annotated collection of the nearly two hundred songs that appear in Boswell's journals. For a sampling, see Brownell and Brownell 1997. It is hoped that this catalogue and collection will be available to scholars in the Special Collections Division of the Library at the University of Nevada at Reno.

Hogarth painting (Boswell 1963:253):

> There were two outside passengers, who sung and roared and swore as [the coachman] did. My nerves were hurt at first; but considering it to have no offensive meaning whatever, and to be just the vocal expression of the beings, I was not fretted. They sang "And a-Hunting We will Go," and I joined the chorus. I then sung "Hearts of Oak," "Gee Ho Dobbin," "The Roast Beef of Old England," and they chorused. We made a prodigious jovial noise going through Welwyn and other villages.

Reporting anxiety for his own safety in this vehicle which that very day "had been robbed by footpads in the morning near London," Boswell notes that he swapped songs "upon the coach-box," in a solidarity-inducing chorusing to ease his fear. For us the account supplies a momentary glimpse of oral interaction in Georgian England, carried out in the form of conversation and singing. This essay explores several dimensions of orality and popular song culture as these are revealed by entries in the diaries of James Boswell (1740-95), Scottish gentleman, lawyer, and writer.[2]

From the moment he arrived in London from Scotland in 1762, the then-young Boswell kept diaries about his life and contacts with the people around him. This detailed log indicates that he collected, quoted, alluded to, commented upon, sang, and composed popular songs on every conceivable occasion. As already noted, he sang on top of coaches. Elsewhere in the diaries he describes himself intoning, through the course of his life, in an array of settings: on horseback, in London taverns, in Edinburgh coffeehouses, in parliament, in court, on a skiff in the Hebrides, among soldiers and peasants in Sicily, at election dinners in Scotland, and at the Lord Mayor's feast in London. In addition, throughout his reported conversations he mentions songs, clearly invoking lyrics and (implicitly) tunes as shared touchstones of sociocultural reference and meaning. Boswell's journals present a panorama of conversational and singing contexts that serve the study of orality and performance, particularly as contextualized by social discourse. The very literate and literary Boswell represents conversations and activities that range from commonplace to formal and ceremonial. Especially as these accounts involve songs —both as references and as performances—they supply a useful antidote to the tendency to polarize oral and written as separate linguistic arenas. Reading these accounts offers an opportunity to consider oral performance as a constant practice in a highly literate and literary culture.

John Miles Foley's analysis of traditional referentiality explores the immanent relation of the individual performance and performer to a knowing audience, delineating how in oral performance "structures and patterns exist not merely as mechanically useful items but as vehicles for meaning and artistry" (2002:113). He finds that meaning with regard to oral poetry is "idiomatic" and "indexical," producing a range of implicative meaning (1991:6-8). To theorize such conversational matrices of performance and association as we find in Boswell, we might extend the concept of "register" by which Foley identifies stylistic modes "used both by oral

[2] The voluminous diaries of James Boswell are available in *The Yale Editions of the Private Papers of James Boswell*. For an overview of the twentieth-century discovery of these private papers, see the "Publisher's Note" (Boswell 1950:ix-xiii).

poets to make their poems and by audiences and readers to hear and read them" (2002:114).

Proceeding from Foley's findings, Thomas Dubois (2006:33) further characterizes this concept of immanent meaning and orally invoked resonance as "a process of association in the minds of knowledgeable audience members" by which in "any particular instance" performer and audience engage a shared "set of interpretive resources." In his application of this typology of immanence and referentiality to Shakespearean lyric, medieval lament, and religious song, Dubois demonstrates the applicability of these ideas to the orality of songs and song performance in the lives of very literate and literary persons in diverse historical contexts. He identifies three matrices in the interplay of meaning and experience shared by singers and listeners in oral performance of songs: a generic axis determined by the song's content and context, an associative axis by which the song offers a connection to a singer's own life or that of an addressee, and a situational axis by which a song represents a particular person or group. In oral performance, singers and listeners inhabit together an experiential web of meaning and association.

At times, studies of oral tradition and performance assume a romanticizing focus on non-literate or marginally literate peoples and an exclusion of the highly literate and literary in the exploration of the meanings and mechanisms of oral expression and performance. However, as Foley (1998:5) observes, "the mere existence of literacy in a society may reveal nothing about the society's oral art." Víctor Vich and Virginia Zavala observe (2004:41; my translation):

> Indeed, in daily life oral and written discourse usually occur together, since they are used simultaneously rather than existing as polar opposites or separate linguistic modes. For example, observing the applications of literacy in households makes clear that a written document is usually a point of departure for speech, and that often times reading and writing take place collectively rather than in private.[3]

Rather, as they remind us (11; my translation),

> Orality . . . is a performance, and in studying it we must always make reference to a particular type of social interaction. Orality is a practice, an experience that is carried out and an event that is participatory. Always situated in specific social contexts, orality produces a circuit of communication that is brought into being by numerous factors.[4]

Clearly, theorizing orality requires richly interdisciplinary approaches that proceed from a recognition of performance in order to reconceptualize what has been too restricted an analysis

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[3] The original is: "En efecto, en la vida cotidiana el discurso oral y el escrito suelen ocurrir juntos ya que sus prácticas están entremezcladas y no representan polos opuestos ni modos lingüísticos divididos. Basta observar el uso de la literacidad en los hogares para darse cuenta de que un documento escrito suele ser el punto de partida para discursos orales, y que muchas veces la lectura y la escritura no ocurren de un modo privado sino colectivo."

[4] The original is: "La oralidad . . . es una *performance*, y al estudiarla siempre debemos hacer referencia a un determinado tipo de interacción social. La oralidad es una práctica, una experiencia que se realiza y un evento del que se participa. Situada siempre en contextos sociales específicos, la oralidad produce un circuito communicativo donde multiples determinantes se disponen para constituirla."

of "texts" or "items." Further, the contextualizing of these moments of performance as social interactions enunciates processes not only of aesthetic response, but also of power dynamics between participants. If we widen our examination of oral performance to include the informal and quotidian realm of performed forms and traditions, as well as more markedly sanctioned rituals and occasions, we see a complex interplay of oral performance carried out among literate and literary individuals. In such constitutively social and communicating contexts as Vich and Zavala identify, James Boswell sang and invoked songs in complex ways, often disclosing dynamics of identity formation and relations of power.

While Boswell was no doubt exceptionally irrepressible in his love for singing, the eighteenth century in Europe was one of history's great amateur music-making eras at all levels. We might think of the thousands of ballad broadsides on the streets and the then-emerging interest among intellectuals in the music and song traditions of people at the lower ranks. At the time, the higher ranks included the instrumentalist patrons of such composers as Bach, Haydn, and Mozart. Musicians numbered among literary figures—the flautists John Gay and Oliver Goldsmith, the keyboardist Jane Austen, the fiddling John Clare. In the middle classes, music making prevailed as a domestic pastime for men and especially for women, and outside the home in singing and performing clubs for men. This widespread amateur music-making spurred a burgeoning industry of new instruments, sheet music, music lessons, and concert venues.

Music was a form—a "language" with a range of dialects, if you will—in which most men and women had some degree of fluency. In addition, cultural groups and social levels intersected vibrantly in the performance of music, as we see exemplified in Boswell's exuberant coach ride or in the runaway success of John Gay's *Beggar's Opera* of 1728 and the dozens of imitative "ballad operas" that followed it for decades. This general vitality of eighteenth-century oral song culture and musical expression generated and to a degree shaped the way that the collection and study of music is conceived and conducted to this day. Song scholars have theorized popular songs in the study of ballad traditions, the relation of printing to oral songs, the dynamics of individual song making, and general aspects of performance practice (Dugaw 1995; 2006). However, much remains to be learned about how the meaning and function of songs play a role in the lives of individuals in any era.

Boswell's diaries provide material for such an investigation. They are, as it were, a privately rendered staging of moments of orally enacted social intercourse. These journals, which only came to light in the twentieth century, seem to have served Boswell as personal reflection and self-scrutiny. They likely served as *aides-mémoires* to contribute to his public literary activities (for example, such writings as his acclaimed biographical treatment of Samuel Johnson), and their tone and content suggest a site for self-dramatizing rehearsal not only for future writing but perhaps for future social interactions as well. Performances of, and references to, songs thread throughout these accounts of Boswell's everyday activities, especially in his anecdotes that record conversations. These episodes supply a wealth of material for considering Boswell's everyday music-making moments as oral performances. My analysis draws on such tools of literary study as close reading and contextualizing interpretation, as well as considerations of oral performance such as we find in Foley, Dubois, and Vich and Zavala, in order to investigate the conventions of collective forms and audience expectations. In Boswell's journals, politically and socially resonating encounters demonstrate how oral performances are

situated within and negotiate differences of rank, power, prestige, and possibility.

In November of 1762 Boswell, a young man of 22, records in his earliest journal his journey from Scotland and arrival in London. He reports that his first sight of the big English city inspired his recital of a philosophical speech from a well-known play by Joseph Addison (1672-1719) together with his exuberant singing and even composing of songs (Boswell 1950:43-44):

> When we came upon Highgate hill and had a view of London, I was all life and joy. I repeated Cato's soliloquy on the immortality of the soul, and my soul bounded forth to a certain prospect of happy futurity. I sung all manner of songs, and began to make one about an amorous meeting with a pretty girl, the burthen of which was as follows: She gave me *this*, I gave her *that*; / And tell me, had she not tit for tat? I gave three huzzas, and we went briskly in.

Two culturally prevalent arenas of orality—high-ranking drama and popular folk-style song—shape this spontaneously histrionic moment in which Boswell stages himself with an ironic coupling of dramatic elevation and comic bawdry. A slightly masked anxiety mixes with exuberance as he projects "a certain prospect of happy futurity," and playfully pictures himself as conquering London. First declaiming the well-known and ponderous dramatic soliloquy from Addison and then extemporaneously singing an exuberant and irreverent ditty of his own making, he steps into the performance of himself entering into his new life. His impromptu composition enlists the conventional predations, joking evasions, and sly innuendo of bawdy song, to figure forth by means of an eroticized exchange and sexual conquest his youthful hopes and justifications for success in his new life in the exciting but intimidating foreign city.

Soon after this arrival in London, Boswell became a member of the London Catch Club, a men's singing and drinking fraternity founded in part by Alexander Montgomerie, Tenth Earl of Eglinton, a fellow Scot from whom the young newcomer sought patronage and advice. In March of 1763, Boswell entertained hopes that his influential countryman would help him procure a military commission. He reports a conversation in which he playfully voices doubts about Eglinton's support (Boswell 1950:217):

> I appointed to meet him at his house this evening at eleven, when we might talk my affair over fully. He promised he would do everything in his power for me with Lord Bute [John Stuart, Third Earl of Bute, a favorite of King George III]. "But," said he, "Jamie, after all you will perhaps not believe me." "No, my Lord," said I. "Be not afraid of that. I always believe your Lordship in the past tense but never in the future. When you say, 'I *have* done so and so,' I make no doubt of it. But when you say, I *will* do so and so,' your Lordship must excuse me. I believe you intend to do what you say, but perhaps the song of 'Three blind mice' comes across you and prevents you from thinking of it." He smiled. We are now very well together.

Complex tensions of class difference and access to power inflect this interaction. The anecdote presents an evasively supplicating young Boswell, who seems to conjure the grisly little song as a buffer for the possibility of his hopes being curtailed (so to speak). Within the conversational

context by which the diary frames Boswell's reference to the song, the difference in rank, central to Boswell's petition, becomes leveled in this evocation of the collective experience of singing rounds. After all, each entrance in a catch is equal. For a song to function as a catch, such equalized multiple entrances are required. Boswell calls on a song that he and and Eglinton sing *together*—in the catch club, in the tavern, in Eglinton's apartments, in a coach. He ameliorates the awkward moment by recalling their shared enjoyment of singing rounds, suggesting that his addressee be alert to the danger of a "catchy" tune taking hold and distracting his mind from what he surely otherwise intends to do—help Boswell.

These examples—the first, a celebratory Boswell bursting into song on the crest of Highgate hill; the second, a witty and intricately coaxing allusion—demonstrate the frequent, pervasive performance contexts for songs in everyday life in eighteenth-century Britain. They set before us interrelationships of "popular" and "polite" cultural levels as well as conversational and song-inflected jockeyings of class difference and power. Such recounted scenes in Boswell's anecdotes supply vivid footprints of oral expression and culture. In addition, they point up the social and communal aspect of European song traditions in which performances entail public contexts and co-participation that undergird the appeals to common interest that pertain to both of these anecdotes by Boswell.

When in 1765 and 1766 Boswell undertook the tour of continental Europe that was a requirement for aristocratic young men, he of course kept diaries of his travels. Autumn of 1765 found him in Corsica, which at the time was galvanized by a charismatic leader, Pascal Paoli, and was resisting domination by an alliance of France and the Republic of Genoa (that had controlled the island since the fourteenth century). Boswell, like many European intellectuals, saw in the Corsicans an idealized "noble savagery." As Frank Brady and Frederick Pottle put it (Boswell 1955:144), "what Europe saw was probably an uncomplicated feudal society; what it admired was a nation which seemed to embody in many ways Rousseau's idea of political and social liberty, a nation to which Rousseau himself had referred approvingly in his *Social Contract*." Boswell's accounts of his social interactions with the Corsicans resonate with a Rousseauvian estimation of the islanders. In his vivid depictions, cultural objects and expression —including songs and music—supply points of identification and interpersonal "alliance" that he hopes prefigure a larger political connection with England. Boswell published an *Account of Corsica* in 1768, with hoped-for political support of the Corsicans against France as part of his purpose. He represents his collective and participatory experiences—conversational interactions and performance of songs and music—as negotiations of both difference and alliance within a context that again resonates with dynamics of power. He says (1955:175):

> The *ambasciatore inglese*, as the good peasants and soldiers used to call me, became a great favourite among them. I got a Corsican dress made, in which I walked about with an air of true satisfaction. The General (Paoli) did me the honour to present me with his own pistols, made in the island, all of Corsican wood and iron and of excellent workmanship. I had every other accoutrement. I even got one of the shells which had often sounded the alarm to liberty. I preserve them with great care.
>
> The Corsican peasants and soldiers were quite free and easy with me. Numbers of them used to come and see me of a morning, and just go out and in as they pleased. I did everything in

> my power to make them fond of the British, and bid them hope for an alliance with us. They asked me a thousand questions about my country, all which I cheerfully answered as well as I could.

His performances of music and song certainly depict a bridging of difference and creation of identification and community, as does his own enactment of "going Corsican" as he walks about in local dress. He opens this anecdote about exchanges of songs, tunes, costume, and other items of material culture with an oddly on-looking sentence that depicts himself in third-person point of view, "the *ambasciatore inglese*." However, Boswell's written (though private) staging of his performance goes on to mark cultural and social difference, as its framing of the oral episode constructs a pondered distance between that audience and the "genteel companies" with which he identifies in the writing of the memoir (1955:175-76):

> One day they would needs hear me play upon my German flute. To have told my honest natural visitants, "Really, gentlemen, I play very ill," and put on such airs as we do in our genteel companies, would have been highly ridiculous. I therefore immediately complied with their request. I gave them one or two Italian airs, and then some of our beautiful old Scots tunes: "Gilderoy," "The Lass of Patie's Mill," "Corn rigs are bonny." The pathetic simplicity and pastoral gaiety of the Scots music will always please those who have the genuine feelings of nature. The Corsicans were charmed with the specimens I gave them, though I may now say that they were very indifferently performed.

Within this depiction lies an intricate tapestry of inter-threading skeins of projected difference and similarity: the young and genteel Londoner, yet also self-consciously subaltern Scottish Boswell, identifies in and through the "pastoral" pathos and "simplicity" of "Scots music," a complexly patronizing yet appreciative complicity with the "honest, natural" Corsicans around him and with whom he is in social converse.

The lineaments of power relations show increasingly as the incident continues. The reported collaboration of Boswell and the Corsicans in "quite a joyous riot" of cultural-linguistic translation interlaces in the written representation with the diarist's contrasting fantasies of an ordering hierarchy of dominance and subordination that is inscribed into his recollection and commentary on the event. He goes on (1955:176):

> My good friends insisted also to have an English song from me. I endeavoured to please them in this too, and was very lucky in that which occurred to me. I sung them "Hearts of oak are our ships, Hearts of oak are our men." I translated it into Italian for them, and never did I see men so delighted with a song as the Corsicans were with the "Hearts of Oak." "Cuore di quercia," cried they, "bravo Inglese!" It was quite a joyous riot. I fancied myself to be a recruiting sea officer. I fancied all my chorus of Corsicans aboard the British fleet.[5]

Boswell's "fancies" project onto this "joyous riot" of linguistic interpretation, and dynamic and

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[5] "Heart of Oak" was a popular mid-eighteenth-century English stage song from a stage pantomime with words by David Garrick and music by William Boyce.

interchanging collective performance, a sung image of "British" military rule. The jingoistic stage song aligns with the paradigm of dominance and subordination inherent in his earlier remarks that link "honest natural" Corsicans with the "pastoral" pathos of similarly subaltern Scots. Indeed, David Garrick and William Boyce composed the rousing "Heart of Oak" to serve a mustering of British patriotic feeling and military recruitment in response to rumors of the day that a French fleet of flat-bottom boats was preparing to invade England. Onto his encounter with his "good friends" in Corsica, Boswell overlays the theatrical-performance mode for the song on a London stage with himself in the stage role of lead singer, who in military costume begins to intone in solo before a hearty and collective chorus. "Come cheer up my lads, 'tis to glory we steer" opens this solo exhortation that will lead to the chorus of patriots responding after each stanza (Simpson 1966:299-301):

> Heart of oak are our ships.
> Heart of oak are our men.
> We always are ready. Steady, boys, steady.
> We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again.

For the eighteenth-century world the theater functioned in one form or another as an important reference point in social converse as well as in literary and journalistic commentary. Boswell was a particularly enthusiastic playgoer as well as an obvious "ham" who constructs himself theatrically in the scenes he depicts in his writings. He seems to have staged himself as prominently as possible in the "real life" the writings represent. However, Boswell's histrionic personality aside, the omnipresent sway of drama as a ready cultural forum encouraged the theatricality, oral artfulness, and performance orientation of even the most private and informal of personal exchanges. Boswell's declamation of the speech from Addison's play mentioned above supplies an earlier example of this kind of conversational performative citation. John Gay's song-filled drama, *The Beggar's Opera* (1728), was one of the most recognizable playhouse touchstones and a particular Boswell favorite. We know that he dressed up as its rakish hero Macheath on more than one occasion and often referred to the play and its songs.

"Youth's the Season Made for Joys" from *The Beggar's Opera* illustrates the way that theatrical figures, texts, and songs supplied shared reference points in social discourse. The song figures in a journal entry of 30 March 1775 that depicts a breakfast conversation with "the Hon. Mrs. Stuart," a friend of Boswell's wife who became his confidante as well and for whom Boswell developed a great fondness.[6] The song in the original play by Gay is a deceptively lilting and ironic *carpe diem* exhortation that is sung by a chorus of whores who are about to betray the hero Macheath to the authorities. This dashing highwayman who could not withstand his desire for women supplied an often-invoked alter-ego for the compulsively womanizing Boswell. Used as an

"Youth's the Season Made for Joys," *The Beggar's Opera*

[6] Margaret (Cunynghame) Stuart was the wife of James Archibald Stuart, younger brother of Boswell's friend John Stuart, Lord Mountstuart, later fourth Earl and first Marquess of Bute, who had traveled with him to Italy.

allusion in this account of his flirtatious conversation with Margaret Stuart on sexual promiscuity, the song brings to this social interchange between the two an associative crackle of invitation, resistance, irony, innuendo, and taboo. Such references typically work along the associative and situational axes outlined by Dubois whereby the song may be linked to one's own life or to a particular person or group of people as a figure or analogue.

Exemplifying the longstanding *carpe diem* literary motif of lyric poetry going back to classical times, "Youth's the Season Made for Joys" functions as a collectively known analogue whose meaning expresses in parallel and with the indirection of metaphor a meaning in the "real life" context of the conversation in which the reference occurs. The Latin phrase *carpe diem* ("seize the day") as a literary trope is a conventional invitation by a usually male speaker who asserts that life is short and time is fleeting and urges his usually female auditor—often represented as a virgin—to acquiesce to his invitation to make the most of sexual pleasures. The conversation with Margaret Stuart reported in Boswell's diary is redolent of the flirtatious parrying of the conventional motif represented in the song. He recounts (1963:109-10):

> This morning we talked of gallantry. I explained or illustrated the manners of Italy; said that a gay society of people of gallantry there was like an orrery. The planets were in continual rotation: as one falls, another rises. If I grow indifferent to one lady, I catch a warmth for another, and my former *flame* beams kindly on some man who has grown cold to some other, and thus it goes round. That there is more immediate happiness is certain, for people are kept constantly in the delirium of love. But I told her that an Italian lady said to me that our ladies were much happier, who married from attachment and preserved a constancy, for when Italian ladies grow old, they are in a sad situation. "But," said I, "it maybe said age is a bad thing at any rate; and we are not to lose exquisite happiness while we can enjoy it, merely because we shall afterwards be worse in age." That one might reason according to the song in *The Beggar's Opera*: "Youth's the season made for joy, etc., Age is nought but sorrow." Mrs. Stuart said she did not think it was. I said the women were great cheats; they were so cold. That the men talk of them in such terms, and imagine them so much occupied with amorous inclinations, but they find very little reality of that kind. She said she had often laughed at the men on that account; and she really believed that very few women ever thought of it when young girls; that she used to have an aversion to the very idea of it; and that she never had any conversation with her.[7]

A mechanical apparatus, the orrery was very popular in the eighteenth century for representing the placements and motions of the planets revolving in the solar system. The song "Youth's the Season" supplies a text and tune that "circle" their theme, each stanza returning to and concluding with its opening two lines. The first stanza with its *carpe diem* words thus unfolds (Gay 1969:134-36):

> Youth's the season made for joys,
> Love is then our duty.

[7] The conversation breaks off at this point because five pages were torn from the manuscript, according to the editors, "not earlier than 1912," whether by accident or from a desire to suppress the material is unknown.

> She alone whom that employs
> Well deserves her beauty.
> Let's be gay while we may
> Beauty's a flower despised in decay.

At its conclusion, the song text and tune return—circling round, as it were—to the opening: "Youth's the season made for joys, / Love is then our duty." In this way, Boswell's allusion to the song—and one can well imagine him singing, not just declaiming the reference in this reported conversation—enacts in its oral/aural performance the circularity of the orrery as well as its rising and falling (by means of the tune). With even more complexity, this familiar reference takes into the conversation the song's ironic meaning within the original dramatic context: a scene depicting a rakish man being betrayed by his doxies.

By weaving dialogue and song, this moment in the conversation immediately deepens into resonating and complicating levels of communication and meaning for the two conversants on a literary and courtly model, evoked in the conventions of the song and its cavalcade of *carpe diem* analogues from Roman antiquity through the Middle Ages to Boswell's day. Functioning in this way, songs become what I have elsewhere termed "critical instants" in social discourse (Dugaw 1989-90:157-75; 2001:169-85). Certainly Margaret Stuart's laughter and retorts should be understood as operating with respect to the playful innuendo and ironic and seductive undertows that are present in the conversational exchange and its employment of shared cultural recognition and knowing. Once again, as Vich and Zavala encourage, we see the power dynamics of gender relations in this scene of parrying repartee between the rakishly suggestive Boswell and the flirtatiously fending-off Margaret Stuart, on the subject of gallantry and sexual promiscuity. Her rejoinder in this verbal match-up maintains a kind of equilibrium in this revisiting of the "tit-for-tat" theme of Boswell's sexually inflected ditty at the top of Highgate hill. Remarking to her soliciting and complaining suitor that she often "laughed at the men on that account," she maintains her equilibrium and keeps the orrery of the conversation in motion.

Boswell spontaneously composed songs, as we saw from his journal entry about his arrival in London, dipping into a stock of well-known texts, tunes, references, and commonplaces in a world of shared conventional forms in which the songs and singing of the day abounded. Boswell apparently used the tune for the traditional Scottish ballad known to scholars as "The Gypsy Laddie" (Child 1884-98:No. 200), for a humorous ditty that he and some Scottish friends improvised one cold November evening in 1782. He says in his diary (1981:14):

> Walked to the village of Auchnleck and rouped [auctioned the rental of] the farm of Stonebriggs; dined with Mr. Dun, and came home pleased with self and everybody. Found Mr. and Mrs. Hamiltons . . . . Was glad to see them, and spent the night in agreeable mirth, towards which an extempore verse of a song upon the Earl of Cassilis and Miss Coopers greatly contributed.

Boswell's song satirizes the bachelor David Kennedy, Tenth Earl of Cassilis, Member of Parliament for Ayrshire. A certain pair of "Miss Coopers" arrived in the neighborhood from London with marriage plans for the unmarried Lord Cassilis. As the little ditty of Boswell and his friends relates, the ladies were not successful. Lord Cassilis died a bachelor in 1792. The text

for Boswell's song is (Johnson 1853:iv, 410):

> The Coopers they came to Lord Cassilis at Colzean,
> With their hoops all tight and ready,
> From London they came down, baith the black and the brown
> And they wanted to give him a lady.
> 'Your Lordship we pray, may not say us nae,
> For it's now full time you was girded.'
> Quoth the Earl, 'Faith my dears, so great are my fears
> In conscience I'd rather be yearded [buried].[8]

The impromptu "verse" of Boswell and his friends makes use of traditional images from comical lore and caricature, as the ladies with their sexually suggestive "tight hoops" arrive to noose a conventionally fearful and reluctant beau. The original "Gypsy Laddie," an anonymous popular ballad that flourished in oral traditions and on broadsides of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, supplies an ironic citation, for the song tells of a highborn lady who runs off in love with "Johnny Faa," a "gypsy." A version of the song in Allan Ramsay's *Tea-Table Miscellany* (1740) reports the husband's discovery in the following stanza (Child 1884-98:iv, 65-66):

> And when our lord came hame at een,
> And speir'd for his fair lady,
> The tane she cry'd, and the other reply'd,
> 'She's away with the gypsie laddie.'

The use of the traditional tune of the "Gypsy Laddie" for Boswell's satirical little ballad about the unmarrying Lord Cassilis has particular resonance, for Scottish variants of the ballad identify the runaway wife as "The Earl of Cassilis' ladie" as in the following variant of the ballad, whose opening stanza states (66):

> The gypsies they came to my lord Cassilis' yet,
> And O but they sang bonnie!
> They sang sae sweet and sae complete
> That down came our fair ladie.

This episode of convivial satiric song-smithing on a Scottish winter's night evinces the shared associations and lexical elements of oral performance art that we can look for in any context. Although perhaps more often reserved for formulaic and ceremonial performances in oral cultures of the present, the analysis of such concepts applies with equal usefulness to the song-making and performance of even so literary and literate a company as that of James Boswell and his genteel neighbors.

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[8] The verses were printed with the tune "Johnnie Faa, or The Gipsie Laddie."

The diaries of James Boswell supply a prolific and varied panorama of the oral circulation of songs and the vibrancy of oral performance in eighteenth-century Britain, as reported by a literate, imaginative, and musically enthusiastic member of the upper ranks. In these journal entries, with their vivid stagings of song performance in a wide variety of social settings and occasions, we see how levels of musical culture—traditional, popular, elite—coalesce both within Boswell's sensibility and across his social relations and familial, collegial, amatory, economic, and political contexts. Folklore, literary history, cultural studies, and the theorizing of orality still operate with constraints that have come into being historically and keep this coalescence from being inadequately examined. The immediacies, dimensions, and dynamism of orality across time and societies call for deftly conceptualized theories of orality in all the contexts in which it occurs. As Boswell's journals bear out, songs sung and cited invoke phenomenological spaces that people inhabit together. Songs are collective forms that can both mitigate and enhance differences, as aspects of relation among people emerge in a field of oral performance, aural reference, and shared experience.

A glimpse of this dynamic of oral exchange among individuals within a shared culture emerges in Boswell's conversation in 1775 with Margaret Stuart discussed above. As the diary reports, she sang several songs. Trying to learn one of them from her, Boswell expresses his frustration at trying to learn this "fine plaintive Irish one on the subject of love . . . [that] was ill to catch being like a swallow's flying, the notes wavered so and did so dip and rise and skim along." But he determines to persist, his anecdote supplying a vivid metaphor for this dynamic of singing and song, as the diarist himself notes: "I resolved to get it from her. I was in the most pleasing spirits, and, as she sung, expressed my joy in metaphor borrowed from my favourite *liqueur*: 'This is quite a dram. This is the very kernal taste'" (Boswell 1963:110).[9]

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[9] By "kernal taste" Boswell means apricot brandy.

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Written Composition and (Mem)oral Decomposition: The Case of "The Suffolk Tragedy"

Tom Pettitt

For the study of verbal performance culture in late medieval and early modern England—that significant triangular continuum between a literature, theatre, and folklore that had yet to negotiate their modern borders—oral tradition in its purest form has limited relevance. On the one hand, in a culture in which "oral, scribal and printed media fed in and out of each other as part of a dynamic process of reciprocal interaction and mutual infusion" (Fox 2000:410), a given narrative's complete trajectory from composition, through transmission, to performance and reception, altogether independent of writing, print, or reading, will certainly have occurred, but will not necessarily have been typical, and while audible then would be invisible now: the word-craft of the past is accessible to us in the present only by virtue of having undergone material textualization at some point in the meantime. On the other hand, it is evident that ignoring non-textual processes would severely hamper a fully historical appreciation, even at the more literary end of the spectrum.[1] Shakespearean tragedy, no less than popular ballads and folk wondertales, is performed from memory and can be transmitted from one performer to another without the intervention of a written or printed text (Graves 1922; Troubridge 1950-51). And while not all oral tradition involves improvisation, improvisation is invariably oral, and as late as the nineteenth century a stroller performing in English provincial fairgrounds reported that he had more than once been "told what character he's to take, and what he's to do, and he's supposed to be able to find words capable of illustrating the character." The same informant reckoned that for one actor who learned his part ten did not (Rosenfeld 1960:149). Much if not most of even non-dramatic verbal culture was experienced as performance, as activity rather than artifact, deep into the early modern period, and a gentleman visiting Devon in the early nineteenth century was startled to find that the poetry of the seventeenth-century cavalier-clergyman Robert Herrick had been preserved in local memory among his parishioners, passed down orally from parent to child for a century and a half (Marcus 1986:140).

In such a "para-literate" culture (Bennett and Green 2004:10), those non-textual processes will have been involved to greatly varying degrees (over time; between cultural systems; among genres) and will have had varying impacts on the verbal material subjected to

[1] For the purposes of this study, "text" (and "textual") will refer exclusively to verbal production in the form of visual signs (writing; print) on a material surface (here invariably paper, but in theory also vellum, stone, etc.).

them. They will also have comprised a complex of aspects between which it is necessary to distinguish more strictly than in a culture totally innocent of letters. "Oral" in this context is best taken to mean specifically vocalization in performance, and it applies with equal legitimacy to both retrieving words from memory and reading them aloud from a text. Reception of oral performance is correspondingly "aural," but we need other terms for what happens before the first performance and between subsequent performances.

Composition can also be oral if it is coterminous with performance (or, conversely, if performance involves a significant degree of improvised re-composition), but in late medieval and early modern England it is just as likely to have been literally scribal: as words form in the mind they are written down (although they may take a detour through the composer's voice to his ears before they get to his hand). If composition involves neither simultaneous oral utterance nor scribal registration, the sequence of words remaining within the mind, it may be designated "mental," by analogy with the arithmetic that is engaged in without benefit of pen and paper. But the definitive cultural distinction relates to the mode of conservation of verbal material between composition and performance, or between performances. If conservation is not as written or printed characters then it is in the memory, which, rather than the page, duly provides the medium from which the verbal material is retrieved in performance. The opposite of "written" transmission, which involves conservation as text and vocalization from a text, is therefore not "oral" transmission, but what I suggest we designate "memoral" ("memor-al"/"mem-oral") tradition, since it comprises conservation in, and oral performance from, memory (and, conversely, memorization from oral performance by the next performer in the chain of transmission). But of course in cultural reality the transmission of a verbal product from composition to a given performance (not least if traversing a sequence of performers) can have comprised almost any imaginable permutation of the processes just described, and in varying proportions.

Amidst this complexity, it is evident that no assumptions can be made about the non-textual processes involved in a given tradition of verbal culture in late medieval or early modern England. Faced with the text of a medieval work whose form we suspect may have been influenced or even determined by memoral processes, there is no alternative to an analysis designed to determine the presence and relative significance of symptoms of textual and memoral processes, respectively (enhanced, when possible, by external information on how works of this kind were transmitted at the period). But what are the symptoms of memoral transmission? These too defy generalization, for while some may apply universally others will reflect other factors: professional versus amateur performers; ceremonial versus convivial context; spoken versus chanted versus sung performance; stanzaic versus stichic verse; narrative versus dramatic versus lyric mode. For each permutation of these, the symptoms of memoral transmission need to be established by comparative analyses of different versions of a verbal product within a given genre or tradition at various points in its trajectory from composition through transmission to reception, and preferably under circumstances where the interference of textual processes can be ascertained and allowed for.

Paradoxically but unavoidably, those traditions most likely to have involved the largest degree of memoral transmission are the least likely to survive, not least in multiple versions of externally ascertainable relationships: so much so indeed that controlled experiments have been

undertaken to *create* the evidence by recording performances of late medieval popular narratives deliberately committed to, and retrieved from, memory by a modern scholar (Zaerr 2005; Zaerr and Ryder 1993-94). The results are intriguing and useful, but with due caution something less artificial is feasible by examination of material from post-medieval, and thus better documented, phases of narrative tradition, in an area of verbal culture in which there is strong likelihood of a considerable degree of continuity from earlier periods.

The area concerned is that of narrative song, which in the English-language traditions of the British Isles, as in many cultures of Western Europe, can be encountered in the very different, but strongly related, contexts of oral tradition and popular print. The "popular ballads" recorded from English and Scottish folk tradition and figuring in most anthologies and surveys of English Literature—songs such as "Sir Patrick Spens"; "The Wife of Usher's Well"; "Edward"—actually have less authentic claim to either the noun or the adjective than the much maligned but vastly more numerous commercial songs that shared the same stanza forms and many melodies. Within about a century of the introduction of printing there emerged in London (and subsequently in the English provinces, Scotland, and Ireland) a highly commercialized business—effectively the first of England's mass media—which supplied popular songs known as ballads to a broad market in the form of single sheets of paper with the text of a song on one side, hence "broadside ballads." Within the limitations of the ambient technology these were multimedia products. The text, usually set out in stanzas, was designed to be sung, often with an existing popular tune specified as suitable for the purpose, and illustrated by a more or less suitable woodcut. From the late sixteenth to the late nineteenth century, hundreds of new ballads were issued each year. Commissioned from professional hack writers, published in massive, sometimes six-figure print-runs, sold at a discount to both stationary stall-holders and itinerant peddlers, they reached and were popular with a socially very broad audience, from the metropolis to the most distant and isolated communities.[2]

The vigor of this popular song culture complicates inordinately any attempt to write the history of "folksong" (including the traditional ballad) in England. There is no doubt that there were "memoral" traditions of song in England in the medieval period, the Victorian period, and all the periods in between: songs received aurally from performance, conserved in the memory, then retrieved from memory in oral performance, and that in a tradition linking a series of singers over many decades or centuries. It is equally clear that a significant segment of these traditions survived into the early twentieth century, to be recorded as "folksongs" by Cecil Sharp and other collectors, both in the British Isles and North America. But the two modes had manifestly tangled with each other throughout the time of their joint existence (reproducing, with greater intensity, the entanglement of manuscript and memoral tradition in earlier periods). It is possible, greatly to be hoped, and entirely in keeping with the commercial spirit of the broadside business, that some songs printed as broadsides were actually acquired on the cheap from memoral tradition, recorded from a singer rather than bought from an author, and thus inadvertently preserve an antecedent "folk" tradition. (Something similar has plausibly been claimed of the blues recorded and issued as "race records" in the United States in the early twentieth century.) But the reverse is equally if not more plausible and amply documented: songs written for the

[2] Standard introductions to the broadside trade include Rollins 1919; Würzbach 1989; Shepard 1973.

broadside business having been printed, hawked around the countryside, bought, sung, memorized and passed on (the original print having been discarded at some point in the interim), entered memoral tradition, in due course to be encountered and recorded as folksongs. Indeed, the recorded corpus of folksongs probably underrepresents the extent of the phenomenon, as collectors, who believed they were rescuing from oblivion a national song heritage of considerable antiquity, were less likely to record a song that they recognized as deriving from a broadside—unless it had what sounded like an old tune (in which case they tended to note down only the first verse of the song).

The folksong credentials of such broadside derivatives might therefore be suspect, but the derivation facilitates investigations that come as close as we ever can to an understanding of the impact of memoral transmission on verbal material (in song form) over a substantial period. The present writer has accordingly undertaken a series of experiments that involve juxtaposing, with an original text published as a broadside in the seventeenth, eighteenth, or nineteenth century, derivative, folksong versions subsequently recovered from memoral tradition. While the memoral versions of a given song of course vary from each other, there is a distinct tendency for them to differ from the original broadside in the same kinds of ways. That these are indeed characteristic symptoms of memoral transmission (in a generally literate environment) is increasingly confirmed as repeated experiments with different songs show—if always with interesting adjustments—similar results. The focus on narrative songs of course reflects the present writer's literary interests, not least the emergence of this research under the auspices of controversies concerning the transmission of the traditional—narrative—ballads.

The greatest potential weakness of this approach is that (in accordance with a process invoked a moment ago) the folksong may stem precisely from an antecedent memoral tradition of which the broadside itself is a derivative, effectively reversing the thrust of the evidence (and rendering the results unsafe when we cannot know which direction is the true one).[3] This danger can largely be obviated, however, by studying news broadsides reporting specific crimes, trials, and executions that actually happened, so that the broadside ballad concerned (however much indebted to established generic paradigms) is effectively a new song: any versions subsequently recorded from oral tradition must be derived from the original broadside, either exclusively through memoral tradition or (in some documented instances) via an intermediate, revised broadside whose contribution to the changes can be exactly ascertained (see Pettitt 1994, 1997a, 1997b, 2001).

The changes perceived in such experiments with narrative songs indicate that verbal material produced under the conventional "literary" auspices, whose composition is initially scribal and whose transmission is initially textual—written by a professional, then printed and sold on a broadside—when subjected thereafter to the memorial preservation, oral performance, and aural reception characteristic of folk (memoral) tradition, systematically loses many of the features with which it was initially characterized and acquires others. The original broadside ballads display the typical features of a popular, grub-street journalism that symptomatically emerged and developed contemporaneously with the rise of the novel. The account of the crime

[3] This is the problem with explorations otherwise analogous to the present experiments, for example Greene 1967.

and trial is expansive and circumstantial, explicit on names, places, and times, and painting the scene of the outrage (and in the case of murder the discovery of the body) with uncompromising and lurid detail. The characteristic ethos is that opportunistic combination of the moral (take warning by this man's fate), the melodramatic (the victim begs for mercy), the sentimental (the criminal begs for forgiveness), and in the case of a female victim, voyeuristic titillation (purple gore on lily-white breast) we still associate with tabloid journalism. The narrative is packaged between the buttonholing "come all ye" *incipit*, by which the ballad-vendor was to attract a crowd, and the concluding valediction of the narrator or, just as often, the perpetrator, who having ostensibly told his story anticipates with horror his impending fate—the ballads in many cases designed to be sold at the public execution, which attracted vast crowds.

The oral derivatives are in contrast leaner and meaner, the pressures of their transmission tending to subtract anything not essential for the progress of the narrative (not least that opening and closing packaging and any moralizing, sentimental, or melodramatic elaboration along the way). The process can be compared to the weathering of rock or the wearing of cloth to reveal the underlying structures and their patternings that hold the whole together. In a literary context that has half an eye on late medieval culture, a more appropriate image—less agreeable but enabling a useful play on words—is the decay of a corpse in which the softer tissues disappear and reveal the skeletal structure beneath. It is usefully represented by the "cadaver tombs" of late medieval churches and cathedrals, which display the dignitary fully fleshed and in all his magnificence above (equivalent to the song as composed in writing) and beneath the corpse (the song as decomposed in and by memoral transmission), with the clothes reduced to rags and the body literally to the bare bones (including the incremental repetition of the rib-cage), which more resemble other skeletons than the living man resembled other men.[4]

To translate this into generic terms (and invoke yet another image), memoral tradition has something of the function of a "ballad machine," gradually shaping narrative songs into conformity with the traditional ballads, a genre canonized in Francis James Child's *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (Child 1965). These are characterized precisely by the impersonality and economy of their narrative, and the crime broadsides also acquire in the course of transmission some of the verbal repetition patterns familiar from traditional balladry, as well as verbal commonplaces or formulas. In the rare cases where the oral versions have actually *added* narrative material to the song, it tends to be scenes or motifs familiar from other traditional ballads (usually expressed in conventional ballad idiom), either deriving from specific songs or (more likely) of a formulaic status that is common to the tradition as a whole.

But there is a further insight to be gained from the crime, trial, and execution broadsides, for precisely by virtue of being news ballads we can sometimes juxtapose them not merely forwards, with their folksong derivatives, but sideways, with contemporary journalistic accounts of the events concerned, whose manner of handling the narrative provides illuminating similarities and contrasts. Indeed, in rare instances the broadside can be compared backwards with a journalistic prose account that provided its immediate source, permitting an analysis of a narrative's trajectory towards and through memoral tradition at various stages. This is feasible

[4] A classic instance is the tomb of Bishop Thomas Bekynton (died 1465) in Wells cathedral. For illustrations of this and several other examples, see Fairweather 08 15 07.

since broadside ballad authors seem not to have acquired their information about the events they relate by attending the trials of the accused (which often took place at distant towns on the regional assize circuits). They based their accounts on reports in the newspapers or in occasional newssheets, both of which (prior to the tabloids' usurpation of the sensationalist function of the broadsides in the late nineteenth century) tended to be relatively restrained and factual, often presenting what they at least claimed were verbatim transcripts of statements in court and judicial documents. Accordingly, under favorable conditions comparisons can be made between the content, form, and style of a prose account that is the product of scribal composition, designed to be textually transmitted and received by reading, with a parallel or directly derivative stanzaic rendition of the same story, which while composed in writing and designed initially for publication in print, is also created to be suitable for singing: that is, oral performance and aural reception, and probably also in the knowledge that the song would thereafter be diffused by word of mouth and enter memoral tradition—whose impact, as already noted, can be discerned in the derivative folksongs.

As might be anticipated, while there are some instances where it is possible to juxtapose journalistic prose accounts and a broadside ballad on a given crime, and others where it is possible to juxtapose an original news ballad with its folksong derivatives, the number of cases permitting sequential juxtaposition of all three is extremely limited. This may be precisely because news ballads generally tended to have a restricted shelf-life in folk tradition, and it may be no coincidence that those that did make it as folksongs were advantaged by a case with particularly striking and memorable features, like the revelation of the whereabouts of the corpse of one victim in her mother's dream (as in the song to be explored below) or the sleepless nights of the murderer haunted by hellish visions. It is also noticeable that those broadside ballads that devoted greater efforts to telling the story than to moralizing over it or to wallowing in the condemned criminal's remorse and spiritual conversion seem to have been more congenial to the needs and tastes of folk tradition.

There follows a longitudinal study along these lines of one of those rare songs for which these conditions are met, and in a particularly useful way, enabling revealing comparative analysis of the way the same narrative was first written as prose for reading, then composed into a song for singing, only to be decomposed by singing in memoral tradition. The song concerned is "The Suffolk Tragedy, or the Red Barn Murder" (beginning "Young lovers all, I pray draw near"), one of the several news ballads inspired by the 1828 trial and execution of William Corder for the murder (in 1827) of Maria Marten at the notorious "Red Barn" at Polstead, Suffolk.[5] I have only recently disentangled it from the better-known "Murder of Maria Marten" ("Come all you thoughtless young men"), already subjected to a similar comparative

[5] I have used "The Suffolk Tragedy, Or, the Red Barn Murder" issued by Thomas Ford of Chesterfield, Thomas Ford's Ballads, Derby City Libraries: Local Studies Library, accession no. 60374, # 121, and acknowledge with thanks both the provision of a copy and permission to quote. See below for discussion of other printings. For purposes of comparison with the derivative folksong version, I have resolved the text into ballad quatrains (as signaled by the rhyme-scheme) and supplied stanza numbers.

analysis at an earlier stage of this project (Andersen and Pettitt 1985).[6] It will be relevant for what follows to note that while based on real events, "The Suffolk Tragedy" belongs to the "murdered sweetheart" subgenre of crime and execution broadsides, telling the story of a gullible young woman who is lured away to a lonely spot and murdered by her seducer when she demands he fulfill his promise to marry her—a subgenre that emerged in the mid-seventeenth century and persisted strongly throughout the life of the broadside ballad as a news medium. The existence of this subgenre will be among the factors shaping the way the broadside handles the available information about the case (see Pettitt 2005).

As a first step, we may see how the original broadside compares with a contemporary journalistic account, and the idiosyncrasy of dating the murder to May 19th the two share (ballad stanza 7.2; other sources give May 18th), together with many parallels in phrasing (signaled below by my underlinings), suggests that the prose report is the direct source for the first eighteen stanzas of our broadside (on the right below).[7] The account (on the left) is taken from a prose newssheet on the discovery of the body published, ironically, by the London printer James Catnach,[8] who also published the rival ballad on the case, "The Murder of Maria Marten":

Atrocious Murder of a Young Woman in Suffolk. Singular Discovery of the Body From a Dream. Printed J. Catnach, 1828

The Suffolk Tragedy or The Red Barn Murder. Printed Thomas Ford, Chesterfield[9]

1. Young lovers all, I pray draw near
and listen unto me,
While unto you I do relate
a dreadful Tragedy

A murder,

---

[6] The two songs have now accordingly been assigned separate numbers in the Roud Broadside Ballad and Folk Song Indexes with "The Murder of Maria Marten" as 215 and "The Suffolk Tragedy" as 18814 (Roud 08 15 07). The other ballads based on this case are "The Red Barn Tragedy" ("Come all you young lovers, I pray you attend"), "A Copy of Verses on the Execution of Wm. Corder" ("Hark! 'tis the dreary midnight bell"), and "William Corder" ("Good people I pray draw near"). Passing references in contemporary sources suggest there were probably others.

[7] The historical accuracy of the ballad is not an issue in its own right, but to the extent the chronology of (real) events may be useful it is as follows. 1827: Maria Marten killed by William Corder in the Red Barn and buried there, Friday, May 18; 1828: body found, April 19; Corder arrested, April 22; Inquest records verdict of unlawful killing by Corder, April 26; Corder convicted and condemned at Bury Assizes, Friday, August 8; hanged, Monday, August 11. On the events themselves and the extraordinary popular interest they provoked, see the website of the Moyse's Hall Museum, Bury St Edmunds (Moyse's Hall 08 15 7).

[8] *Atrocious Murder of a Young Woman in Suffolk. Singular Discovery of the Body from a Dream*, in Hindley 1968:180-82. The same account appears almost verbatim in *The Sunday Times* of 27 April 1828 (*Sunday Times* 1972), but verbal details suggest the ballad derives directly from the Catnach newssheet (which itself is probably derived from the newspaper).

[9] Two other printings of the song have been consulted, one with the same title, "The Suffolk Tragedy or the Red Barn Murder," and no indication of printer or place (Oxford, Bodleian Library Johnson Ballads 2889), the other titled "The Red Barn Murder of Maria Marten" issued by Plant of Nottingham (Cambridge University Library, Madden Collection, vol. 20 [Country Printers 5], #116). Neither has any textual variations of significance for the current inquiry except for the way they refer to the barn where the decisive events occur. The Ford of Chesterfield

rivalling in cold-blooded atrocity that of Weare,
has been brought to light, within a few days,

at Polstead, in the county of Suffolk.
The circumstances which have reached us
are as follows:-- Maria Marten,
a fine young woman, aged twenty-five,
the daughter of a mole-catcher in the above village,
formed an imprudent connection,
two or three years ago,
with a young man, named William Corder,
the son of an opulent farmer
in the neighbourhood,

by whom she had a child.

He appeared much attached to her,
and was a frequent visitor at her father's.

On the 19th of May last,
she left her father's house,

2. As for cold-blooded cruelty
the like was never heard,
It is as true as ever was heard
or put upon record.

3. In the County of Suffolk
'twas in Polstead Town,
Maria Marten lived there
by many she was known,

4. Her beauty caused many young men
to court her as we find,
At length upon a farmer's son
this damsel fix'd her mind.

5. As they walked out one evening clear,
she unto him did say
William, my dear, **my time draws near**
let's fix our wedding day,

6. **You know I am with child by you**,
then bitterly she cried
Dry up your tears, my dear, says he
you soon shall be my bride.

7. In eighteen hundred and twenty seven
nineteenth day of May,
Maria was dressed in men's clothes,
her mother then did say,

---

text used here, like that printed by Plant of Nottingham, consistently refers to this site as the "Red Barn" (stanzas 9.1, 11.1, 12.3, 14.4, 15.1.): it is never merely "the barn." The latter is the designation, however, in three of the references(sts. 11.1, 12.3, 15.1) in the unattributed print in the Bodleian Johnson Ballads. When compared with the source narrative, the Catnach prose account, honors are evenly divided between the two alternatives: in the three instances where the prose also refers to the barn, each alternative agrees with the source and against the other on one occasion (in the third instance all agree). The priority of the Bodleian variant may be suggested by its inclusion of a woodcut (evidently meant to represent Corder) that also appears on a follow-up Catnach newssheet reporting further developments in the case: *Atrocious Murder of a Young Woman in Suffolk. Singular Discovery of the Body from a Dream. Apprehension of the Murderer at Ealing, Middlesex*; see Hindley 1968:183-85. If this is the case, then the uniformity of the references in the other (now derivative) printings may be due to the kind of internal contamination otherwise associated with memory-based transmission—in this instance the time between a compositor consulting the copy text (which probably happened less often in connection with a popular song) and setting the print. In popular consciousness "the Red Barn Murder" quickly became synonymous with the Marten case.

stating, **in answer to some queries**,

that she was going to the Red Barn
to meet William Corder,
who was to be waiting there with a chaise
to convey her to Ipswich,
where they were to be married.
In order to deceive observers,
Corder's relations being hostile to the connection,
she was to dress in man's attire,
which she was to exchange at the barn

for her bridal garments.

She did not return at the time expected;
but being in the habit of leaving home
for many days together,
no great alarm was expressed by her parents.

8. My daughter why disguise yourself,
I pray tell unto me,
Where are you going? For I fear
some harm will come to thee.

9. Mother! I am going to the Red Barn
to meet my William dear,

His friends won't know me on the road

and when I do get there

10. I'll put on my wedding robes
then we shall haste away,
To Ipswich Town, to-morrow is fixed
for our wedding day.

11. She straight went to the Red Barn
and never more was seen

> When, however, several weeks had elapsed, and no intelligence was received of their daughter, although Corder was still at home, the parents became anxious in their inquiries. Corder named a place at a distance where he said she was, but that he could not bring her home for fear of displeasing his friends. Her sister, he said, might wear her clothes, as she would not want them. Soon after this, Corder's health being impaired, he, in real or pretended accordance with some advice he had received, resolved on going abroad. Accordingly, he left home in September last, expressing a great anxiety before he left to have the barn well filled. He took with him about £400. Several letters have been received by his mother (a widow) and sister, as well as by the Martens, in which he stated that he was living with Maria in the Isle of Wight. These, however, bear the London post-mark. He regularly desired that all his letters should be burnt, which request was not complied with. Strange surmises lately gained circulation throughout the neighbourhood, and one person stated, as a singular circumstance, that on the evening when Maria Marten disappeared, he had seen Corder enter the Red Barn with a pick-axe.

The parents became more and more
disturbed and dissatisfied, and these fears

were still more strongly agitated
by the mother dreaming,
on three successive nights last week,
that her daughter had been murdered,

and buried in the Red Barn.

She insisted that the floor of the barn
should be upturned.
On Saturday, Marten, the father,
with his mole spade and a neighbour with a rake,
went to examine the barn;

and soon, near the spot where the woman dreamt
her daughter lay buried,

and only about a foot and a half underground,

the father turned up a piece of a shawl
which he knew to have belonged to his daughter,
and his assistant with his rake
pulled out part of a human body.
Horror struck, the unhappy father and his neighbour
staggered from the spot.
The remains were afterwards disinterred,
the body being in a state of decomposition.
The pelisse, shawl, Leghorn bonnet, and shoes

Until eleven months were past,
the mother dreamed a dream,

12. That her daughter was murdered by
the man she loved so dear,
In the Red Barn beneath the floor
her body was buried there.

13. Three times she dreamed
the same dream
then to the father said,
I beg you will rise instantly,
and with you take the spade,

14. Our neighbour with his pickaxe
will bear you company,
To the far corner of the Red Barn
where our daughter does lie.

15. They went to the Red Barn,
the corner they were told,
The same spot the mother dream'd,
they raised the floor and mould,

16. When they had dug
eighteen inches deep,
the body there they found
Tied in a sack, and mangled
with many a ghastly wound.

17. Her shawl, her bonnet and pelisse
in the grave were found,
That eleven months had been
buried underground.

were, however, distinctly identified
as those once belonging to Maria Marten. . . .

18. Soon as they were discovered
they were identified
To be Maria Marten's when
she left home to become a bride.

. . . .

The remaining stanzas (19-24) of the broadside, which will be quoted in full below, are evidently based on a later source of a similarly journalistic character reporting the arrest and trial of Corder. Indeed, the ballad author's eye may have been straying elsewhere towards the end of the stanzas quoted, since the detail of the body being found in a sack (stanza 16) does not appear in the prose account: it does appear, however, in the report of the discovery of the body, "Most Horrible Murder" in *The Sunday Times*, 27 April, 1828, which also, like the song, describes the body explicitly as "mangled."[10]

Even a cursory glance at these parallel texts will discern that in the transition from prose journalism to news broadside the most significant operative factor is subtraction. There is a lot the broadside does not choose to report, for example the reaction of the men recoiling, "horror struck," on discovering Maria's body. Perhaps the most notable omission is the account of events during the period that elapses between the disappearance of the girl and the discovery of her body, in which the main developments are Corder's various subterfuges to give the impression Maria Marten is still alive and to placate the anxiety of her family, narrated in the prose account with novelesque detail.

The result of the omissions, clearly deliberate, creates a leap from one episode to another of the kind more often associated with traditional ballads—an anticipation that is one of the deviations characteristic of this particular experiment: "The Suffolk Tragedy," at least in its crime sequence, is narrated with somewhat greater efficiency than many another murdered sweetheart broadside. A further consequence is to have the mother's revelatory dream come unbidden, effectively as a providential event, rather than led up to with more psychological plausibility as it is in the prose account, prompted by growing suspicions and circumstantial evidence (such as Corder's being seen approaching the barn with a pickaxe on the day of the disappearance):

11. She straight went to the Red Barn,
and never more was seen,
Until eleven months were past,
the mother dreamed a dream.

Indeed, the status and function of the mother's revelatory dream are a small but central instance

[10] The "bleeding mangled body" of Maria is similarly invoked in "The Murder of Maria Marten," Hindley 1968:187, stanza 8.3. The phrase has a good gothic pedigree, with Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* of 1764 presenting "the bleeding mangled remains of the young prince" to the horrified gaze of his parents (Walpole 1985:17).

of what happens to narrative as it modulates through different discursive media. With no evidential force (and vulnerable to challenge) the mother's dream was not mentioned at the trial, even when she was called as a witness; in the journalistic account, it is prepared for by growing anxiety and made plausible by hints of what might have happened and where; in the broadside it is an unexplained and therefore supernatural intervention: as we shall see shortly in the derivative folksong, it has become the central, pivotal moment linking the disappearance and the discovery.[11]

In many passages the song marches side by side with the prose narrative, selecting sequences whose formulations, with many verbal echoes, change the original only as much as is necessary to meet the requirements of meter and rhyme. And as variant forms of journalism the two discourses share the device of packaging their narrative with a striking opening gambit, both finding "cold-blooded" an appropriate eye- (or ear-)catcher. They have a mutual interest in specifics, the song retaining place-names like Polstead, Suffolk, and Ipswich, as well as personal names like Maria and William.

There are occasions, however, when the simple expedient of retaining material but moving it has considerable impact. For example, the information that Maria was dressed in men's clothes, which in the prose narrative is part of a third-person account in the course of which Maria explained her plans, is in the broadside moved to become a description of how she looked, prompting the anxious question of the mother. This in turn amounts to an addition that is qualitatively, if not quantitatively, significant. For while the prose account has Maria explaining her plans merely "in answer to some queries," the latter is dramatized in the ballad as the mother's question, Maria's explanation correspondingly modulating into a first-person reply, the whole sequence transformed from narrative to a dialogue mode, which is evidently more congenial to a text designed for performance. The same process—the retention of material but in a different mode—occurs after the mother's dream. In the prose account we are merely told that she asked that the barn be examined and consequently that the father and the neighbor dug up the floor. In the song we are given her speech, which instructs the father, with the neighbor, to dig up the floor with their tools, leaving the next stanza to report they did so without the specifics.[12]

But perhaps the most significant instance of dialogue is also the song's major addition to the prose source: the interview between Maria and Corder where she demands marriage on account of her pregnancy. Its absence in all judicial sources and journalistic accounts (other than broadside ballads)[13] is probably accounted for by its not having happened. Or at least if trial evidence (and the *Sunday Times*' reporting of it) is to be believed, having produced her first

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[11] If the revelatory dream of Maria Marten's mother was indeed her own assertion rather than added at some phase in the mediation of the narrative, then this is undoubtedly an instance of ostension: the perception of reality shaped by pre-existing narrative conventions, the revelatory dream being a commonplace in popular and traditional murder narratives.

[12] That the neighbor's historically correct rake becomes a pickaxe may be a residual concatenation of spade and pickaxe from the—here unrecounted—murder and burial scene discussed above.

[13] Maria is also pregnant in "William Corder," while the pregnancy is omitted by "Copy of Verses, on the execution of Wm. Corder" and "The Murder of Maria Marten" (neither of which, however, mention the illegitimate child/children); "The Red Barn Tragedy" is closest to the journalistic accounts by including the birth and death of the child she bore to Corder.

illegitimate child some years previously by another man, Maria had had another, by Corder, some months before her murder. This latter child had died, and their surreptitious burial of its body had evidently prompted local suspicion: indeed, according to Corder's confession, the row in the barn had been provoked precisely by mutual recriminations over this incident. The prose account, if laconic, is in accordance with the evidence of the case as reported by the regular press, noting briefly Maria's "imprudent connection" with Corder, "by whom she had a child." But the ballad is coerced by subgeneric convention into staging a fully fledged pregnant-sweetheart-demands-marriage scene, with the evening walk and the dialogue deploying conventional phrases like "I am with child by you" and "fix the wedding day."[14]

In relation to the general run of murdered sweetheart ballads, a major idiosyncrasy of "The Suffolk Tragedy" is the absence of a murder scene, usually seized on by ballad writers as an occasion for a purple passage. Here, instead, we move directly from Maria's leaving home to the mother's dream about the body's whereabouts. We are quite effectively placed in the position of the mother, speculating about what has happened, rather than following Maria as the protagonist. But this rather (traditional) ballad-like manner of handling the material (unlike the matter of Corder's explanations for Maria's absence) does not involve the omission of material from the prose source, for the latter too stays with the parents, for the very good reason that it was written before the arrest of Corder and the trial (both prompting subsequent news-pamphlets from the Catnach presses) and lacks the necessary information. Our broadside writer (who does cover the trial) evidently chose not to switch sources and introduce information from one (which described the murder) while following the narrative line in another (which didn't): it is perhaps by way of compensation that when the body is found its condition bears witness to what happened in the missing murder scene: "mangled / with many a ghastly wound" (broadside stanza 16.3-4).

Performance of the "The Suffolk Tragedy" by Freda Palmer as recorded by Mike Yates (Hall 1998, item 12).

Thus composed, "The Suffolk Tragedy" was printed, sold, sung, remembered, and passed on, entering late English memoral tradition, and its impact can be ascertained by juxtaposition of the original text with the words of the song when it was recovered from folk singers. This did not happen often, and of the three versions available the only one suitable for full-scale analysis of this kind is the one recorded by Mike Yates in 1972 from the singing of Freda Palmer of

[14] As this suggests, broadside ballads are not innocent of the use of commonplace phrases akin to the formulas of traditional ballads: they are a boon to a somewhat uncommitted author writing at speed. It might be added for completeness' sake that the "Suffolk Tragedy" broadside as written also contains a few verbal repetitions between linked moments in the narrative ("eleven months"; "fix the wedding day"; "to the red Barn") noted below as characteristic symptoms of oral transmission: earlier studies have likewise indicated that it is not the repetitions themselves that are symptoms, but their frequency and the way they are generated out of non-repetitive formulations.

Witney in Oxfordshire.[15] Freda Palmer's version follows, juxtaposed with what is now the full text of the original broadside, with the underlining on this occasion signaling significant differences:

Original broadside printed Thomas Ford, Chesterfield, ca. 1828	**Derivative folksong** recorded Mike Yates, 1972
1. Young lovers all, I pray draw near, and listen unto me, While unto you I do relate a dreadful Tragedy,	
2. As for cold blooded cruelty the like was never heard, it is as true as ever was told or put upon record.	
3. In the County of Suffolk 'twas in Polstead Town, Maria Marten lived there by many she was known,	
4. Her beauty caused many young men to court her as we find, At length upon a farmer's son <u>this damsel</u> fix'd her mind.	10. <u>This damsel</u> caused many young men to court her as <u>you'll find</u> <u>Till</u> at length upon a farmer's son <u>this damsel</u> fixed her mind.[16]
5. As they walked out one evening clear, she unto him did say, William my dear, my time draws near, let's fix our wedding day,	
6. You know I am with child by you, then bitterly she cried, Dry up your tears my dear, says he,	

[15] For the broadside, see note 14; the oral text is my transcript of Freda Palmer's performance as recorded by Mike Yates (Hall 1998, item 12) with the exception of stanza 1 (not included in the recording as published "for technical reasons"), which is supplied from Yates 2002:3. I am grateful to Mike Yates for his permission to cite this text in full: this is not the first time that I have benefited from his song collection in both Great Britain and North America, and it will probably not be the last. Freda Palmer's performance is copyright Topic Records and is reproduced here with their kind permission.

[16] As my numbering indicates, this stanza, the earliest part of the broadside narrative remembered (broadside stanza 4), is actually sung last (as Palmer stanza 10). This order was not, however, an idiosyncrasy of this performance: it was the same when Freda Palmer was recorded singing this song by Steve Roud six years later in 1978 (personal communication, 25 Jan 2005) and evidently represents the song as she conceived of it.

you soon shall be my bride.

7. In eighteen hundred and twenty-seven,
nineteenth day of May,
Maria was dressed in men's clothes,
her mother then did say,
8. My daughter why disguise yourself,
I pray tell unto me
Where are you going? For I fear
some harm will come to thee.

9. Mother! I am going to the Red Barn
to meet my William dear
His friends won't know me on the road,
and when I do get there

10. I'll put on my wedding robes,
then we shall haste away,
To Ipswich Town, to-morrow is fixed
for our wedding day.

11. She straight went to the Red Barn,
and never more was seen,
Until eleven months were past,
the mother dreamed a dream,

12. That her daughter was murdered by
the man she loved so dear,
In the Red Barn, beneath the floor,
her body was buried there

13. Three times she dreamed the same dream
then to the father said,
I beg you will rise instantly,
and with you take your spade,

14. Our neighbour with his pickaxe
will bear you company,
To the far corner of the Red Barn
where our daughter does lie,

15. They went to the Red Barn,

1. In eighteen hundred and twenty-seven,
on the ninth day of June;
Maria was dressed all in men's clothes
and her mother to her did say
2. Oh daughter why dost thou disguise thyself
pray tell it unto me
For I'm sure some harm or other
may happen unto thee.

3. Oh mother I'm going to the Red Barn
to meet my William dear
His friends won't know me as I am
nor when I shall get there

4. I will put on my wedding gownd
and we will haste away
To Islip town tomorrow is fixed
all for our wedding day.

5. She straightway went to the Red Barn
and never more was seen
Till eleven months was over
her mother she dreamt a dream

6. Three nights she dreamt *the very same* dream
then unto her husband did say
I will have thee rise instantly
and with thee take thy spade

7. Thy neighbour with his pick-axe
shall bear thee company
To the fer corner of Red Barn
my daughter there you'll find

8. They straightway went to the Red Barn

to the corner they were told,
The same spot the mother dream'd
they raised the floor and mould,

16. When they had dug eighteen inches deep,
the body there they found,
Tied in a sack, and mangled
with many a ghastly wound.

17. Her shawl, her bonnet, and pelisse
in the grave were found,
That eleven months had been
buried under ground

18. Soon as they were discovered
they were identified
To be Maria Marten's when
she left home to be a bride.

19. A warrant soon was issued out
against the farmer's son,
Who had married a Lady near
the City of London,

20. He soon was apprehended
and placed in a dreary cell,
For murdering the young girl
who loved him so well.

21. And when his trial did come on
he at the Bar did stand,
Like a guilty criminal
waiting the judge's command,

22. The judge then passing sentence,
made him this reply,
You're guilty of the Murder,
so prepare yourself to die.

23. You must prepare yourself to die
on Monday on the tree,
When hung the usual time thereon
dissected you must be,

to the place where they'd been told
And with their spade and peck-axe
they raised the floor and mould

9. And when they'd dug seven inches deep
the body there they found
Tied in a sack and mangel-ed
with many a ghastly wound.

24. And when you bid the world farewell,
prepared may you be,
To dwell with Christ our Saviour,
that died upon a tree.

The broadside here has been presented as "double" ballad stanzas, which is how it was printed (if in long lines), but as always it was designed to be sung, as Freda Palmer sings it, to a rounded melody that encompasses the verbal equivalent of a single ballad stanza. The difference has had a limited but interesting impact on the wording in that an instance of grammatical continuity between stanzas within a double stanza has been reformulated to give, as normal in song tradition, a correspondence between the verbal and musical elements, that is with each stanza as a complete sense-unit:

9. Mother! I am going to the Red Barn
to meet my William dear
His friends won't know me on the road,
and when I do get there

10. I'll put on my wedding robes,
then we shall haste away,
To Ipswich Town, to-morrow is fixed
for our wedding day.

3. Oh mother I'm going to the Red Barn
to meet my William dear
His friends won't know me as I am
nor when I shall get there [.]

4. I will put on my wedding gownd
and we will haste away
To Islip town tomorrow is fixed
all for our wedding day.

In the line of memoral tradition of which this performance by Freda Palmer is the culmination,[17] the song has manifestly been subjected to the ruthless excision of material proving inessential, the narrative effectively reduced to its basic, stark essentials: decomposed to the bare bones. We have lost the characteristic broadside *incipit* calling for attention (broadside stanza 1) and characterizing the sensational but authentic character of the story (broadside stanza 2), together with the opening setting of the scene (specifying the location; introducing the protagonists). The events are detached from their historical location and could almost be happening anywhere: this is only marginally if at all compromised by a passing reference to the lovers' supposed destination, which replaces the original Suffolk Ipswich (broadside stanza 10.3) with the similar-sounding Oxfordshire Islip (Palmer stanza 4.3), close to the home town of the singer. We are left to infer that the damsel was "fair," and will not be told until later that her lover was "a farmer's son," while it remains significant that he was "dear" to her (Palmer stanza 3.2); meanwhile the lovers are reduced from specific, historical individuals with surnames to the generic boy and girl,

[17] Discussion of Freda Palmer's version has hitherto been confused by the assumption it is derived from the quite distinct "The Murder of Maria Marten," for example by Mike Yates in his notes to the published CD (Yates 2002) and in Fred McCormick's review of it, who by way of illustration of the changes "the 'corrupting' processes of oral tradition have wrought . . . to many . . . ballads on the disc" comments that "between creation and collection strange things have happened to Freda Palmer's *Maria Marten*" (McCormick 1999:3).

"Maria" and "William."

Of the central narrative we have even lost their affair and its consequences: it is perhaps sufficiently implied by the revelation that the girl is going to her wedding, but surreptitiously (sts. 3-4). The memoral version opens instead with what this tradition has evidently selected as one of the song's core scenes—the departure of the girl from her home in a manner that prompts her mother's concern (Palmer sts. 1-4: note that the broadside's earlier stanza on courtship, broadside stanza 4, is retained but is now the last stanza, Palmer stanza 10, of the song). That this scene takes the form of a one-on-one confrontation (there is no sign of the lover or the father) in dialogue is largely due to the broadside author. But it will be noticed that in tradition the balance of question and answer has acquired a small but measurable verbal reinforcement with the parallel openings of the two speeches:

8. My daughter why disguise yourself,	2. Oh daughter why dost thou disguise thyself
9. Mother! I am going to the Red Barn	3. Oh mother I'm going to the Red Barn

The exchange has also replaced some of the original formulations with more traditional song-idiom: "pray tell it unto me" (Palmer 2.2) and "all for our wedding day" (4.4).

The broadside's already ballad-like leap to the next scene is made more so by the omission of a stanza summarizing the mother's dream. Here too traditional narrative efficiency seems to be at work: we do not need to be told what she dreamt since its subject is effectively determined by what went before, and its import is more than adequately implied by the instruction to dig in the barn. Verbally, as a result of the omission, we get the kind of intense repetition characteristic of folksong aesthetic: "her mother she dreamt a dream / Three nights she dreamt the very same dream" (Palmer 5.4-6.1)—again with some reformulation into traditional phraseology ("the very same . . .").

The song has now moved into its second scene, in which the mother instructs the father where to look for the body, and (following the broadside) proceeds directly to the sequel, in which the body is discovered. And here the song ends: tradition (in which the other memoral versions concur) is emphatically indifferent to the judicial aftermath of identifying the body, arresting the culprit, the trial, and the judge's moral admonitions: our last image is of the girl's body, the horror savored in the extended "mangel-ed" of Freda Palmer's penultimate line.

The scenes that are retained, and the way they are formulated, now comprise a complex of sequences and balances—some, as my annotations indicate, reinforced by verbal repetition—that together amount to what I would hail as a triumph of vernacular aesthetic: "aesthetic" because the text is as complexly structured as a sonnet; "vernacular" because the structure has been achieved not by the artistic skills of a particular author but through the necessity of

achieving a given aim (telling a story) under given circumstances (singing from memory).[18]

In terms of time the nine stanzas of the song comprising the narrative resolve themselves into two equal sections of 4½ stanzas, balancing around that eleven-month gap between Maria's departure (ending in the second line of stanza 5) and the mother's dream about the body (beginning at the third line of stanza 5). The balance between these sections is supported by thematic images that were present in the broadside, but that now acquire a greater prominence and take on a more structural role. The first scene (as defined by the time-sequence) anticipates Maria leaving the Red Barn with her lover (on her way to her wedding); the second anticipates her leaving the Red Barn with her father (on her way to her funeral). The first scene is dominated by the mother's conversation with Maria, about Maria's going to the Red Barn; the second scene by the mother's conversation with her husband, about his going to the Red Barn, and here the balance is reinforced by verbal repetition that is limited but nonetheless stronger than in the original (and each of these is the fourth line of its respective scene):

7.4 her mother then did say,	1.4 and her mother to her did say
13.2 then to the father said,	6.2 then unto her husband did say

In terms of persons and place these same nine stanzas comprise three sections, steadily shortening in length: four stanzas where mother and daughter are together at home (sts. 1-4); three stanzas where the daughter is in the Red Barn and the mother, at home, dreams of her (sts. 5-7); and two stanzas where the daughter is in the Red Barn and her father finds her there (sts. 8-9). These too are more emphatically linked conceptually, the link reinforced by verbal repetition achieved through internal contamination. The first and third scenes (as defined from this perspective) are linked by the moves to the Red Barn of, respectively, the daughter and the father, the link now emphasized by more closely parallel formulation:

11.1 She straight went to the Red Barn,	5.1 She straightway went to the Red Barn
15.1 They went to the Red Barn,	8.1 They straightway went to the Red Barn

The first and second scenes are balanced, as we have already seen from the time perspective, by the parallel speeches of the mother to, respectively, her husband and daughter; while the second and third scenes (respectively, mother with husband; husband with daughter) are closer in the song than in the broadside thanks partly to the reappearance (resulting from the total reformulation of a line) of the spade and pickaxe and the verbal contamination that produces the balance between:

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[18] Among the more formal features of this aesthetic, the generation of repetition patterns will be discussed in what follows. It would take a more substantial and statistically based investigation to determine to what degree the memoral version of the song has acquired ballad formulas (and whether they differ from the verbal commonplaces already noted in the broadside); the following phrases, however, seem to have more of folksong idiom about them than the original formulations: "Pray tell it unto me" (stanza 2.2, vs. "I Pray tell unto me"); "All for our wedding day" (4.4, vs. "for our wedding day"); ". . . the very same dream" (6.1, vs. "the same dream").

14.4 where our daughter does lie,	7.4 my daughter <u>there</u> you'll <u>find</u>
16.2 the body there they found,	9.2 the body <u>there</u> they <u>found</u>

There have also been some interesting changes in content, as well as form and formulation. Published as a song about a man executed for killing a girl, thanks not least to the dropping of the judicial aftermath, in which the lover naturally usurps the role of protagonist, it is now emphatically a song about mother and daughter. And this feminizing of the narrative is reinforced by (and may, conversely, explain) the shift in the stanza describing Maria (Palmer stanza 10):

> This damsel caused many young men
> to court her as you'll find
> Till at length upon a farmer's son
> this damsel fixed her mind.

Originally part of the setting of the scene (broadside stanza 4), it is now the last stanza of all (Palmer stanza 10), ensuring that at the close it is emphatically Maria who remains, or returns to, the center of attention—and attention perhaps intensified by the repetition of "this damsel" (Palmer stanza 10.1 and 10.4) generated by internal contamination out of its one occurrence in the broadside (stanza 4.4). Maria's main competitor as protagonist is now no longer William but her mother: the latter takes anxious leave of the living girl and will next see her dead and "mangled with many a ghastly wound," the two moments linked by her dream, which is triggered by the first and premonitory of the second. It is also striking that the broadside mother's humble request to the husband to search the barn, "I beg you will rise instantly," has in tradition become the peremptory "*I will have thee* rise instantly," and is addressed to a man whose status is shifted from "the father" (with an implied independent relationship to Maria) to "her husband" (with a merely auxiliary relationship to Maria). Accordingly, in the barn he will no longer find "our daughter" but "*my* daughter." Singers are unlikely to have known that the historical Mrs. Marten was actually Maria's stepmother, but this fact emphasizes the distance traveled by the song to reach the intensity of the relationship in Freda Palmer's version.

This may well reflect the impact on the song of a tradition that was not merely memoral but a woman's tradition, Freda Palmer having learned many of her songs as a girl from an aunt whom she helped making gloves (Yates 2001:5).[19] It may or may not be proper to suggest that the noticeable emphasis on clothing has a similar explanation, but Maria's dress also establishes a thematic balance between the two core moments in the song's handling of the narrative: Maria takes leave of her mother "dressed all in men's clothes" (Palmer stanza 1.1), anticipating that she will "put on my wedding gownd" (stanza 4.1), only to be found by her father, "tied in a sack" (stanza 9.3). The men are merely the agents who effect the transitions, but in a significant

[19] In the version recorded from a male singer, George Digweed, in 1906, the mother, speaking to her husband, refers to Maria as "*your* daughter." London, Vaughan Williams Memorial Library, English Folk Dance and Song Society, Gardiner MSS., H214.

pattern: ostensibly on her way to be married, the girl is taken to the barn (living) by her lover, and brought back (dead) by her father, a poignant reversal of their respective roles in the traditional wedding processions in which the girl is taken to the church (single) by her father and brought back (married) by her lover. Much of this dynamic is present in the broadside but embedded amidst other information: memoral tradition, by decomposing the other material, has brought this thematic pattern into prominence.[20]

This song provides a rare opportunity within English song tradition of following the trajectory of a narrative from prose journalism, through verses written and published for singing, to a song orally performed from memory, and almost certainly passed on from voice to ear by a sequence of several singers in the interim. The changes are not haphazard, and the decomposition to which the singers subject the song is not necessarily destructive: the result is not without its aesthetic qualities. Indeed, while "The Suffolk Tragedy" as originally composed conforms very much to the image of sensational journalism-in-song in opposition to which Francis James Child evidently defined his "popular" ballads, it is very likely that had he encountered Freda Palmer's performance (especially if unaware of its origins), he might well have been tempted to include this "Fair Mary and Sweet William" in his collection, for it has many of the qualities associated with the Child ballad. And most of those features can be shown, with an unusual degree of certainty, to be a result of the impact of memoral tradition on the song.[21]

These results cannot of course be transferred wholesale and unreservedly to earlier periods, but it is striking that the discursive mode that emerges in "The Suffolk Tragedy" in memoral tradition also characterizes early ballads such as "St. Stephen and Herod" and "Judas." In contextual terms the later middle ages displayed a similar amalgam of textual and memoral traditions of popular narrative, if with manuscript in the role of the broadside, and some of the insights achieved here might also be relevant in a general way to other genres of performed, stanzaic narrative, say the tail-rhyme romances, be it with regard to the impact of performance on the text or the antecedent conversion of narrative into the text to be performed. The fifteenth-century chronicler, Jean Froissart, has left us a revealing diatribe against "jongleurs and marketplace entertainers" who have "sung and rhymed the wars of Britain," suggesting that both processes were in his mind: in contrast to his—reliable, prose—account, these others have "corrupted the just and true story with their songs and contrived rhymes" (Froissart 1869-88:ii, 265; trans. Coleman 2005:33, in the context of a discussion with several points of connection to the present study). Narratives of English battles (if more often against the Scots than the French) loom large among the early English ballads, and the results of the present study and its

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[20] There are some changes in Freda Palmer's version compared to the original broadside that are not germane to the present context, but nonetheless interesting. Changing the date of Maria's disappearance from "nineteenth day of May" (broadside stanza 7.2) to "the ninth day of June" at the expense of spoiling the rhyme with "did say," has no immediately discernible motivation. Equally unexplained is the discovery of the body when the men had dug "seven inches deep" (song stanza 9.1) as opposed to the "eighteen inches" of the original, but interestingly the depth was "corrected" to eighteen inches when Freda Palmer sang the song for Steve Roud in 1978 (personal communication).

[21] This is very much in accordance with the thesis of Tristram P. Coffin (1961) that narrative songs acquire ballad qualities in the course of memoral tradition. The other versions of "The Suffolk Tragedy" recorded from tradition, that of George Digweed mentioned earlier, and that of Australian singer Sally Sloane (Fahey 2004), may take the song further towards the "emotional core" he postulates as the final culmination of these processes.

antecedents might invite speculation that narrative songs were not composed with their balladesque features but acquired them over time, as and to the extent that they were subjected to the decomposing effects of memoral tradition: similar processes, if from different points of departure (for example, minstrel romances and holy legends), may have produced the earlier traditional ballads that emerged prior to, or at least independently of, the broadside press.[22]

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[22] I have studied the "balladizing" of a medieval romance (*Sir Eglamour of Artois*) in Pettitt 1982. For what looks like a specific instance of the process in a European tradition, see Putter 2004.

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Sites of Sound

Bruce Johnson

Historians of the city concur that the nineteenth century was a particularly incandescent moment in urban development, both in terms of material and perceptual space (Morris and Rodger 1993b:1):

> Between 1820 and 1914 the economy and society of Britain became more extensively and intensively urbanized than ever before. Not only was the rate at which people became concentrated in relatively large, dense and complex settlements greater than it has been before or since, but fundamental changes also took place within and between towns and in the relationship of urban places to British society as a whole.

Through both internal migration and national increase (from nine million in 1801 to 36 million by 1911), by the end of the nineteenth century the urban population in England and Wales had grown from 33.8 percent of the total in 1801 to 78.9 percent by 1911, with the biggest growth rates between 1821 and 1881 (Williams 1973:217; Morris and Rodger 1993b:3). There are of course various ways of defining "urban," but some raw figures are sufficiently eloquent for present purposes. "In 1801 only London contained more than one million people—still well over eleven times the size of its nearest rival, Liverpool. By 1861 there were sixteen places already in the 100,000-plus category, and by 1911, there were forty-two" (Morris and Rodger 1993b:2). Reflecting the connection between urbanization and industrialization, the greatest rate of urban expansion was to be found in manufacturing towns, particularly those in the north including Manchester, Leeds, Bradford, Birmingham, and Liverpool, increasing in size by up to 40 percent in a decade (Williams 1973:220). These converging forces in nineteenth-century urbanization clearly suggest complicity with the consolidation of class divisions associated with capitalism, the confrontations between a dominant bourgeoisie and the working class. The growing conurbation was also "a site of class formation" (Morris and Rodger 1993b:26).

Apart from manual labor in factories, the new infrastructural services required staffing. Professional and trade specializations proliferated, and the distinction between what we would now call blue- and white-collar labor was sharpened. The massive information networks and technologies generated by the nineteenth-century city led to an explosion of bureaucratic workers, particularly in economic sectors like banks, insurance, real estate, and commerce (Williams 1973:147-48). These included clerks, accountants, scriveners, and, increasingly from the 1870s, personnel to operate new or developing information technologies including

telephonists and stenographers using dictaphones and typewriters. By 1910, the clerical profession in England, including 124,000 women, was "one of the most rapidly expanding occupational groups" (Carey 1992:58). Thus, while the uppermost tiers of management could choose to live in bucolic isolation, there were nonetheless also class demarcations traversing the "urban masses," all the more strident because of physical propinquity. The labor force sustaining urban industrialized capitalism did not constitute a single homogeneous urban mass in contradistinction to "management," but was itself differentiated into various layers characterized by various degrees of self-consciousness and forms of social practice.

These demarcations manifested themselves geographically, socioeconomically, and in terms of the urban imaginary, that is, the way in which various sections of the urban population imagined, enacted, and represented themselves. As cities expanded and responded to forces of industrial production, they also segmented into class-based residential precincts. This disintegration of the growing city was noted by Engels in 1844 when he visited Manchester (Engels 1971:54):

> Owing to the curious lay-out of the town it is quite possible for someone to live for years in Manchester and to travel daily to and from his work without ever seeing a working-class quarter or coming into contact with an artisan . . . mainly because the working-class districts and the middle-class districts are quite distinct. The division is due partly to deliberate policy and partly to instinctive and tacit agreement between the two social groups.

The outward growth of the suburbs was one site of these distinctions, providing a space in which the bourgeoisie could distinguish themselves from the world of work and the lower orders. These rapid changes thus transformed urban geography in ways other than simple expansion, in particular by a fragmentation of space. F. M. L. Thompson cites nineteenth-century complaints that (1993:151):

> the alarming rapidity with which they turned pleasant fields into muddy, rutted building sites, the confusion of hundreds of building operations going on simultaneously without any discernible design, the impression that little schemes were starting up everywhere at once and were never being finished, were in themselves frightening portents of disorder and chaos.

The Manchester of Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* is a city of "many half-finished streets" (1996:14), and, looking back from the early twentieth century, H. G. Wells' account of the expansion since the mid-eighteenth century of a thinly disguised southern London suburb, Bromley, encapsulates the process like a time-lapse photograph (1946:37):

> The outskirts of Bromstead were a maze of exploitation roads that led nowhere . . . a multitude of uncoördinated fresh starts, each more sweeping and destructive than the last, and none of them ever really worked out to a ripe and satisfactory completion. . . . It was a sort of progress that had bolted; it was change out of hand, and going at an unprecedented pace nowhere in particular.

Revisiting it in what would have been 1910, Wells' narrator reported it "as unfinished as ever; the builders' roads still run out and end in mid-field in their old fashion; the various enterprises jumble in the same contradiction" (38). The infrastructural developments that enabled this chaotic expansion of urban space, and intended to hold it coherently together, ironically in practice also exacerbated the sense of labyrinthine disorder. Proliferating road, rail, and other transport systems imposed new grids, led to demolition and the formation of adjacent slum precincts that absorbed displaced communities, and segmented the urban space into mutually impenetrable components. In 1851 Hastings was a town of 17,000, but cheap rail fares produced a building boom in the 1860s. When Thomas Carlyle rented a local house he experienced "dust, noise, squalor, and the universal tearing and digging as if of gigantic human *swine*, *not* finding any worms or roots that would be useful to them" (cited in Harker 2003:11; italics in source**)**. The older and smaller conurbation, which could be comprehended as a coherent unit as a "walking city," was transformed into the "tracked city," up to thirty miles in radius, in which the episodic and discrete movements of commuters traversed and disrupted the former pedestrian dynamic (Kellett 1993:182; Cannadine 1993:116). Railway systems, arguably "the most important single influence on the spatial arrangement in the Victorian city" (Morris and Rodger 1993b:22), contributed massively to the growing indecipherability of urban space. Apart from further darkening an already heavily polluted atmosphere with their emissions, their multiple tracks and marshaling yards displaced prior occupation (in both senses), presented uncrossable barriers between and within hitherto contiguous and unified districts, completely reorienting local geography and changing focal points in ways that only a bird's eye view could make sense of. An account from 1873 observed of the railway network in south London (cited in Kellett 1993:189):

> There is such a network of rails I do not think there is any one person in England . . . who knows what the different lines are. They run in such innumerable directions, and engines are passing along them at such angles at various speeds, and with so much complication, that I do not think anybody who did not know that they will all be arranged safely but would suppose that they must all come to a general convergence and wreck, and that it will be the end of them all.[1]

The railway became one of the major influences on the "darkening" of the literary as well as the literal city as it "blackened," "distorted," and choked "the murky distance," producing "deformity of mind and body" (Dickens 1848:290-91). Unchecked and uncoordinated expansion, transport infrastructure, air pollution, and changing orders and rates of mobility all contributed to the opacity of the nineteenth-century city, and this environment extended to its inhabitants. At the beginning of the century Wordsworth lamented (1969:626-29):

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[1] For an account of the impact of the railways on literary production and productions, see Picker 2003:15-40.

> How oft, amid those overflowing streets,
> Have I gone forward with the crowd, and said
> Unto myself, "The face of every one
> That passes by me is a mystery."[2]

The urban crowd was simultaneously ubiquitous yet unreadable. As John Barton in Gaskell's *Mary Barton* walks the city streets (1996:63):

> he could not, you cannot read the lot of those who daily pass you by . . . . How do you know the wild romances of their lives; the trials, the temptations they are even now enduring, resisting, sinking under. You may be elbowed one instant by the girl desperate in her abandonment, laughing in mad merriment in her outward gesture, while her soul is longing for the rest of the dead, and bringing itself to think of the cold-flowing river as the only mercy of God remaining to her here. You may pass the criminal, meditating crimes at which you will tomorrow shudder with horror as you read them.

The fundamental link between all these aspects of the nineteenth-century city is that of disordered illegibility, a "loss of connection" (Williams 1973:150; see further 156-63). Various measures taken to open the city up to more effective surveillance in every sense, ranging from the installation of street lighting, through the reformation of a police force invested with greater powers in the monitoring of public conduct, to the demolition of dark, labyrinthine precincts to be replaced by visually open thoroughfares, described by Engels as "the method called Haussman" (cited in Berman 1983:158).[3] All these measures were associated with the formation and monitoring of political and class divisions, attempts at the regulation of urban life. Nonetheless, throughout the nineteenth century the city and its inhabitants remained for the most part obdurately unreadable texts, and as such provided a locus for literary inquiries into the inscrutability and unknowability of modern urban life, from Wordsworth at the turn of the century and Gaskell in 1848, to Dickens in 1853, conflating the fog of London with the image of chancery in the opening of *Bleak House* (1853:1):

> Smoke lowering down from chimney-pots, making a soft black drizzle, with flakes of soot in it as big as full-grown snow-flakes—gone into mourning, one might imagine, for the death of the sun . . . . Fog everywhere. Fog up the river, where it flows among green aits and meadows; fog down the river, where it rolls defiled among the tiers of shipping, and the waterside pollutions of a great (and dirty) city.

And so on, the reiterated, inescapable fog for two pages, then modulating directly to the bureaucratic fog of the High Court of Chancery. Similarly, Coketown, based on Preston Lancashire, in *Hard Times* (2001:20-21):

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[2] *The Prelude* was composed over the years 1799-1805. All quotations are from the text of Wordsworth 1969. Due to the existence of multiple editions, line rather than page numbers are provided for reference.

[3] On the role of the police force, see Storch 1993:*passim*.

> a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled. It had a black canal in it, and a river that ran purple with ill-smelling dye, and vast piles of building full of windows where there was a rattling and a trembling all day long, and where the piston of the steam engine worked monotonously up and down like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. It contained several large streets all very like one another, and many small streets still more like one another, inhabited by people equally like one another, who all went in and out at the same hours, with the same sound upon the same pavements, to do the same work.

The coalescence of the visual impenetrability of the city, and of the lives of its occupants, is consolidated in Conrad's *The Secret Agent* from 1907. The idea of the city itself was central to the genesis of the novel, as he recalled, reflecting on recent anarchist violence in his Author's Note (1983:xxxvi):

> the vision of an enormous town presented itself, of a monstrous town more populous than some continents and in its man-made might as if indifferent to heaven's frowns and smiles; a cruel devourer of the world's light. There was room enough there to place any story, depth enough there for any passion, variety enough there for any setting, darkness enough to bury five millions of lives. Irresistibly the town became the background for the ensuing period of deep and tentative meditations.

The dark, inexplicable collage of the window display in Verloc's shop, and the mysteriousness of its habitués, imply but never specify meaning and significance (3-5); the signage and numbering of the London Streets are misleading and arbitrary (14). The eponymous "Secret Agent" Verloc might, to the eye of a fellow pedestrian, "have been anything from a picture-frame maker to a locksmith" (13). It is precisely this appearance that deceives, that masks the reality of a homicidal terrorist.

The urban experience not only provided a motif of illegibility, but also generated narrative structures and strategies that came to characterize modernist literature. Through the trajectory from Wordsworth and Austen to T. S. Eliot and Joyce, the temporal and spatial fragmentation of the city nurtured the short story and the disruption of early nineteenth-century literary structures and rhythms. Raymond Williams argues that in the case of Dickens' work it produced "a new kind of novel" (1973:154). The hidden places of the city and its people increased a consciousness of potential criminalities, and its inscrutability came to require the Holmesian superhuman powers of observation and deduction on display in the power of the detective to "penetrate the intricacies of the streets" (227; see also 229). Both the dark places of the city and the illegibility of its crowds hid horrors from which the urban gothic, the dissociated "Jekyll and Hyde" sensibility, emerged. The city's shadowed geography dislodged visuality as a credible narrative mode, undermining the value of the eyewitness, the reader of events, the supposedly omniscient, reliable narrator. In one particular example of what has become known as the "unreliable narrator," we see two experiential modes in contention, one by virtue of its ineffectual presence, and the other conspicuous by its studied absence.

Edgar Allan Poe's characters Dupin and Legrand predate Doyle's Holmes as prototypes in detection fiction, and it is suggestive that the former made his debut in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" only months before "The Man of the Crowd," whose narrator demonstrates rather more ordinary and less analytical powers of observation.[4] As such, his account challenges the reliability and stability of point of view. Poe's attempt to engage with the city is also an early problematization of point of view, a growing preoccupation of prose writers trying to deal with a breakdown of centralized consensus, the projection of a wider range of voices and belief systems into the public space. The opening paragraph sets up the impression of the complacently omniscient author, a source of veracity. The narrator watches the crowd in the street through the window of a London coffee house and begins confidently to categorize people by class, according to their appearance. As night falls he sees an Old Man who seems not to fit his categories: "'How wild a history . . . is written in that bosom!' Then came a craving desire to keep the man in view—to know more of him" (Poe 1965:140). The narrator then follows him closely for a full twenty-four hours throughout the city, returning finally to the general reflection which opened the story: "'es lässt sich nicht lessen'—it does not permit itself to be read" (134, 145; repeated at the conclusion in explicit reference to the old man, this may be translated as "He does not permit himself to be read"). His illegibility is then taken as clear confirmation of his criminality. Hiding himself in the city crowds, the Old Man remains illegible, a metaphor of the city itself.

The story, however, is equally about the limits of reading—of scopism—as a way of engaging with the city. In realist prose narrative the narrator is traditionally a stable platform, a fixed and reliable point of view. Urban life increasingly displaces the omniscient, stable point of view, and renders everything and everyone impenetrably ambiguous. The narrator fails to take into account his own position and conduct. Consider the Old Man's point of view. He is in his sixties, obviously past his physical prime, short, thin, feeble, with clothes that are torn and dirty. He is walking the streets, minding his own business, until becoming aware that a man is following him closely and continuously for twenty-four hours. The follower wears an overcoat, a cane, rubber galoshes, and has a handkerchief covering his mouth (we, the readers, know he is recovering from an illness). The narrator in fact may reasonably be regarded as the cause of the behavior he cannot fathom. Pearlman (1998:141) explores the question: is this a story about "the narrator's pursuit of a stranger [or] . . . the stranger's flight from the narrator"? The narrator insists that the Old Man never saw him, but how credible can this be given the duration of the pursuit, sometimes "close at elbow" (Poe 1965:141), and the fact that for much of the time they are the only two people in the streets (see further Pearlman 1998:63-65). Perhaps the narrator, so confident of his secure position as an observer, is in fact deceived by his own surveillance. It certainly leaves him no better informed after twenty-four hours of close stalking.

What I want to add to Pearlman's inquiry is the conspicuous absence from this whole encounter of any attempt to communicate with each other by any means other than reading. Despite twenty-four hours of contact, sometimes within inches of each other, neither man speaks. Each remains a *silent* text. Finally, the narrator, "stopping fully in front of the wanderer, gazed at

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[4] I wish to acknowledge with great appreciation my former undergraduate student Jonathan Pearlman, whose discussion established a starting point for my argument here. See Pearlman 1998:61-68.

him steadfastly in the face," and still, implausibly convinced he "noticed me not" (Poe 1965:145), decides that the Old Man will never be read. Or to put it another way, he decides that this man, to whom he has been close enough to talk for twenty-four hours, can never by any means be understood. The man has been for the most part silent, although the narrator is close enough to hear "a heavy sigh" and a "half shriek of joy" (143, 144). Apart from this, that the two of them should be in such proximity for so long and under such circumstances, without ever venturing to exchange one word of question or explanation, is extraordinary. The narrative follows a trajectory that makes excruciatingly obvious the absence of sonic contact, of finding an explanation simply through sounding and listening. The man of the crowd remains inexplicable because the encounter is wholly visual—an attempt to read each other.

Increasingly, the urban milieu discloses itself acoustically. Coketown is visually impenetrable, but clearly defined sonically by the sounds of the factories. The people in the streets cannot be read, but they can be heard. The contrast may be briefly exemplified in the case of William Wordsworth, whose lyrical enthusiasm about London as a silenced spectacle viewed in early morning from Westminster Bridge is turned into indignation and disgust when he becomes immersed in the "Babel din" of its crowds, the oppressive "roar," "deafening din," "thickening hubbub," and "uproar of the rabblement."[5] The city confronts Wordsworth with the rising tide of modern mass culture, the actuality of the contemporary "common man," and it is demonized as an acoustic culture (see further Johnson 2002:*passim*). Wordsworth gives us a prefiguration of that moral panic at the collapse of received and authorized order that we think of as the conservative response to twentieth-century mass culture. And, as with that response, it can be largely configured as a confrontation with a resurgent acoustic order. The shift from an inspirationally silent dawn prospect from Westminster Bridge to the noise of the streets corresponds to a shift to the increasing dynamic fluidity of the modern urban experience and class relations. Baudelaire's description of modern life as "floating existences" (cited in Berman 1983:144) and the imperative that the artist should "set up his house in the heart of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of motion, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite" (145), recognizes that modern urban life requires a new language supple and subtle enough to render "leaps and jolts of consciousness" (148), and that modern life is fluid, in motion, evanescent, not a static text. The increasingly dynamic nature of the modern city is ill adapted to the static spatial readings of a pre-moving-image representational order. Only by so-to-speak getting the city to sit still and pose could Wordsworth render it as visual text, silently frozen in time. And that is only by falsifying it, sneaking a snapshot while everyone is asleep or out of frame. The city requires a processual mode of representation through the temporally grounded faculty of hearing, of sounding unfolding in time.

In 1913, the Futurist Luigi Russolo declared in *The Art of Noises* that in the nineteenth century "with the invention of machine, Noise was born" (1986:23). He invited his reader to (26):

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[5] See "Composed Upon Westminster Bridge, September 3, 1803"; then *The Prelude*, Book Seven, lines 178, 155, 211, 273.

> cross a large modern capital with our ears more sensitive than our eyes. We will delight in distinguishing the eddying of water, of air or gas in metal pipes, the muttering of motors that breathe and pulse with an indisputable animality, the throbbing of valves, the bustle of pistons, the shrieks of mechanical saws, the starting of trams on the tracks, the cracking of whips, the flapping of awnings and flags. We will amuse ourselves by orchestrating together in our imagination the din of rolling shop shutters, the varied hubbub of train stations, ironworks, thread mills, printing presses, electrical plants, and subways.

Analyses of the city are predominantly modeled in terms of "spectacle" (see further Tonkiss 2003:303-4). I suggest as a supplementary and often competing trope that of the city as "oracle" or "auricle," as a site of meaning that is spoken and heard. Tonkiss notes that although Barthes wrote of the city as a "text," he also declared that it "speaks to its inhabitants, we speak our city, the city where we are, simply by living in it, by wandering through it" (305). One of the distinguishing features of the material culture of urban modernity is the increased presence of sound. Cities have always been distinctively noisy, but the urban acoustic order from the nineteenth century is distinguished by, among other things, the proliferation of technologized sonorities and changing reverberative space**.** R. Murray Schafer's benchmark study, *The Tuning of the World*, included a review of the distinctive properties of the post-industrial soundscape (1977:69-99), and pointed to the explanatory potential of acoustically based cultural historiography. The approach has been applied to studies of modern urban culture, such as those of Bruce Smith (1999) and John Picker (2003). Picker notes the changing acoustic profile of the nineteenth century and its complicity in class formation: "Victoria's reign had been marked by an increasing volume and an increased awareness of sound—from the shriek and roar of the railway to the jarring commotion of urban streets, and from the restrained tinkling of the drawing-room piano to the hushed propriety of the middle-class parlour" (111). Sounding and hearing thus became increasingly significant in nineteenth-century urban life: "the development of Victorian self-awareness was contingent on awareness of sonic environments, and that, in turn, to understand how Victorians saw themselves, we ought to understand how they heard themselves as well" (11). Picker's magisterial investigation of Victorian soundscapes refers also to the work of Dickens and of George Eliot (15-40, 82-109), disclosing how the latter "recognized the advent of an age defined by new emphases on and understandings of the capacity for listening" (83).

My interest here is in the particular relationship between visual and acoustic modes in nineteenth-century literary representations of the city. Visually the city is chaotic, labyrinthine, and threateningly indecipherable; full of the faces of strangers, opaque windows, and blind alleys, it resists communality. Sonically of course it is also likely to be thought of as pandemonium and babel, particularly by those whose cultural capital lies in the printed text and other scopocentric epistemologies. But the city is sonically communal in the sense that its sounds construct a sense of shared life. Sound is the medium of the flood of collectivity (see further Johnson and Cloonan 2008). It is this shared life that the intellectuals and the middle classes resist, since it breaks down the class and professional segregations by which they differentiate themselves in an increasingly congested and visually undiscriminated mass. Sound defies the privacy and separation that can be sustained visually. It does not respect the class-based segmentation of space. Unregulated urban noise announces mass culture, culture losing its older

internal demarcations by which class and privilege are defined and preserved through literacy and the literary text (see further Johnson 2006:*passim*).

The literary record of urban experience in the nineteenth century is pervaded by the noise (most often disagreeable) of the modern city, "the noise of people, and bells, and horns; the whiz and scream of the arriving trains" (Gaskell 1996:283).[6] It is a condition of life and a marker of the confrontations that define the modern condition, confrontations across a range of boundaries including those of class, gender, and nation. This was not simply the traditional sounds of the city rising in volume. The nineteenth-century soundscape became more heterogeneous, complex, information-rich, and introduced new kinds of experience to the sonic imaginary. These included the sounds of the unprecedentedly rapid motion of engine components, flatline sounds, the Doppler effect, and the disembodied sounds from telephones and sound recordings, which also preserved the voices of the dead (see for example Schafer 1977:78-80, 89).

I conclude by referring to a particular trope for the auralization of the nineteenth-century city, a point of convergence for all the issues raised here—sound, class, information inundation, the mobility and pace of life, and their literary representation. That trope is the typewriter, one of the new information technologies that were developed to cope with the increase in the level and complexity of information traffic in an urbanized capitalist economy. These became elements in new literary scenarios in which technologized sonority and sonic technologies played a central role in the elaboration of theme, setting, narratologies, as well as the development of personal and professional relationships. In particular, they transformed the way in which the workplace was imagined, specifically that massively expanding sector in which information was processed and disseminated. Like other changes in information processing, storage, and dissemination (telephone and dictaphone), the shorthand typist functioned in an acoustically active environment. Listening to a voice (increasingly on a dictaphone), she transcribed in a phonetically based shorthand, then copied it longhand on a typewriter, which proclaimed its productive activity sonically. This labor replaced that of the (usually male) scrivener working in a relatively silent office space that was the modern equivalent of a study in which "silence is golden."

Until the "aural renaissance" of the late nineteenth century, the sign of productivity and self-improvement was silence, providing a background for the definition of character and power relations. In Herman Melville's "Bartleby the Scrivener" the silence of the workplace is essential to the narrative impetus. Bartleby is a scrivener who comes to work for a law firm. All that can be heard normally is the scrape of pen on paper and, from time to time, proofreading of a document while another follows the copy "closely written in a crimpy hand" (Melville 1987:20).

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[6] Williams 1973 is a provocative inquiry into changes in the "way of seeing" (226) in the urban consciousness, by which he means the way of knowing and of representing. For the most part, his literary citations consolidate the argument about the increasing illegibility of the city, yet it is striking how often they collaterally illustrate the argument I am making here about sound. While this point does not escape his attention, my argument, however, is that to continue modeling these changes as "ways of seeing" is to miss a deeper shift towards an acoustic epistemology, what Steven Feld (1994) calls "acoustemology." We cannot find our bearings in the modern city by just looking because it cannot be comprehended visually. We know the city largely by hearing it, especially since the revolutions in media and information technologies from the late nineteenth century. The deeply internalized metaphor itself, "ways of seeing," is an impediment to the understanding of modern urban experience and its forms of representation.

Noise is a disruption of the ambience of productivity. The most valued employee has one flaw. His work in the mornings is exemplary, but lunchtime tippling often makes him "rather noisy" (15):

> He made an unpleasant racket with his chair; spilled his sand-box; in mending his pens, impatiently split them all to pieces, and threw them on the floor in a sudden passion; stood up, and leaned over his table, boxing his papers about in a most indecorous manner.

During these afternoon improprieties he was also "apt to be rash with his tongue, in fact insolent" (16). Another employee broke the silence by audibly grinding his teeth "over mistakes committed in copying, [also] unnecessary maledictions, hissed, rather than spoken, in the heat of business; and especially by a continual discontent with the height of the table where he worked" (16):

> amid the stillness of my chambers, Nippers would sometimes impatiently rise from his seat, and stooping over his table, spread his arms wide apart, seize the whole desk, and move it, and jerk it, with a grim, grinding motion on the floor, as if the table were a perverse, voluntary agent, intent on thwarting and vexing him (18).

Another's indulgence in ginger-nut cakes produced "the crunching of the crisp particles in his mouth" (19). These are all irritations because they break the silence that proclaims conscientious labor.

The new recruit is given a workplace behind a screen, so that his employer (the story's narrator) "might entirely isolate Bartleby from my sight, though not remove him from my voice" (19). The newcomer initially proves a most diligent copyist, but on his third day Bartleby is called to proofread a short document. Without emerging from behind the screen, he replies, "I would prefer not to" (20). The narrator sits for a while "in perfect silence," incredulous, wondering if his ears had "deceived" him (20). The rest of the narrative concerns attempts to persuade Bartleby to perform his duties—attempts that are increasingly refused. In a provocative mood, the narrator asks Bartleby to check to see if there is any mail waiting at the Post Office (25):

> "I would prefer not to."
> "You *will* not?"
> "I *prefer* not."

The narrator grows reconciled to this impasse, in view of Bartleby's "steadiness, his freedom from all dissipation, his incessant industry (except when he chose to throw himself into a standing revery [*sic*] behind his screen), his great stillness, his unalterableness of demeanor under all circumstances" (25-26). Bartleby discloses nothing of himself, having "declined telling who he was, or whence he came" (28). Finally, discovering that the "unaccountable Bartleby" (37) has taken to living in the office, the employer gives him notice, to no effect. The narrator is then forced to move his chambers, since the scrivener will not quit them. He later

discovers that having been turned out of the chambers by the incoming occupants, Bartleby now haunts the building (40) and is finally arrested for vagrancy. When the narrator visits him in prison Bartleby keeps his back to him but recognizes him by his voice. "I know you . . . and I want nothing to say to you" (43). On a subsequent visit the narrator is directed to the prisoner who appears to be sleeping in the prison yard but in fact is dead.

Like Poe's Man of the Crowd, Bartleby is illegible (13):

> While of other law-copyists I might write the complete life, of Bartleby nothing of that sort can be done. I believe that no materials exist for a full and satisfactory biography of this man. It is an irreparable loss to literature. Bartleby was one of those beings of whom nothing is ascertainable, except from the original sources, and in his case they are very small. What my own astonished eyes saw of Bartleby, that is all I know of him, except, indeed, one vague report which will appear in the sequel.

That "report" "was a rumor that he had been a clerk in the Dead Letter Office in Washington until removed by a new administration" (45):

> Dead letters! does it not sound like dead men? Conceive a man by nature and misfortune prone to a pallid hopelessness, can any business seem more fitted to heighten it than that of continually handling those dead letters, and assorting them for the flames? For by the cart-load they are annually burned. Sometimes from out of the folded paper the pale clerk takes a ring:—the finger it was meant for, perhaps, molders in the grave; a bank-note sent in swiftest charity:—he whom it would relieve, nor eats nor hungers any more; pardon for those who died despairing; hope for those who died unhoping; good tidings for those who died stifled by unrelieved circumstances. On errands of life these letters speed to death. Ah Bartleby! Ah humanity!

The vanity of this teeming secular life—its records, files, and communications—is reduced to ashes. The modern city and its information, its bureaucracy, proliferate infinitely yet pointlessly. Bartleby is ultimately driven through the informational looking glass to the other side of babble: silence, non-information, non-explanation. Bartleby succumbs to the weight of information that is both profoundly important and useless. The Dead Letter Office is a kind of "final solution," an all-consuming furnace that reduces the infinite variety of hope, endeavor, and expectation that constitutes human experience to featureless ashes. Bartleby's response to his epoch is withdrawal, silence, death, a foreshadowing of the approaching extinction of his species. The silent scrivener will be overwhelmed by the avalanche of information spilling out of the modern city, himself one of its "dead letters." Ambient silence and his concealment behind a screen are essential to the unfolding of this narrative. It is difficult to imagine how he could effectively present his mysterious protest in the noisy open-plan offices emerging from the late nineteenth century. In any case, for reasons including temperament, professional competencies, and gender, it is highly unlikely that he would have become employed there anyway. The sensibility that replaces him will be accompanied by different skills, aspirations, and expectations, and is likely to revel in the milieu of the urban masses and cheerfully embrace its benefits, to the disdain and alarm of intellectuals (Carey 1992:*passim*). The male scrivener who laboriously traces each

separate and distinctive letter in silence will be replaced by the "typewriter girl," rapidly processing information through the standardized typefaces and keys of a clattering typewriter.

The noise of the typewriter became the new trope of busyness, or business, because, like the sound recording, it came into being for stenographic purposes (see further Johnson 2003). No scribal hand could keep up with the information explosion and its technologies, but a typewriter could. Sound and sounding technologies transformed power relations. The breaking of the link between scribal silence and the movement of commercial information completely inverted the gender profile of the "keeper of the secrets": the secretary. You didn't need a good writing hand to use a typewriter, so the erratic literacy of the enormous female labor pool was not an issue. In 1870, only 4.5 percent of stenographers and typists in the United States were women. By 1930, the figure was 95.6 percent (Kittler 1999:184). The gendering of this technology was so powerful that the word "typewriter" referred interchangeably to the woman and to the machine.

The politics of the connection are reflected in the 1897 novel *The Type-writer Girl* by Grant Allen, writing under the name Olive Pratt Rayner. Unlike the increasingly silent Bartleby, whose employer speaks to us on his behalf, Juliet the typewriter girl speaks to us with buoyant extroverted directness. Like Bartleby, Juliet works in a legal office. However, this is a defiant modern woman: "I am all for the absolute equation of the sexes" (Allen 2004:53). In the bold celebrative spirit of Baudelaire (Williams 1973:234-35), she cheerfully embraces her milieu, and the mystery of the masses is a stimulant, not a depressant (Allen 2004:23):

> how can I cruise down the Strand without encountering strange barks—mysterious argosies that attract and intrigue me? That living stream is so marvelous! Whence come they, these shadows, and whither do they go?—innumerable, silent, each wrapped in his own thought, yet each real to himself as I to my heart. To me they are shooting stars, phantoms that flash athwart the orbit of my life one second, and then vanish. But to themselves they are the centre of a world—of *the* world, and I am but one of the meteors that dart across their horizon. . . . I cannot choose but wonder who each is, and why he is here. For one after another I invent a story. It may not be the true story, but at least it amuses me.

She is brought into being by the age of the machine, of urban mass culture, and this is signaled by the sonic environment in her workplace. While Bartleby drudged in impassive silence, her world is one of noise. The two clerks with whom she shares the office talk endlessly about horses, football, and ladies of the music hall. And in this environment her own identity is differentiated and her value is confirmed and defined not through silence but through noise. She took shorthand, then typed it out in her anteroom workplace "where I clicked" (33). She is her technology, its sound is her sound; it is the sound of the typewriter that counterbalances the idle chatter of her male colleagues with the proclamation of her value (34):

> As their tongues rippled on, with peculiar London variants on the vowels of our native language, my type-writer continued to go click, click, click, till I was grateful for its sound as a counter-irritant to their inanity. . . . That click, click, click became to me like music—if only because it drowned the details of the Lewes Spring Meeting. . . . I continued to click, click, click, like a

> machine that I was, and to listen as little as possible to the calculated odds for King Arthur for the Ascot Cup.

When, like Bartleby, she prefers to do no more work, far from withdrawing into the kind of nullity that overtook him in his paralyzed immurement in the workplace, her response is escape and independence. The instrument of that escape is one of the nineteenth-century technologies that brought mobility to the proliferating urban workforce: she sets out on her bicycle (42-43):

> How light and free I felt! When man first set woman on two wheels with a pair of pedals, did he know, I wonder that he had rent the veil of the harem in twin? I doubt it, but so it was. A woman on a bicycle has all the world before her where to choose; she can go where she will, no man hindering.

She thinks of herself as owning large estates, tax-free, the streams, the sky, the wild-life: "All these I own, by virtue of my freehold in the saddle of my bicycle" (109). The triumph of the typewriter-girl is a triumph of the woman, the machine, and of what Baudelaire, speaking of America, called "volubility" (1952:123), an open embrace of modernity and the emancipative possibilities of mass culture.

The sound of the keyboard would become one of the metaphors of the information industry in film and even in music, as in the sonic anaphones used by many news programs.[7] The sound of the typewriter, rather than the silence of the scriptorium and library, became the trope of the production and circulation of knowledge. These new information technologies and the world with which they engaged both provided and even constituted a new "language" for the description of urban modernity. In "Paris Spleen," Baudelaire insists that modern urban life requires a new language supple and subtle enough to render "leaps and jolts of consciousness" (cited in Berman 1983:148), a language and a medium to express constant displacement and dislocation. This consciousness required the suppleness of sound, registering the dynamic of urban modernity to accommodate its plasticity. The continuity and enveloping flood of noise provided a counterpoint to the fragmented, visual collage of the modern city. Modernist literature pushed against the limits of static textuality to lay hold on the experience, anticipating in the fragmented collages of Eliot and Joyce the medium that would become the dominant expressive form for the modern city.

It was the moving sound image, its balancing of what is seen with what is heard, that standardized the twentieth-century trope of productivity and information circulation. That is, the movie office-space scene filled with the sound of typewriters generating urgent bulletins and dispatches. The transition I have been describing led to a narratology that was most fully realized in film, with its constantly shifting camera points of view, its rapid editing, and its deployment of sound. In the 1959 film *The Battle of the Sexes*, based on a story by the (near-blind) James Thurber, an American efficiency expert (actress Constance Cummings) arrives at McPherson's, a Scottish company dealing in hand-woven fabric. She attempts to rationalize the business, to the chagrin of the accountant (actor Peter Sellers). The two become locked in the eponymous battle,

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[7] On "sonic anaphones" see Tagg and Clarida 2003:99-101.

which is also a battle over modernization. His weapons are impassive taciturnity and tradition. Her weapons are volubility and the technology of mass modernity, the sonorous technology of keyboards, Dictaphones, and intercoms. She begins by technologizing the accounting department. Hitherto, the efficiency of its operations was signaled through scribal silence in which even the sound of a worn scratchy pen on paper was an intrusion on the silence of concentrated labor. The transition to a "modern" workplace is signaled in what might have taken a silent page in a novel several paragraphs to recount. Film presents without explanatory commentary a time-lapse narrative of the gender and technology shift from Melville to Allen/ Rayner. Here, it is completed in a few seconds' expressive collage of technologized cacophony: the tapping of adding machines and the buzz of intercoms. The sound of silence has been replaced by a site of sound.

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Joyce's Noises

Derek Attridge

Molly Bloom is lying restlessly in bed, her head next to her husband's feet, counting the days until she will next be with her lover, Blazes Boylan: "Thursday Friday one Saturday two Sunday three O Lord I cant wait till Monday" (Joyce, *U* 18.594-95).[1] The next item we see on the page—one can hardly call it a word—is a bizarre string of letters: "frseeeeeeeefronnnng" (*U* 18.596). All in lower case, it begins the fourth of the so-called sentences of the final episode of *Ulysses*. Its challenge to our reading of the episode is multiple: it is unpronounceable, at least according to the norms of the English language; it is meaningless; and it is hardly conceivable as part of Molly's thought processes in the way that everything in the chapter up to this point has been. Joyce does not leave us mystified for long, however: the verbalized thoughts that follow this strange irruption explain what it is doing here: "train somewhere whistling the strength those engines have in them like big giants" (*U* 18.596-97). Distant train whistles may more usually evoke associations of travel, separation, nostalgia, or longing, but Molly's response is clearly colored by her active desire for the man she has just called, with obvious relish, a "savage brute" (*U* 18.594).

Are we to take this series of letters as representing the actual sound of a train whistle—perhaps on two notes, higher then lower—as it penetrates the bedroom of 7 Eccles Street? (The train is too distant, I think, for the double tone to be a product of the Doppler effect.) Would it be legitimate for an audio version of the book to substitute for the reader's voice at this point a recording of the real sound? Surely not: although one could argue that the succession of *e*'s and the subsequent *o* do mimic the higher and lower notes of the whistle, and that the prolonged nasal of the second syllable imitates a change in timbre in the second note, Joyce's choice of letters can hardly be said to aim at exact representation. The spelling is connected in some way with Molly's own perception of the sound. Is this how she would write it down if she felt the need to do so? (As I've argued elsewhere, there are many suggestions in the episode that the apparent flow of uncontrolled thoughts is constantly mediated by the constraints and characteristics of writing).[2] This supposition is strengthened by the sudden change of tack in

[1] All references to Joyce's *Ulysses* (abbreviated as *U*) will be in the standard form of episode and line number(s); see Joyce 1986.

[2] See Attridge 1988:ch. 8, espec. 97-105.

Molly's ruminations: ". . . like big giants and the water rolling all over and out of them all sides like the end of Loves old sweeeetsonnnng" (*U* 18.596-98).

Given the obvious association between the imagined steam locomotive and Boylan's thrusting masculinity, we may well misread "like the end of . . ."; then, as so often in "Penelope," we have to correct our interpretation, as we realize that the comparison Molly is making is between the sound of the train whistle and one of the songs she'll be performing on the forthcoming concert tour with Boylan (and has probably been singing to him earlier). (Molly herself, of course, is in no doubt about what is like what; it's only the reader who may find a grosser meaning in "end." The result of Joyce's removal of punctuation in this episode is not, as is often thought, a more accurate rendition of mental processes, but a game of constant guessing and reassessment that has little to do with Molly's subjectivity.) The "onnnng" of the train whistle, it turns out, is there less as an attempt at mimesis than as an indication of the already forming connection with the "onnnng" of the song. (That the word of the song in question is "song" is, of course, another Joycean joke.) The implied downward change in pitch in the move from *e* to *o* is what links this sound in Molly's aural imagination to the singing of "sweet song."

The strength of the association between sound and song is made clear when the train whistle penetrates Molly's thoughts a second time. She is recalling some of her youthful experiences with the opposite sex when her reminiscences are interrupted by the same sequence of letters—now with even more *e*'s (no fewer than twenty) and an upper case *F* at the start (perhaps the train is closer?):

> Frseeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeeefrong that train again weeping tone once in the dear deaead days beyondre call close my eyes breath my lips forward kiss sad look eyes open piano ere oer the world the mists began I hate that istsbeg comes loves sweet sooooooooooong (*U* 18.874-77).

Again, her thoughts move straight from train-whistle to song, with "weeping tone" providing a bridge.

The third and last time Molly hears the train, she once again associates it with "Love's Old Sweet Song," though this time there is a third sound blended with it. Molly has just said to herself: "I feel some wind in me better go easy not wake him up" (*U* 18.903), and she seems to be successful in this endeavor not to disturb Leopold's sleep: "yes hold them like that a bit on my side piano quietly sweeeee theres that train far away pianissimo eeeee one more tsong" (*U* 18.907-08). Here Joyce gives us an extraordinary triple sonic pun: "sweeee" and "eeeee" are at once the train in the distance, much quieter now; the farts, released as softly as possible; and the final words of the song (with the "t" of "sweet" postponed so that it becomes the first sound in "tsong," to maximize the musical potential of the vowel). The words "piano" and "pianissimo" apply to all three. Anal references have, in fact, been building up in the passage even before Molly articulates her desire to break wind—perhaps as the unconscious effect of an internal build-up, perhaps another of Joyce's games with the reader—and the connection between singing and farting has already been intimated. For instance, Molly's choice of words to describe her singing of "Love's Old Sweet Song" after the previous train whistle—"Ill let that out full" (*U* 18.878)—already seems suggestive; she then describes her rival singers as

"sparrowfarts" who "know as much as my backside" (*U* 18.879-80). And the song she decides to sing as an encore is "Winds that blow from the south" (*U* 18.899).

Ulysses, like *Finnegans Wake* after it, takes great delight in fusing high and low, the polite and the taboo, the revered and the looked-down-upon. Language, that mark of civilization, proves to be a medium well suited to blurring the distinctions on which civilization is supposed to rest. Train-whistle, fart, concert song: these very different sounds, each with a different set of cultural associations, are hardly compatible with one another; yet Joyce manages to unite them, and to do so without any sense of hierarchy or conflict. At the same time, the representational indeterminacy of the sounds of *language*, its *in*adequacy as a mode of direct imitation, is signaled: these different sounds are, in the end, represented by nothing more than a row of *e*'s.[3]

In *Peculiar Language* I made a distinction between two types of onomatopoeia, which I called "lexical" and "nonlexical"—not a watertight distinction, to be sure, but one that I think serves a useful purpose (1988:136, 148). In lexical onomatopoeia, the more common variety, the words of the language are deployed in such a way as to suggest a more than usually strong link between the sounds of speech and the non-speech sounds (or other physical features of the world) being represented. In nonlexical onomatopoeia, the rarer form that is the subject of this essay, the letters and sounds of the language are used for a similar purpose, but without the formation of words. Writers have been traditionally free to exploit the fact that in a language with a phonetic alphabet individual letters can represent sounds without conveying meanings, and the usual strict limits placed on neologisms do not apply when no actual lexical items are involved. (One of the best-known examples in literary history is perhaps the earliest: Aristophanes' frogs going "Brekekek koax koax.") The group of letters representing the first train-whistle is thus a clear example of nonlexical onomatopoeia. "Sweeee," on the other hand, lies somewhere between the two types, although its use of the lexical potential of the language is unusual in that it's not the *meaning* of the word that is relevant (unless one wants to make an argument about the sweetness of Molly's singing) but rather the fact of its being sung.

I hope I may be allowed to summarize briefly part of the argument about nonlexical onomatopoeia I put forward in *Peculiar Language*. There I focused on the other significant fart in *Ulysses*—Bloom's burgundy-induced release at the end of "Sirens" (an event of which Molly's fart in "Penelope" is a kind of unwitting echo or partner). I listed eight factors that complicate the simple picture of unmediated imitation one might be tempted to apply to nonlexical onomatopoeia, the first four being limits to the *directness* of the link between linguistic and represented sound, and the second four being limits to its *precision* (see 1988:138-47):

> (1) All onomatopoeia relies on the reader's knowledge of the system of language in which the text is written; in the case of nonlexical onomatopoeia, the knowledge required is of the phonological system of the spoken language and the graphological system of the written language. (In *Finnegans Wake*, Joyce would

[3] Elsewhere, a row of *e*'s can indicate the dragging of a stick on the ground (*U* 1.629), a creaking door (*U* 7.50; *U* 11.965), and a turning doorhandle (*U* 15.2694). See also Attridge 1988:144 on these *e*'s.

enrich the possibilities of nonlexical onomatopoeia by bringing several languages into play simultaneously.) Even though the sequence "frs" at the beginning of the train-whistle contradicts the phonological norms of English, unpronounceability is as much part of the system as pronounceability; and if Joyce wants us to struggle to produce some sort of noise based on our knowledge of the sounds indicated by each letter, he also wants us to be aware of the limits of this kind of representation.

(2) Very few sequences of letters are without any lexical associations at all. We've seen that the "ong" of the train-whistle is linked to the "-ong" of "song," for example—though it's noticeable that Joyce avoids the usual phonemic clusters linked in English with whistling and related sounds, notably the letters "wh"—"whisper," "wheeze," "whoosh," "whine," and so on. Like unpronounceability, the avoidance of conventional associations depends on knowledge of the language's systematic properties.

(3) There are conventions attached to the notion of onomatopoeia itself: for instance, that repeated letters indicate prolonged sound. A particular convention operating in the train-whistle—or perhaps it's an extrapolation from other conventions—is that "nnnng" is an extended "ng" sound, rather than an extended "n" sound followed by "ng" (though there is nothing, finally, to stop one from reading it in this way). If we read "deaead" as "d—e—d", with an extended central monophthong (rather than some complicated diphthong or triphthong) we are aware as we do so that the letter-by-letter spelling suggests something else. Nonlexical onomatopoeia is as much a matter of *interpretation* as any other use of signs or system of notation.

(4) Although we tend to think in terms of sound imitating sound, nonlexical onomatopoeia often has a *visual* component as well. The string of *e*'s we have been discussing hits the eye as anomalous even before we have attempted to read them, and the idea of prolongation is already present to us. It's perhaps also relevant that the beginnings of the two tones are signaled by letters that poke up above the sequence, and the end by one that drops below it.

(5) Interpretation of nonlexical onomatopoeia is highly context-dependent. As I've already noted, the example I began with conveys very little by itself. Given on its own to a group unfamiliar with *Ulysses*, I don't imagine many people would identify it as a train-whistle. The sense we may have of the vividness of an onomatopoeic representation is seldom a result of the precision of its imitation.

(6) Appreciation of any type of onomatopoeia also presupposes familiarity with the sound itself. Someone who has not heard, directly or in a recording or simulation, the whistle of a train is not going to bring it into being on the basis of Joyce's string of letters.

(7) The existence of these two preconditions—an identifying context and prior familiarity with the sound—is still not enough to produce exact imitation. The sounds of language are not, after all, widely found outside language. Had Joyce given us Molly's response to the train whistle without the string of letters, we

> would not have had any difficulty in imagining the sound she hears—but of course the interweaving of train-whistle and song, and later fart, would have been impossible.
>
> (8) Finally, the tendency in reading nonlexical onomatopoeia is to produce in the voice an imitation of the sound, rather than a literal reading (literal in the most literal sense) of what is on the page. Its avoidance of recognized lexical items, therefore, acts for many readers as an instruction: make a sound like a train whistle. Recordings of Molly's monologue invariably do the same, often with impressive histrionic inventiveness. The danger of this way of treating nonlexical onomatopoeia is that some of Joyce's subtleties in choosing and arranging letters may be lost in a bravura performance.

Nonlexical onomatopoeia, then, might appear to operate as a puncturing of the mediated, conventional surface of the language by something close to the actual occurrence of an extralinguistic sound, but all the factors I have listed combine to make this a rare event. Joyce, far from trying to escape from the complications that prevent direct imitation of sounds in language, exploited them brilliantly, just as he exploited most of the conventions governing the genre of the novel.

Joyce was slow to develop an interest in the possibilities of nonlexical onomatopoeia. It is not a feature of the scrupulously mean style of *Dubliners*, and I've found only one example in the collection. In "Ivy Day in the Committee Room," Mr. Henchy puts two bottles of stout on the hob, saying "Did you ever see this little trick?" (Joyce 1993a:101). A few minutes later, one of the corks flies out, and Joyce represents the sound by "*Pok!*," with uppercase P, italics, and exclamation mark all working to magnify the dramatic effect—yet at the same time, he makes the drama seem absurd by qualifying the sound with the adjective "apologetic" (a belittling in keeping with the whole story, of course). As an instance of onomatopoeia, this is pretty conventional; Joyce has no interest in playing with the processes of sonic imitation. That this minor sound, and the trick it clinches, should be given such salience in this gathering serves to underline the bankruptness of Dublin party politics at this historical juncture.

A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man also makes very limited use of nonlexical onomatopoeia, but there is a new consciousness of some of the complications involved in its employment. Curiously, the most obvious example in the book is a close relative of the uncorking sound in "Ivy Day," as if Joyce was revisiting this moment with a fuller sense of the device's potential. On the playing fields of Clongowes Wood College, young Stephen hears the sound of balls hitting cricket-bats: "They said: pick, pack, pock, puck: like drops of water in a fountain slowly falling in the brimming bowl" (Joyce 1993b:34). As in the case of Molly's perception of the train-whistle, we get not so much the sound of the bats as the *heard* sound, already transformed in its reception. For Stephen, the bats speak, and it is perhaps his visualization of the words they utter that produces the sequence of recognizable English words "pick," "pack," "pock," and "puck." (The stout bottles, by contrast, say "*Pok*," the spelling of which immediately signals that we are dealing with the representation of a sound, not a word.) It might be possible to make some claims for the meanings evoked by each apparent word in this series, although there is such an array of unrelated associations that no strong semantic pattern

emerges, and it seems justifiable to class this instance as an example of nonlexical onomatopoeia, in which what is important are the plosives with which the items begin and end and the modification in the vowels across the series, rather than the fact that we can find all these strings of letters in an English dictionary.

Familiarity with the sound Stephen hears is undoubtedly helpful here: American readers may have a weaker impression of imitative accuracy in representing the sounds of a cricket match than many British readers. Stephen's own interest in the sounds he hears and the words used to represent sounds—elsewhere he comments on what he takes to be the onomatopoeic quality of "suck" and "kiss"—leads him to relate the cricket-bat noises to water drops. It's a somewhat puzzling association: is Stephen thinking of the slight differences made to the sound by the effect of wind or unevenness in the size of the drops? Joyce will later develop this technique of sequencing vowels; in the "Sirens" episode of *Ulysses*, for instance, Bloom recalls the sound of Molly peeing in a chamber pot, with highly self-conscious onomatopoeic play: "Diddleiddle addleaddle ooddleoodde" (11.984).

It is in *Ulysses* that Joyce allows full rein to his onomatopoeic impulses. The novel is studded with textbook examples of lexical onomatopoeia, and it may seem that these would be the places where his creativity is most evident. After all, the resources of nonlexical onomatopoeia are extremely limited compared to its lexical counterpart, which can draw on all the riches of meaning and emotion embodied in the language. Even though, as I've suggested, lexical associations are often operative in nonlexical onomatopoeia, these can never be anything like as powerful as those of actual words. However, where Joyce is interested in noise—in sounds that suggest neither music nor language—nonlexical onomatopoeia has a distinct advantage. Combinations of letters, and hence of sounds, forbidden by the norms of the language become available to the writer, and new possibilities for mimesis—and for the problematization of mimesis—offer themselves.

The main characters in *Ulysses* all have an interest in onomatopoeia. In Molly's case, as we've seen, it remains unclear how much of the onomatopoeic exorbitance triggered by the train-whistle can be ascribed to her; but it's certainly the case that her experience as a singer has given her a sensitivity to the sounds of words, and that she relates external sounds to the words of the songs she performs. Stephen, the aspiring poet, also has a professional interest in the sounds of words, an interest made especially vivid in the "Proteus" episode. He provides a verbal equivalent for his footsteps on Sandymount strand reminiscent of the cricket bats heard by his younger self in *Portrait*, in this case shifting from lexical to nonlexical onomatopoeia: "Crush, crack, crick, crick" (*U* 3.19).[4] His memory of the post office door shut in his face in Paris prompts a cartoon sequence involving noisy violence: "Shoot him to bloody bits with a bang shotgun, bits man spattered walls all brass buttons. Bits all khrrrrklak in place clack back" (*U* 3.187-90). And the process of composition—the short gothic stanza that begins to form itself in Stephen's mind in this chapter—is depicted by Joyce as having much to do with sounds and their suggestiveness, and rather less to do with the subtleties of sense and syntax. Joyce uses a mixture of lexical and nonlexical onomatopoeia to convey the creative process:

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[4] The *OED* (Second Edition) doesn't recognize "crick" as an onomatopoeic word, though it does list "crick-crack" as "the representation of a repeated sharp sound."

> His lips lipped and mouthed fleshless lips of air: mouth to her moomb. Oomb, allwombing tomb. His mouth moulded issuing breath, unspeeched: ooeeehah: roar of cataractic planets, globed, blazing, roaring wayawayawayawayaway (*U* 3.401-04).

This is not necessarily a recommendation of Stephen's method of poetic creation—the poem that results, which we finally get to read in the "Aeolus" episode (*U* 7.522-25), turns out to be a weak imitation of Douglas Hyde. There can be no doubting Stephen's pleasure in the production of suggestive sound by mouth and breath, however, and it's a pleasure that's not difficult to share. Later, he hears in the incoming tide a "fourworded wavespeech: seesoo, hrss, rsseeiss, ooos" (*U* 3.456-57). Here Stephen's extravagant attempt to represent different qualities of sound by means of nonlexical onomatopoeia (avoiding traditional water-words) is only a partial success: the reader can imagine a repeated fourfold sequence of watery noises but can hardly read it directly off this sequence of letters. This, I would suggest, is part of the point.

Bloom, too, is interested in the noises made by nonhuman entities: in the newspaper printing works he listens to the presses:

> Sllt. The nethermost deck of the first machine jogged forward its flyboard with sllt the first batch of quirefolded papers. Sllt. Almost human the way it sllt to call attention. Doing its level best to speak. That door too sllt creaking, asking to be shut. Everything speaks in its own way. Sllt. (*U* 7.174-77).

And in "Sirens" he meditates on the distinction between sound as music and as noise:

> Sea, wind, leaves, thunder, waters, cows lowing, the cattlemarket, cocks, hens don't crow, snakes hissss. There's music everywhere. Ruttledge's door: ee creaking. No, that's noise. (*U* 11.963-65)

Both these passages refer back to a sentence near the beginning of "Aeolus": "The door of Ruttledge's office whispered: ee: cree" (*U* 7.50). What we probably took there to be the narrator's nonlexical onomatopoeia turns out to have been Bloom's, who, in both these latter passages, completes the word implied earlier, "cree" becoming "creaking." (Once again, the boundary between lexical and nonlexical is tested.)

But there are far more examples of nonlexical onomatopoeia in *Ulysses* than can be explained by the characters' explicit interest in the device. Among the other noises represented by this means are the following:

> pebbles dislodged by a rat: "Rtststr! A rattle of pebbles…. An obese grey rat toddled along the side of the crypt, moving the pebbles" (*U* 6.970-74).

> dental floss twanged on teeth: "He took a reel of dental floss from his waistcoat pocket and, breaking off a piece, twanged it smartly between two and two of his resonant unwashed teeth. ----Bingbang, bangbang" (*U* 7.371-74).

a yawn: “Davy Byrne smiledyawnednodded all in one:
----Iiiiiichaaaaaaach!” (*U* 8.969-70).

a rap with a doorknocker: “One rapped on a door, one tapped with a knock, did he knock Paul de Kock with a loud proud knocker with a cock carracarracarra cock. Cockcock” (*U* 11.986-88).

a fire brigade answering a call: “Pflaap! Pflaap! Blaze on. There she goes. Brigade! … Pflaaaap!” (*U* 14.1569-71).

And at least five types of bell:

a mass bell: “And at the same instant perhaps a priest round the corner is elevating it. Dringdring! And two streets off another locking it into a pyx. Dringadring!” (*U* 3.120-22).

church bells: “A creak and a dark whirr in the air high up. The bells of George’s church. They tolled the hour: loud dark iron.

Heigho! Heigho!
Heigho! Heigho!
Heigho! Heigho!” (*U* 4.544-48).

a handbell: “The lacquey lifted his handbell and shook it:
----Barang!” (*U* 10.649-50).

bicycle bells:

“THE BELLS
Haltyaltyaltyall” (*U* 15.180-81).

and bells on bracelets:

“THE BRACELETS
Heigho! Heigho!” (*U* 15.4085-86).

Animal cries may demand this type of onomatopoeia, the most famous one being Bloom’s cat’s escalating cry: “Mkgnao! . . . Mrkgnao! . . . Mrkrgnao!” (*U* 4.16, 25, 32). We also hear a different sound from the cat: “Gurrhr! she cried, running to lap” (*U* 4.38). There is a noisy hen in the “Cyclops” episode:

Ga Ga Gara. Klook Klook Klook. Black Liz is our hen. She lays eggs for us. When she lays her egg she is so glad. Gara. Klook Klook Klook. Then comes good uncle Leo. He puts his hand under black Liz and takes her fresh egg. Ga ga ga ga Gara. Klook Klook Klook (*U* 12.846-49; see also 15.3710).

In "Circe" the gulls' cry is rendered as "Kaw kave kankury kake" (*U* 15.686) and the horse's neigh as "Hohohohohohoh! Hohohohome!" (*U* 15.4878-79).

The use of playtext format in "Circe" allows even objects to speak (as the cricket-bats had in *Portrait*), and they sometimes employ nonlexical forms to do so: examples include the already-mentioned bracelets and bells (*U* 15.181 and 4086); a trouserbutton: "Bip!" (*U* 15.3441); and a pianola: "Baraabum!" (*U* 15.4107). Especially colorful are the flying kisses:

> THE KISSES
>
> (*warbling*) Leo! (*twittering*) Icky licky micky sticky for Leo! (*cooing*) Coo coocoo! Yummyyum, Womwom! (*warbling*) Big comebig! Pirouette! Leopopold! (*twittering*) Leeolee! (*warbling*) O Leo! (15.1272-74).

Human characters also produce nonlexical utterances in the book, though in these cases they can be understood to be playing Joycean games themselves, and I shall not discuss them here.[5] Davy Byrne's yawn is an exception, as an involuntary human sound on a par with the book's farts.[6]

It is true that some of these examples can, like Molly's train-whistle, Stephen's wavesounds, and Bloom's creaking door, be understood as reflecting a mental response to a sound rather than the sound itself. It might be Stephen who converts the imagined sound of a massbell to "Dringdring! . . . Dringadring," and Bloom who hears the sound of St. George's bells as repeated "Heigho"s.[7] We can't be sure whether the "Rtststr!" of the rat's movement among the pebbles comes to us via Bloom's perception or not; what is curious is that the cause of the noise—unknown to Bloom when he first hears it—seems to be alluded to in the string of letters themselves. In most cases, however, the noise punctuates the progression of the text without any indication that its conversion into the letters of the English alphabet is the responsibility of a character. The "sllt" of the printing press might seem to be Bloom's representation at first, but as it interrupts his thoughts at unpredictable intervals it gives the strong impression of coming from outside his mental world.

Joyce follows no consistent rules in constructing his nonlexical interruptions, not even self-determined rules. Sometimes the letters he uses suggest the sound they are meant to convey quite directly: "barang," for instance, seems to me an apt equivalent for the sound of a handbell rung with a double strike: two syllables with the same vowel to represent the two sounds at the same pitch, beginning with a voiced plosive and ending with a nasal as the sound dies away. (It also of course suggests the conventional onomatopoeia "bang" and contains the word "rang.")

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[5] For an insightful account of some of the implications of these human sounds in *Ulysses* (as well as non-human sounds), see Connor 1994.

[6] Another sound that might be involuntary is that which is made when Bella Cohen's "*sowcunt barks*": "Fbhracht!" (*U* 15.3489-90). As Connor (1994:136) points out, this is an anomaly in "Circe," as it is the only place where an object or organ is not presented as a character with its own speech prefix.

[7] I've included "Heigho" among the examples of nonlexical onomatopoeia as it is not given by the *OED* as a word; however, the *OED* does recognize "Heigh-ho," so it is a marginal case.

"Bip," to take another example, is probably as good a representation of a snapping button as more familiar sound-words (such as the word "snap" itself).

At times Joyce is happy to use a conventional onomatopoeia, such as "thump" for the printing machines (*U* 7.101), "tink" for the diner's bell in the Ormond hotel (*U* 11.286), and the frequently repeated "jingle" for the sound of Boylan's jaunting-car (*U* 11.212)—though the last of these is subject to a number of Joycean variations, including "jinglejaunty" (*U* 11.290), "jing" (*U* 11.457), "jiggedy jingle" (*U* 11.579), and "jingly" (*U* 11.606). Other examples use conventional words as a basis on which to build: the traditional "miaow" of the cat (which Bloom himself uses in addressing his cat [*U* 4.462]) becomes the unpronounceable "Mkgnao!" when uttered by the cat itself (*U* 4.16), with those even more complicated versions following as the animal—presumably—becomes more insistent. There is enough correspondence with the conventional word to allow for a pronunciation not too far removed from the traditional one, but there is also an invitation to the reader to be more inventive in emulating these feline ejaculations. Similarly, the "Klook Klook Klook" of the hen (*U* 12.846) allows us to hear "cluck cluck cluck" but defamiliarizes it by means of the upper case K's and the double o's. (Did Joyce know the Australian term "chook" for a domestic fowl?) The same switch of letter, without an impact on pronunciation but with a distinct shift in associations, occurs when the gulls in "Circe" utter not "Caw" with a C but "Kaw" with a K (*U* 15.686).

In many examples, however, convincing imitation of a noise seems to be far from Joyce's purpose. Often, as in the case of the train-whistle, the reader needs a pointer to the sound being represented. Thus a stage direction specifies the sound made by the nannygoat before it is given to us: "(*bleats*) Megeggaggegg! Nannannanny!" (*U* 15.3370). The supposedly onomatopoeic sequences of letters by themselves hardly suggest the noise of bleating, and the comic absurdity of two very different sequences of letters for the same sound (the second clearly derived from the name of the animal) is part-and-parcel of "Circe's" mad playfulness.

In most cases, Joyce can assume that we know the sound already and that there is no point in trying to match the sounds of the language to it. Rather, he takes advantage of the traditional license to invent new collocations of letters when imitating sounds to undertake a creative deformation and reformation of the words of the language. Thus the gong of the tram (perhaps a sound now more familiar to San Franciscans than Dubliners) moves from a conventional onomatopoeic word to a surprising sequence that doesn't seem sonically accurate but is comically suggestive: "Bang Bang Bla Bak Blud Bugg Bloo" (*U* 15.189). (This is another example of the sequence of varied vowels we have seen before, both in *Portrait* and in *Ulysses*.) There are echoes here, especially in the penultimate "word," of the "British Beatitudes" listed in the previous episode: "Beer, beef, business, bibles, bulldogs, battleships, buggery and bishops" (*U* 14.1459-60), though at its climax the gong appears to interpolate our hero, just as the fearsome sandstrewer bears down on him.[8] To take another example, the horse's neigh has been infected by the last word of the previous speaker—both Bloom and Corny Kelleher end speeches with "home," and as if in sympathy, or perhaps mockery, the horse twice follows them by emitting its "Hohohohome!" (*U* 15.4879, 4899). Similarly, the gulls' "kankury kake" (*U* 15.686) reminds us that Bloom has earlier fed them Banbury cakes; Major Tweedy's "Salute!"

[8] Connor (1994:107) hears "something like 'Get back you bloody bugger Bloom.'"

becomes the retriever's "Ute ute ute ute ute ute ute ute" (*U* 15.4752-54); and the bawd's "coward's blow" mutates into the same retriever's "Wow wow wow" (*U* 15.4763-66).

In some examples, particularly in "Circe," the supposed onomatopoeia is very hard to interpret, even though we are given clues to the sound. Would we realize that the retriever was "barking furiously" with its repeated "ute"s if it weren't given as a stage direction? What kind of bicycle bell goes "Haltyaltyaltyall" (*U* 15.181)? Do quoits on a bed really make a sound anything like "Jigjag. Jigajiga. Jigjag" (*U* 15.1138)—or is what is important the association with the set of sounds already linked to Boylan's assignation with Molly, such as "Jiggedy jingle jaunty jaunty" (*U* 11.579)? The sound emitted by the "Dummymummy"—"Bbbbbllllblblblblobschb!"—is as obscure as the object emitting it, a "dummy of Bloom, wrapped in a mummy" (*U* 15.3380-81). It's hard to imagine exactly what noise the gasjet in the brothel makes when it needs adjusting or when struck by Stephen's ashplant, as these are rendered "Pooah! Pfuiiiiiii!" (*U* 15.2280) and "Pwfungg!" (*U* 15.4247). And two examples I find particularly puzzling are the twanging dental floss, which sounds far too loud when rendered as "Bingbang, bangbang" (*U* 7.374), and the fire-brigade's repeated "Pflaap" (*U* 14.1569, 1577, 1589), which I can't connect with any imagined horn or other warning sound.[9]

Here I would like to assert three further points. First, the significance of the device we are considering goes beyond the local pleasures it provides, for Joyce uses many of these examples to link distant parts of the book, capitalizing on their salience and memorability within the dense texture of the writing. We've already seen how Bloom's fart at the close of "Sirens" receives a response in Molly's fart near the end of "Penelope," and how the refrain around the words "jingle," "jaunty," and "jig" not only extends through much of "Sirens" but is recapitulated in "Circe." "Circe," in fact, recycles a number of the earlier examples of nonlexical onomatopoeia, among them the bells of George's church (15.1186; also echoed in the bracelets' "Heigho!" [15.4086]), Davy Byrne's yawn (15.1697), the fire brigade from "Oxen of the Sun" (15.1925), the lacquey's bell (15.3096, 4140), and the clucking of Black Liz (15.3710). The complexly patterned architecture of *Ulysses* is thus built not just out of repetitions of and variations upon words and phrases but out of sonic echoes and refrains. Second, there are, of course, numerous examples in *Ulysses* of the intermediate category that lies between full lexical onomatopoeia and full nonlexical onomatopoeia: the deformation of words to suggest mimetically the sounds or movements to which they refer. Some of our examples lean in this direction, as we have noted. "Sirens" in particular relies on such effects for much of its aural effectiveness; to give one example, the piano's "dark chords" are described as "lugugugubrious" (*U* 11.1005). Often it is an already onomatopoeic word that is developed: for example, this cadenza on the word "clap": "----Bravo! Clapclap. Good man, Simon. Clappyclapclap. Encore! Clapclipclap clap. Sound as a bell. Bravo, Simon! Clapclopclap"(*U* 11.756-58). Third, there are also occasional uses of a perfectly normal word for what seem to be purely onomatopoeic purposes. One example is the moth that flaps against the lightshade in the brothel, going "Pretty pretty pretty pretty pretty pretty petticoats" (*U* 15.2477). Here Joyce seems to be evacuating these words of sense so we can attend to their sounds.

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[9] Jim Norton, in his excellent reading of the complete *Ulysses* (Joyce 2004), speaks the repeated "Pflaap" in a whisper, which I don't think helps.

If we step back to consider Joyce's use of nonlexical onomatopoeia in *Ulysses* as a whole, can we make any generalizations about its relation to wider cultural developments? It is tempting to argue that these eruptions of noise into the textual stream are a reflection (or should I say echo?) of the new sounds of the early twentieth century—the sounds of mechanization, of mechanized war, of automation, of recording instruments themselves. And it is true that Joyce was remarkably alert to new developments in communications media, the references to television in *Finnegans Wake* being the most familiar instance. There's one striking passage in *Ulysses* in which Joyce perfectly exemplifies a claim made by theorists of the cultural shifts produced by the invention of sound recording. Claire MacDonald (2003:2), for instance, notes that with the invention of recording techniques "the separation of voice and body changed our relationship to death." Bloom is indulging in one of his extended meditations in the "Hades" episode:

> Have a gramophone in every grave or keep it in the house. After dinner on a Sunday. Put on poor old greatgrandfather. Kraahraark! Hellohellohello amawfullyglad kraark awfullygladaseeagain hellohello amawf krpthsth. Remind yo*U* of the voice like the photograph reminds yo*U* of the face. (*U* 6.962-67).

Joyce not only recognizes the changed relation to death of which MacDonald speaks, but through nonlexical onomatopoeia suggests the technological limitations that can turn pathos into absurdity, mourning into laughter. These limitations are explicitly adverted to when "Circe" returns to the gramophone: "Whorusaleminyourhighhohhhh… (*the disc rasps gratingly against the needle*)" (*U* 15.2211-12).

But in spite of this alertness to technological change, I'm not sure a case can be made that Joyce's exploration of the representation of noise through nonlexical onomatopoeia is a product of the new sounds he was hearing as he wrote or that he remembered from his childhood and youth. For one thing, there would have been a significant difference between the urban sounds of 1904 and those of 1922, whether in Dublin or Paris (or Trieste or Zurich). Emily Thompson, in *The Soundscape of Modernity* (2002:117), emphasizes the change over this period.[10] She notes that "[w]hen Dr. J. H. Girdner catalogued 'The Plague of City Noises' in 1896, almost all the noises he listed were traditional sounds: horse-drawn vehicles, peddlers, musicians, animals, and bells. 'Nearly every kind of city noise,' he reported, 'will find its proper place under one of the above headings.'" By 1925 the sound of the city was very different: an article in the *Saturday Review of Literature* mentions "the motor, the elevated, the steel drill, the subway, the airplane."[11] When New Yorkers were polled in 1929 about the noises that they were bothered by, only seven percent mentioned the sounds listed by Girdner in 1896; the ten most disturbing noises were all products of the "machine age." If, then, Joyce was being true to his memories of 1904, it is perhaps not surprising that most of the examples I've cited have no

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[10] See, in particular, Thompson's introduction, "Sound, Modernity, and History" (1-12) and the first part of ch. 4, "Noise and Modern Culture, 1900-1933" (115-20).

[11] Thompson (2002:117) is quoting from the *North American Review* of September 1896, p. 300, and the *Saturday Review of Literature* 2, 24 October 1925, p. 1.

particular twentieth-century association: bells of several kinds (and none of them electric); door, doorhandle, and doorknocker; a number of animals; waves, bed quoits, the gasjet, a button. Even the machinery we hear in operation does not appear to be recent in origin: the printing press, the steam locomotive, the tram gong, the fire-engine (whatever its noise is). Although we're very aware in *Ulysses* of the technological achievements of the nineteenth century as they manifest themselves in Dublin in 1904—trams, telephones, gas lighting, that gramophone, and so on—Joyce's noises are drawn from a much wider range of sounds. However, it may well be that the invention of recording itself, in separating sounds from their origins, made it easier for Joyce to indulge in his exuberant aural games.

With very few exceptions, the enjoyment and insight offered by nonlexical onomatopoeia in *Ulysses* are not the product of vivid and precise imitation. Nor has this type of onomatopoeia available to it the intensity of signification produced by *lexical* onomatopoeia—when the reader experiences the words of the language with unusual forcefulness. What Joyce does in the nonlexical arena is to make the inevitable failure of his mimetic sallies a productive resource, revealing the language's own entertaining proclivities and challenging a long tradition of aesthetic practice and theorization based on the idea of imitation. It could be said that nonlexical onomatopoeia has been marginalized in serious literature (it thrives in the comic book genre, of course) because it takes literature's supposed mimetic function *à la lettre* and in so doing exposes its limits. Instead of letting the world break into the text, nonlexical onomatopoeia, in Joyce's hands at least, reminds us, with comic brilliance, that the text produces a world.

Although the instances of nonlexical onomatopoeia in *Ulysses* amount to only a minuscule proportion of the text, I would argue that they played a crucial part in Joyce's creative development. For it must have been in these playful challenges to the normally binding rules governing the construction of the words of the language that Joyce glimpsed a new way of writing. If letters could be strung together with comic effect, if words could be manipulated into new shapes and made to flow into one another, would it not be possible to write a whole book on this basis? There are many ways in which *Ulysses* can be seen to have prepared the ground for its successor, but we should not overlook the significance of Joyce's pleasure in the noises he could make with nothing more to play with than the twenty-six letters of the alphabet.

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Where Now the Harp? Listening for the Sounds of Old English Verse, from *Beowulf* to the Twentieth Century

Chris Jones

nis þær hearpan sweg, / gomen in geardum, swylce ðær iu wæron (2458b-59)[1]
There is no sound of the harp, delight in courts, as there once were

The way to learn the music of verse is to listen to it. (Pound 1951:56)

Even within an advanced print culture, poetry arguably never escapes the oral dimension. For Ezra Pound, whose highly intertextual epic *The Cantos*, so conscious of its page appearance, could only be the product of such a print culture, poetry was nevertheless "an art of pure sound," the future of which in English was to be the "orchestration" of different European systems of sound-patterning (Pound 1973:33). Verbal orchestration is meaningless without auditors; it goes without saying that the notion of oral literature simultaneously implies the concept of aural literature. This much is also evident from the very beginning of *Beowulf*: *Hwæt, we Gar-Dena in geardagum, / þeodcyninga þrym gefrunon* . . . . ("Listen, we have heard of the Spear-Danes in times past, of the glory of the people's kings . . . ," lines 1-2). While the conventionality of the opening might suggest the evocation of a formulaic idiom often associated with oral composition,[2] the emphasis is clearly on aurality, on hearing a voice. Much work has been done in recent decades on the evidence in Old English written texts for a poetics that draws on compositional methods derived from an oral culture, either as it had survived into a period of widespread literacy, or as it was imagined to have once existed.[3] This essay will not directly address that valuable rehabilitation of oral-formulaic theory into a more sophisticated understanding of early medieval scribal culture, although it will draw on it at times. Rather, I wish to pay some attention to the contiguous matter of that emphasis on listening for voice, of

[1] This and all subsequent references to *Beowulf* are from Klaeber 1950.

[2] For comparable examples of the "listen, we have heard . . ." formula, see the opening of *Exodus* in Krapp 1931:91; of *Andreas* in Krapp 1932:3; and of *Juliana* in Krapp and Dobbie 1936:113.

[3] See, for example, Foley 1991a, 2002; Renoir 1988:157-74; O'Keeffe 1990; Stock 1990; Lerer 1991:158-94; Doane and Pasternack 1991; espec. Schaefer 1991; Pasternack 1995; and Amodio 2004:33-78 and 2005.

trying to make a space in the text for audible performance, before moving on to consider an analogous impulse in modern poetry and to argue for a new type of textual allusion. A number of Old English poems could be used to explore the first idea, but the present essay will limit itself to some observations about *Beowulf*.

Beowulf is a poem that stages the making and/or performance of poetry on several occasions;[4] one could say that poetry itself, or its creation, is one of the poem's major themes. Although it is in some ways a self-referential impulse, one hesitates to call this preoccupation metatextual, lest that should suggest that *Beowulf* is concerned to observe and investigate the production of poems like itself, that is to say, textual in its usual sense, made of words in their written, material form. Our *Beowulf*, an inscripted text, the product of a late tenth- or early eleventh-century scriptorium,[5] is intrigued by the sound of oral composition, perhaps as much so as modern scholars of early Germanic verse.[6] Through this staging of the voice or voices of oral poetry, *Beowulf* situates itself as listening in to that tradition.[7] In doing so, the poem implicitly aligns itself with a poetics where transmission and composition are co-dependent, indivisible aspects of the same act, just as its opening rhetorical gambit implicates speaking with hearing and collocates narrator and audience, suggesting through the plural pronoun that a poet is always also a listener, as the second epigraph to this essay makes explicit.

A prime example of this straining to listen for the voice of oral composition occurs in the episode that takes place the morning after Beowulf's victory over Grendel, when one of Hrothgar's thanes *word oþer fand / soðe gebunden* ("found other words, truly bound," 870b-71a) in order to tell *sið Beowulfes* ("Beowulf's adventure," 872a). We are informed that the thane knows a great deal of traditional material; he is *guma gilphlæden, gidda myndig / se ðe ealfela ealdgesegena / worn gemunde* ("a man full of speech, mindful of poems, who remembered a multitude of many old songs," 868-70a). We are also told that to recount Beowulf's adventure the thane has to *wordum wrixlan* ("vary the words," 874a). Seemingly, then, Hrothgar's man reshapes a stock of familiar material to suit the new context generated by the occasion. Details such as these have sometimes led scholars to the assumption that what we are presented with here is a contemporary or near-contemporary portrait of the oral-formulaic *scop* ("poet") at work, manipulating his store of formulae in order to extemporize in honor of Beowulf (Creed 1963). Seamus Heaney's translation italicizes lines 884b to 915 of the Old English (lines 883 to 914 of

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[4] Hill 2002 gives an overview of these occasions. The term "stage," to describe the poet's practice in this respect, I have adopted from Ursula Schaefer (1991).

[5] While I am relatively confident that there must have been earlier *Beowulf*s, and that they probably differed from the one that survives in the Nowell Codex, I am happy enough with the one we have, without desiring that which we do not and cannot have.

[6] Jeff Opland (1980a:191) believes that the compositional practices described in *Beowulf* were once current, and therefore not straightforwardly fictional. Roberta Frank (1993) is skeptical that the depiction of oral poets in *Beowulf* is anything other than a form of medieval historical fiction. Amodio (2005) argues that this and other reports of *scop*ic activity are "idealized and fictional accounts of how legendary figures composed vernacular poetry" (185). See also Niles 2007:141-87.

[7] On Paul Zumthor's term "vocality" as the term by which medieval poetry can be described without resorting to the binary opposition of a crude "orality vs. literacy" model, see Schaefer 1991:118. On "inscribed" verse as "vocalized" and sharing some characteristics with oral poetry, see Pasternack 1995:60-62.

his translation), indicating that he takes them as the tale of *sið Beowulfes* and regards them as an embedded lay, possibly earlier than the surface layer of the poem but in any case in a different voice (2002:24).[8] Here, then, our *Beowulf*-poet creates a platform for the voice of an earlier or ur-*Beowulf*-poet, and so, in a sense, locates himself as listening to material even as he transmits it. Simultaneously, that ur-poet gives voice to material he has previously heard, making—as he must—through transmission, and transmitting by re-making. *Beowulf* here indulges in some fictional navel-gazing, as the written text purports to listen to the putative sound of its oral origins, finding there a voice-within-a-voice reshaping previously heard stories and intervolving in an umbilical spiral of possibly infinite regress.

Yet even disregarding the fact that the *Beowulf*-poet is imagining, and perhaps idealizing, a fictional oral-formulaic forebear whom he must have imagined to have worked several centuries before his own time, it is arguable as to whether we hear the sound or even the sense of that spoken composition at all. For a tale that describes the *sið Beowulfes* in "other words," varied from the traditionally inherited patterns, such as the Danish thane is presumably meant to have told, is precisely what we do not get here.[9] Instead we hear a story of the hero Sigemund[10] and of Heremod, an inadequate king, unadapted to Beowulf's narrative, unless by the innovation of making Sigemund a dragon-slayer, an ironic manipulation of traditional material of which only the *Beowulf*-poet at his meta-narrative level, and not the Danish thane in his moment of fictional composition, can have been aware. Indeed, there is nothing about this episode concerning Sigemund and Heremod to suggest that it is not in our poet's voice.[11] What appears as if it might be the sound of oral composition, captured in script, may be neither more nor less than the *Beowulf*-poet's writerly manipulation of traditional materials.[12]

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[8] See also his introduction, where he compellingly writes: "For a moment it is as if we have been channel-surfed into another poem, . . . I indicate that we are in fact participating in a poem-within-our-poem not only by the use of italics, but by a slight quickening of pace and shortening of metrical rein" (xxvi).

[9] In this respect Opland seems to me to elide what the text gives us with what the text says it is giving us, when he writes that the thane "utters a eulogy in praise of Beowulf. He skillfully rehearses Beowulf's conquest of the monster; he refers to every famous deed of Sigemund that he has heard of; and he reviews the career of Heremod" (1980b:32). Griffith notes that the song "is introduced in a misleading fashion" (1995:14), while Amodio comments that "the *Beowulf*-poet only reports the substance of the poem and does not attempt to present the song itself" (2005:196).

[10] Griffith (1995) finds evidence that the portrayal of Sigemund might not have the purpose of unambiguously flattering Beowulf by comparison with a legendary hero, as is often assumed to be the point of the passage.

[11] This is not to say that the episode might not be in the voice of the Danish thane; the nature of medieval manuscript textuality, not having the equivalent of modern conventions of punctuation, allows for this kind of ambiguity of voicing. But one might argue that it is easier to presume consistency of voice than shift. Griffith argues that the Danish *scop* and the *Beowulf*-poet "speak with one voice here" (1995:14). Amodio contends that the line between the voices of the inner and outer poets "blurs dramatically," suggesting that the *Beowulf*-poet "does not sharply mark out the conclusion of the fictional *scop*'s performance, but rather seems to finish it in his own voice" (2005:197). It is implied in Amodio's reading, then, that the *scop*'s voice is initially heard somewhere in these lines, even if identifying where it ends presents difficulties.

[12] Although I call the poem writerly, like many recent critics I assume the influence on *Beowulf* of compositional strategies that result from knowledge of, concomitant contact with, or the archaic residue of an oral poetics.

Indeed, what is striking about many of *Beowulf*'s attempts to summon the sound of oral composition into its silent world of parchment and ink marks is that the poem seems to bear witness to as much anxiety as confidence about the possibility for success in this respect. Arguably, one of the themes *Beowulf* concerns itself with is the impossibility of realizing in the poem's present a heroic ideal that it locates in the distant past. If one is prepared to assent to this statement (and it would not command universal acceptance), one could also note that the most fully actualized performances of oral composition occur earlier in the poem, further back in narrative time, and that as the poem drives forward its ability to make audible the sound of oral performance becomes less secure. This, then, would be to acknowledge that a general pattern of narrative thrust can be followed in several threads of the poem simultaneously, whereby various forms of cultural anxiety become amplified over the course of the poem, and that treatment of orality and aurality in *Beowulf* is synecdochic of its broader concerns.

Even in the poem's earlier movements, however, there are intimations that the soundscape of its putative golden age is under threat and its horizons are difficult to defend.[13] So although it is reported to us that in Heorot *þær wæs hearpan sweg, / swutol sang scopes* ("the sound of the harp was there, the sweet song of the *scop*," 89b-90a), and the poet's creation song is reported to us over the next eight lines, we have already been told that the poem has an ominous auditor who is *ellengæst* ("a courageous creature," 86), a listener in the darkness who *dogora gehwam dream gehyrde / hludne in healle* ("heard each day the loud joy in the hall," 88-89a). As this creature's listening to the performance is closely linked to his painful suffering (*earfoðlice / . . . geþolode*, "painfully . . . he suffered," 86-87), and since his first attack on Heorot immediately follows the account of the creation song, it is hard not to assume that it is the sound of the performance that prompts Grendel's campaign of violence.[14] Grendel's behavior is the antithesis of the ideal for an auditor of traditional verse; on hearing the sounds of oral performance he threatens to destroy the very arena of its production.[15] *Beowulf* dreams of a world of primary orality, but it does so fitfully and uneasily.

Sounds of oral performance in Heorot are projected again in *Beowulf*: at lines 496a-97b before Hunferth's challenging of Beowulf (and possibly immediately afterwards, at 611-12b); at 1063-1160b, when Hrothgar's *scop* tells his lay of Finn and Hengest; and at 2105-14 when Beowulf appears to describe the aged Hrothgar telling *gyd* ("song") in his own court. Space does not permit a full examination of each of these episodes; it can only be suggested that while on the one hand the *Beowulf*-poet is keen to fix the sounds of performance in Heorot within a network

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[13] That joy always turns to sorrow in the poem has long been recognized as an almost structural aspect of *Beowulf*. See, for example, Andersson 1980.

[14] Opland (1980a:192-93) makes this assumption. While I acknowledge the possibility of his argument that the activities of harping, singing, and narrating are here (and elsewhere in *Beowulf*) carried out by separate individuals, I accept the consensus view that one actor is performing these roles here.

[15] We have already been alerted, of course, to the fact that that arena is fragile and impermanent; no sooner had the *Beowulf*-poet recounted the construction of Heorot than he revealed that its fate is to be destroyed in surges of hostility and hateful fire (*heaðowylma . . . / laðan liges*, 82b-83a). This in turn attunes us to one of the recurring patterns of the poem (possibly eschatological in conviction): that creation is always at the opposite end of an arc that curves towards destruction. The *scop*'s creation song, then, invites its own silencing.

of shared, positive communal values,[16] on the other hand the poem's outer audience has been alerted to that of which the poem's inner audience is unaware, namely the precariousness of the auditorium. The poem's outer audience is also made aware of the dramatic ironies that are set echoing with each performance (such as the juxtaposition of Hildeburh's fate with Wealtheow's hopes when the story of Finn and Hengest is told). The last example sees a slight modulation of the nexus of associations that are brought into the text around the performance *topos*. For while Hrothgar's poem-telling is accompanied by *hearpan wynne* ("joy of the harp," 2107b), as one might expect, Beowulf also tells us that the king's *spell* ("story," 2109b) was *sarlic* ("mournful," 2109a), and that as he proceeds to *cwiðan* ("lament," 2112b), Hrothgar's *hreðer [in]ne weoll* ("heart surged within," 2113b). Another chain of transmission is unwinding here, moving backward into what remains only tenuously within living memory and will soon become the distant heroic past as Beowulf revisits and revoices the aged Hrothgar's own nostalgic return to the memories of his youth.[17]

We are therefore already prepared for the more dramatic shift of emphasis that occurs with regard to the performance *topos* in the last third of the poem. As the poem tacks course into its more overtly elegiac home run, the noise of harp and *scop* are invoked only to note that they are inaudible, that their sounds, along with the pleasures they connote, have vanished echoless into the past. The poem often ventriloquizes these laments for poetry through digressive or otherwise embedded episodes, and these add a layer of distance to the articulation of poetic inexpressibility. Nevertheless, whereas the poet once distanced or doubled himself in order to try to actualize the aural trace of poetic utterance within the text (however fraught or problematic that attempt might be), the poet now doubles and distances himself in order to affirm the difficulty with which that trace can be heard and preserved. So, in the so-called "Lay of the Last Survivor," we are told: *Næs hearpan wyn, / gomen gleobeames* ("There is no joy from the harp, delight of the glee-beam," lines 2262b-63a).[18] While the *Beowulf*-poet mouths these words in the voice of the last member of an otherwise extinguished community, surveying all aspects of its material and cultural expression before they pass forever from meaningful remembrance, it is hard not to hear this direct speech as also expressing the poet's attitude toward a heroic past already slipping beyond recall; one utterance is over-mouthed by a second voice, adding a kind of harmonic texture to the topline. Similarly, when Beowulf contemplates his imminent death, he does so with reference to Hrethel's grief at the accidental killing of one of his sons by another, a grief he in turn compares to that of the father of an executed son. For such a man, we are told: *nis þær hearpan sweg, / gomen in geardum, swylce ðær iu wæron* ("There is no sound of the harp, delight in courts, as there once were," 2458b-59). Here, as elsewhere, the poet is practicing a technique whereby one utterance is layered over with the perspective of several possible

[16] On the poet's collocation of performance and joy in Denmark, and the subsequent invocation of this network of associations to note their absence in Geatland, see Opland 1980a:197-99. On the performance of the Finnsburg episode in this respect, see Clark 1990:78-79.

[17] On nostalgia as a driving engine of the Anglo-Saxons' own construction of oral poetry, as a return to what never was, and as an impulse "oriented towards a conflicted present," see Niles 2007:179.

[18] On the "Lay" as another example of the staging of oral composition and a voice with no auditor, see Thormann 1992.

speakers. What results is a blurring of the focalizer (or should one say vocalizer?), or at least the simultaneous co-existence of several focalizers, a method that allows the utterance to become free of its immediate context, enabling it to speak to and of the wider concerns of the poem as a whole: *Beowulf* is preoccupied with the difficulty of hearing the sound of the harp as it was once practiced—with delight—in heroic courts. For a poem that may have its own origins in oral composition for aristocratic patrons, or at least a poem that encourages us to believe those are its origins, this amounts to self-referential anxiety about the continuation of a cultural tradition within which the textual poem wants to be read. The final note of this motif is sounded towards the end of the Geatish messenger's proclamation of Beowulf's death, when one of the details that metonymically betokens the passing of a heroic age along with the hero is that *nalles hearpan sweg / wigend weccean* ("Not at all [shall] the sound of the harp wake the warriors," 3023b-24a).

Although this anxiety about the possibility of hearing the sound of oral performance can be accounted for aesthetically as expressing an aspect of the poem's wider thematic concern with the continued ductility of heroic ideals, it can also be contextualized in light of the historical and cultural situation in which the poem found itself. For what the *Beowulf* of the Nowell Codex witnesses is the encoding of certain ideas about traditional storytelling and -retelling, the nexus of making and transmission that has been previously mentioned, within and through the technology of script. In its deployment of various traditional formulae, and its tapping of what John Miles Foley (1991a) has termed the "immanent art" of traditional oral cultures,[19] *Beowulf*, although textual and produced by a scribal culture, wants to be read, or rather heard, within the context of an oral tradition. It hopes its readers are knowledgeable of the idioms of such a culture; it hopes its readers are also hearers, as competent in the one medium as they are in the other. By the time our text was produced, close to the turn of the millennium, such a hope may have come to seem faint, or at least less certain. What room is there in the scriptorium for the harp?[20] *Nis þær hearpan sweg, / gomen in geardum, swylce ðær iu wæron* might be seen as a motto for a number of the concerns both within and outside of the text.

Literary history has proved that *Beowulf* had good reason to be apprehensive about the continuing audibility of the sounds of Old English verse; for several centuries its music was almost entirely unheard,[21] and it was not until the twentieth century that working poets regularly began to investigate and stage those sounds again in their own verse, as the *Beowulf*-poet had done perhaps a millennium or so earlier. During the nineteenth century there were one or two notable exceptions; Tennyson's translation of *The Battle of Brunanburh* performs the rhythms of Old English as he understood them to have operated from the account given by Sharon Turner: fitful and predominantly falling, in measures similar to the trochaic and dactylic feet of standard accentual-syllabics (see Ricks 1987; Turner 1807; Eggers 1971:217). Instances such as this are

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[19] For a distillation of some of these ideas, see Foley 2002:109-24.

[20] Roy Liuzza (2005) writes compellingly on this and other aspects of the poem's own sense of belatedness. Niles speculates that anxiety "in some circles regarding the loss of a former heritage" was experienced as a result of the Benedictine monastic reform of the tenth century (2007:151-52).

[21] See Frank 1993 for an overview of William of Malmesbury's twelfth-century fantasies in this respect, as well as of the editorial attention Old English poetry received before the nineteenth century. For more detail on this latter topic, including the editing of poems not recognized as such, see Plumer 2000.

relatively isolated, however, and in general the interest in Old English in the nineteenth century is philological rather than acoustic. It is Ezra Pound's translation of *The Seafarer*, first published in 1911, that changed this state of affairs.[22] As Michael Alexander has remarked, "though the sense of [Pound's] 'The Seafarer' bears no consistent relation to the sense of the original, the sound of 'The Seafarer' is an authentic if new kind of translation" (1998:75).

Pound's version of the Old English *Seafarer* is really an exercise in the construction and projection of a voice, a voice articulated through an approximation of the sounds of Old English verse, sounds that continued to fascinate him throughout life,[23] as his unpublished essay "The Music of Beowulf" demonstrates.[24] In brief, Pound's three major developments from Old English meter are as follows. First, he allows syllables with primary and secondary stress to fall proximately, as they could in the Old English half-lines that Eduard Sievers' system of "five types" describes as C, D, and E verses (even though Pound does not observe the "rules" about where these consecutive stresses may fall in a line).[25] Consecutive stresses are rare in pre-twentieth-century accentual-syllabic English verse—the occasional spondee being the nearest equivalent. Second, Pound favors rhythmical patterns that are predominantly falling (corresponding to trochaic and dactylic feet in standard accentual syllabics), just as Sievers' type A is the most commonly occurring pattern in Old English. And third, he frequently juxtaposes a line or half-line in one pattern (whether falling, rising, clashing, and so forth) with one of different character, as was common practice in Old English verse. In addition to these three main effects, Pound also elides a number of linguistic particles from his verse, typically articles (as Old English was able to do), thereby paring his syntax of many of the unstressed syllables required in modern English, compacting his lines further, and increasing the likelihood of stressed syllables becoming consecutive. A high concentration of newly coined compound words, some calqued on Old English models, has a similar effect. Furthermore, Pound peppers his verse with alliteration, not in strict imitation of Old English patterns, but with enough density to give an impressionistic sense of the richly woven consonance of Old English poetry. This acoustic texture is distinct from that heard in nineteenth-century verse (except perhaps in the case of the then scarcely-read Hopkins) and clearly audible (Pound 2003:236-37, lines 32-39):

> Neareth nightshade, snoweth from north,
> Frost froze the land, hail fell on earth then
> Corn of the coldest. Natheless there knocketh now
> The heart's thought that I on high streams

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[22] Pound's "The Seafarer" was first published in *The New Age* (1911) and reprinted in *Poems and Translations* (2003). For the text of *The Seafarer*, see Krapp and Dobbie 1936:143-46.

[23] I have analyzed the rhythmic composition of these sounds in Jones 2006.

[24] "The Music of Beowulf" typescript is at Yale, Beinecke Library, Ezra Pound Papers, YCAL MSS 43, Box 69, Folder 3045. It was first noticed in Robinson 1982. The essay was finished on 8 December 1928, according to an unpublished letter to his father of that date, held in Beinecke Library, Ezra Pound Papers, YCAL MSS 43, Box 61, folder 2696.

[25] The "five types" model of Old English meter was first set out in Sievers 1885. Good introductory accounts of the model can be found in Scragg 1991 and in McCully and Hilles 2005.

> The salt-wavy tumult traverse alone.
> Moaneth alway my mind's lust
> That I fare forth, that I afar hence
> Seek out a foreign fastness.[26]

Pound's "Seafarer" performs the sounds of Old English poetry within a new medium, "making it new," making, that is, by transmitting. [27]

This carrying over, or *translation*, of a verbal soundscape from Old English into modern English does not end in Pound's "Seafarer," however. Rather, similar aural patterns are heard in "Canto I," a poem that begins Pound's epic by returning, through a spiral of possible beginnings for the tradition in which it desires to be read, in search of an origin myth for itself. Thus the poem retells a story from Homeric epic, the putative beginnings of European poetic tradition. Furthermore, Pound selects that section of the *Odyssey* that was traditionally held to be the oldest of the Homeric material, the "Nekuia" or "Book of the Dead," in which Odysseus himself visits the shades of the dead in order to be able to begin his voyage anew. Pound tells this material (incidentally out of Andreas Divus' Renaissance Latin translation, refracting Homer through another cultural myth of new beginnings and origins) in a voice derived "from the early Anglo-Saxon" *Seafarer*, a voice characterized by its spiky cadences formed around consecutive stressed syllables, variable but frequently falling rhythms, weightily coined compound words, and liberal alliterative pointing. In speaking the matter of one possible literary origin (Homeric epic) through the sounds of another (an example of the earliest surviving English poetry), "Canto I" enacts a return to roots and indulges in what might be termed "poeto-genesis" just as much as *Beowulf* does in its portrait of the Danish *scop*.

As I treat at greater length elsewhere (Jones 2006:44-49), this account of the echoes of "The Seafarer" (and so of *The Seafarer*) in the aural fabric of "Canto I" is adumbrated.[28] What I wish to suggest here is that Pound, by listening to the sounds of Old English and retransmitting them through his translation and compositional praxis, makes available an idiom to subsequent poets that we might tentatively liken in some respects to the kind of traditional, idiomatic language in which oral-formulaic singers and their audiences are assumed to be competent. When, in an oral, residually oral, or orally imitative text, a formula such as *under harne stan* is uttered,[29] or a motif such as "the beasts of battle" is given voice,[30] a listener fluent in the text's idiom is assumed to import to the poem at this point knowledge of the whole tradition—of all his

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[26] For a recording of Pound reading "The Seafarer," see http://writing.upenn.edu/pennsound/x/Pound.html. For the impact of early radio and sound recording on the textuality of modernist poetry, see Weiss 2002.

[27] According to "Canto LIII," the Chinese Emperor Tching Tang had the ideogram for "make it new" engraved on his bathtub (Pound 1990:265). Pound adopts the slogan as his own, using it as the title of a collection of his essays (1934).

[28] For an account of spondaic sound effects in "Canto XLV" also being derived from Old English, see Brooke-Rose 1976.

[29] See *Beowulf*, 887b, 1415a (as the variant *ofer harne stan*), 2744b.

[30] See *Beowulf*, lines 3024b-27.

or her previous encounters with that formulaic phrase or motif. In doing this, the phrase or passage will become invested with an idiomatic significance beyond that of the words' immediate context. Listeners/readers will understand that the hero is about to step beyond the familiar world of the real and into a realm of possibly supernatural danger (Swisher 2002:133-36), or that imminent slaughter in battle is being presaged.[31] If these expectations are not met by the poem, the listener/reader will then understand that a traditional meaning has been invoked in order for the familiar to be bent into a new shape. This is unlike the kind of individuated, one-to-one correspondence that readers are invited to seek out in more literary intertextual allusions of the kind made by Eliot to Dante, for example, in *The Waste Land*; here a reader is invited to locate an exact source for the intertextual reference. According to the paradigm assumed to operate with oral "intertextuality," a whole tradition or corpus is touched and tapped into by the individual work when it deploys a formulaic pattern or scene. Foley (1991a, 1995) describes this contact as working metonymically: a detail or a part signals a whole. The pattern or scene is a switch through which the specific and particular is brought into a wider, traditional context. This invocation and implication of a meaningful cultural context by deployment of traditional metonymic idiom is what Foley terms "immanent art."[32]

Twentieth-century poets writing in English and disseminating their work chiefly through the medium of print are of course not workers of a traditional oral-formulaic idiom such as Foley refers to with the term "immanent art." While acknowledging this, and not wishing to flatten out the enormous differences that exist between a poet participating in an oral culture and a poet like Ezra Pound, it is still true that for many print poets, verbal utterance, audible manifestation of voice, is the dreamed-of entelechy of the text.[33] An aural structure can itself be invested with meaning, although this meaning is cultural rather than lexical. When a density of aural effects such as consecutive stressed syllables and word-compounding, alliteration, falling rhythms, and varied cadences are given voice, the total resulting acoustic gauze may be so strongly suggestive of the sound of Old English verse that a whole canon of Old English poetry may be implied to lie behind or beyond the local poetic utterance, analogous to the way in which traditional meaning is summoned into an oral or quasi-oral text by the invocation of a specific idiom. Of course, the exact composition of a whole canon of Old English poetry will itself vary from reader to reader, according to the nature of the individual's fluency in that tradition; for most twentieth-century readers who have had some experience of that tradition, it will likely have consisted of *Beowulf*, the elegies of the Exeter Book (*The Seafarer*, *The Wanderer*, *The Wife's Lament*, and so on), *The Dream of the Rood*, *The Battle of Maldon*, and perhaps a few others such as the Exeter Book riddles, and it may have consisted of modern translations of those poems (including Pound's) as well as, or instead of, edited original language texts of the Old English poems. To borrow some

[31] For example, see Bonjour 1957 and Stanley 2000.

[32] See note 19, as well as, for an illustration of how the metonymic dynamic of immanent art operates on a *pars pro toto* basis, Foley 1991b:42.

[33] Perhaps the most explicit expression of this position comes from the poetry and prose of Basil Bunting (1966), who wrote (but later also qualified) "the sound, whether it be in the word or notes, is all that matters" (cited in Forde 1991:76). For a recording of Bunting reading from "Briggflatts," the most significant work he composed from this position, visit http://www.poetryarchive.org/poetryarchive/singlePoem.do?poemId=7500.

of the ideas and terminology of Foley's "immanent art," an aural register (here, one reminiscent of Old English) is the code or switch that can provide access to the implications inherent in an absent body of literature (in this case, Old English poetry).

To illustrate how this contiguity between a twentieth-century poem and the Old English tradition might be established through corporealization of a soundscape and what the effects of this might be, consideration will be given to two post-Poundian compositions:[34] "The Voyages of Alfred Wallis" by W. S. Graham (2004:87) and "Spacepoem 3: Off Course" by Edwin Morgan (1990:268-69). Graham and Morgan have been chosen in part because they both studied the aural ecosystem of Old English poetry: Graham at Newbattle College in 1938-39 (Lopez 1989:2), and partly through Pound's translation of *The Seafarer*—a poem he cites as an influence on his long poem *The Nightfishing* (Snow and Snow 1999:366-67)—and Morgan at the University of Glasgow, between 1937 and 1947 (interrupted for five years by the war) under Ritchie Girvan, using, among other texts, the ninth edition of Henry Sweet's *Anglo-Saxon Reader in Prose and Verse* (Jones 2004:47).[35] One must be knowledgeable of an idiom before one can manipulate it.

Graham unmistakably contours the opening lines of "The Voyages of Alfred Wallis" according to the soundscape of Old English verse (87):

Worldhauled, he's grounded on God's great bank,
Keelheaved to Heaven, waved into boatfilled arms,
Falls his homecoming leaving that old sea testament,
Watching the restless land sail rigged alongside
Townfulls of shallows, gulls on sailing roofs.

The striking opening neologism, compounded from two monosyllables that would normally carry full stress (the second here demoted to secondary stress by being yoked to the first), sounds Anglo-Saxon, although it has no direct precedent there; adjectival compounds formed from a noun as first-element and an adjective as second-element were common in Old English, although adjectival past participles as the second element were much less common.[36] Followed by "he's grounded," the compound "Worldhauled" initiates a pattern of falling rhythm in the first half-line of the poem, rhythmically identical to a phrase such as "Grey-haired he groaneth" in Pound's "Seafarer," and akin to the pattern of Old English cadence that Sievers described as "Type A." A rising rhythm in the second half of the line counterpoints the opening movement and could be performed as a "Type B" if "great" is demoted in stress; other readers

[34] There is, in fact, a richness of material in this vein. Any number of poems discussed in *Strange Likeness* by Pound, Auden, Morgan, and Seamus Heaney could have been used here, as well as, for example, Richard Wilbur (2004:261-62) or W. S. Merwin (1956:11). Something of a tradition of poems invoking an Old English soundscape exists in the twentieth century. I am not happy with my previous discussion of Morgan's "Spacepoem 3" (Jones 2006:150 and 173). I have not previously written about Graham's "Alfred Wallis" at any length.

[35] Also private correspondence with the author, 2 May 1997 and 2 February 1998. For further details see Jones 2006:124-26.

[36] Given Graham's obsessive wordplay and his interest in language itself as subject, it is hard not to see "worldhauled" as a paranomastic calque from *wordhord*, the Old English compound metaphor for a poet's vocabulary, the "word-hoard" that the poet is said to unlock in *Widsith* (Krapp and Dobbie 1936:149).

may voice the final syllables as three consecutive stresses, a rare effect in traditional accentual syllabics but precedented in Pound's "Seafarer" and "Canto I," where the motif is sometimes deployed at the end of a line in phrases such as "ice-cold sea," "hail-scur flew," and "bronze lance heads."[37] Rhythmically, the poem's opening half-line is echoed precisely by "Keelheaved to Heaven" at the start of line two. Reiterating the hook in this way draws the ear's attention to it more insistently and to its construction from newly compounded material, redolent with Anglo-Saxon plangency (similar Anglo-Saxonesque compounds are coined later in the poem: "prayerspray," "seagreat," "shipcry").

Elsewhere in these opening lines, falling rhythms predominate, contrived where necessary by inverting standard modern English word order and placing verb before subject ("Falls his homecoming"), as was possible in Old English (e.g., *nap nihtscua*, line 31 of *The Seafarer*, or Pound's appropriation of the structure in his "Seafarer": "Waneth the watch"). This preponderance of falling rhythms in the poem, of cadences that would have to be described as trochaic and dactylic in the terminology of traditional accentual-syllabic analysis, drawing as it does on the sounds of early English verse, contradicts the commonly voiced view that there is a linguistically iambic essentialism inherent to the English language.

While Graham does not deploy alliteration as a structural principle, as in Old English verse, there is an impressionistic sense of the device here, in the density of consonantal patterning on /h/, /g/, /r/, and /s/, similar to Pound's freer experiments with the sound-system of Old English poetry in "Canto I" (although here also coupled with assonance). These same aural effects are voiced throughout the poem; in particular, the text often weights its prosody with consecutive stressed syllables, sometimes drawing attention to their sound by alliteration: "stone sailor," "black boats," "loud limpet." Pointing proximate stressed syllables with alliteration in this way is a device not required in Old English half-lines of the C, D, and E types, but is possible when those patterns occur as the first half-line, or verse, of a line.

It is, of course, impossible to write of the aural texture of a poem without also writing about its lexical and morphosyntactic qualities; in the above analysis, description of falling rhythm and consecutive stress necessitates discussion of word choice and word order. It might be claimed that Graham's deployment of Anglo-Saxonisms in this poem is as much linguistic as it is phonic, an assertion that cannot be denied only because it is always true of language. The point I wish to make, however, is that out of language—the material from which the poem is constructed—an Anglo-Saxonist mesh of sound is created, and that soundscape, which we might think of as an aural allusion, an allusion in sound, has a meaning, the operation of which we might liken to the traditional meaning Foley describes with the term "immanent art." For the invocation of the aural ecosystem of Old English verse puts "The Voyages of Alfred Wallis" into conversation with that body of literature, at least as it was commonly understood, mediated, and transmitted in the middle of the twentieth century. That is to say, a corpus of heroic and elegiac verse that would include *The Wanderer*, *The Seafarer*, *Beowulf*, *The Battle of Maldon*, *The Dream of the Rood*, as well as other lyrics and elegies from the Exeter Book, is brought to bear on Graham's "Voyages of Alfred Wallis," itself an elegy for the Cornish painter who died in 1942.

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[37] That Pound is fond of double consecutive stressed syllables, especially at the ends of lines, is well established. See Brooke-Rose 1971:89 and Kenner 1991:192-94.

Themes characteristic of Old English verse, such as the loss of companions, the transitory nature of human comfort and achievement, as well as certain allegorical patterns of understanding, such as an ocean-going passage towards safe harbor representing the journey of the Christian soul towards God, are brought into contact with Graham's poem through its strategy of voicing the world. We might even be justified in bringing into conjunction with "Voyages" specific scenes from certain Old English poems, such as the funeral ship in *Beowulf* (lines 26-52) or the unconsoling cries of the seabirds heard by the *wineleas guma* ("companionless man") of *The Wanderer* (Krapp and Dobbie 1936:134-37, lines 45-48), who does not yet enjoy the mercy of God, in contradistinction to the subject of Graham's poem, towards the end of which "the gulls wade into silence." Claiming allusion to specific passages on the basis of aural influence may be considered too tendentious by some, but the more general point that the themes and motifs of Graham's poem are embedded within a body of English poetry from the distant past, and given a sense of historical depth, through the poem's weaving of a music that reminisces for the sounds of Old English (much as *Beowulf* does for the sounds of a distant, heroic oral culture) holds good. Old English poetry and "The Voyages of Alfred Wallis" are allowed to percolate each other through the thin film of voiced sound.

Edwin Morgan's re-performance of an Old English soundscape in "Spacepoem 3: Off Course" is not as linguistically outré as Graham's. Rather, the poem is constructed out of two-stress noun phrases that constantly vary in lexical content while repeating the same syntax. Rhythmically, then, the poem is formed from units of the same weight as the Old English half-line, although their cumulative effect is more monotonous than most Old English verse. The aural likeness of these noun phrases to Old English half-lines is visually emphasized by their layout—two units to the line, with a gap of extra white space between them, as modern editions set out Old English verse (Morgan 1990:268):

the golden flood the weightless seat
the cabin song the pitch black
the growing beard the floating crumb
the shining rendezvous the orbit wisecrack
the hot spacesuit the smuggled mouth-organ

As the poem progresses, its component adjectives and nouns recur, split from their original pairs, and reform into new combinations, until the poem reaches its end (269):

the floating lifeline the pitch sleep
the crawling camera the turning silence
the space crumb the crackling beard
the orbit mouth-organ the floating song.

Language, like all matter, whether it exists in page-space or outer space, is limited in its constituent parts but infinite in the permutations possible from its own resources; it constantly renews itself by returning to its elements, just as this futuristic science-fiction poem returns to Old English rhythms to project itself into an imaginary future. As already noted, the poem does

not imitate Old English verse patterns in any strict sense. Indeed, being written in Modern English, it cannot. Rather it takes a line, or tradition, and traces the evolution and deviation of that tradition, of its course from the distant past into the future, and of its going "off course" over time. This distortion of the trajectory of a sound system is enacted visually, as the Old English-influenced line literally shifts off course, or deviates from its origin, just over halfway through the poem (269):

the cabin sunrise the hot flood
the shining spacesuit the growing moon
the crackling somersault the smuggled orbit
the rough moon the visionary rendezvous.

Again, the invocation of the Old English poetic soundscape brings this poem into a contiguous relationship with the whole corpus. The Old English *topos* of the sea voyage, evident in *Beowulf* as well as *The Seafarer*, is inevitably brought to bear on our reading of Morgan's poem, a poem that arguably is a vessel itself, made in, from, and for language: a song that finally proclaims itself to be, like a ship, "floating" (*flota* is a term used for Beowulf's ship in lines 210b, 218a, 294b, and 310b). Themes from Old English poetry such as the need for exploration, both inner and outer, are rewritten as perennial, while the space-poet, whose gaze encompasses the "turning continents," echoes the rhythmical patterns uttered by his ancestor, the fictional Anglo-Saxon poet Widsith, the "far-traveler," who boasts of having spent time among every tribe of the world as it was known to him (Krapp and Dobbie 1936:149-53).[38]

Both "The Voyages of Alfred Wallis" and "Spacepoem 3" are products of a highly evolved print culture, but both poems also desire to be voiced, in their approximations, imitations, and echoes of the Old English soundscape; they foreground their aural structure (Morgan's poem partly by deploying the visual signals made available through the medium of print) and beg to be uttered. Without Old English being directly quoted, but by its sounds being ventriloquized, the unspoken corpus finds voice, and the unstated is made present. Naturally, these sounds are not authentic reproductions of the aurality of Old English verse; they are refractions, deviations, mediations: sounds evolved "off course." But we have already observed that *Beowulf* itself does not capture the authentic sounds of oral performance except through the same processes. If the auditors of "Alfred Wallis" and "Spacepoem 3" recognize the soundscape that is being evoked, a richly suggestive interpretative context is implied for these poems, and a conversation starts to open up between the present and the past. "Alfred Wallis" and "Spacepoem 3" voice themselves into a network of Old English traditional scenes and common thematic materials that become part of the poems' matrix of meaningful intertextuality, or, to adopt Foley's language for talking about traditional idiom, these poems resonate with extratextual meaning, the allusion not referring to any specific intertext, but rather implying a whole corpus.

What I am suggesting, then, is that a type of allusion is operating here that has not previously received proper recognition. These poems initiate or trigger an aural allusion, an

[38] In Morgan's poem "The Sputnik's Tale" (2007:40), the conceit of the artificial satellite as a modern "Widsith" ("Far-traveler") is made explicit.

allusion in sound, not between two texts or passages at the specific and local level but between one individual poem and a larger body of work. That body differs in its mode of textuality from the trigger poem; it is a body of traditional and formulaic poetry produced by a scribal culture marked by oral practice, which has been subsequently canonized, stabilized, and reified by nineteenth- and twentieth-century editors according to models of textuality that emerge from print culture. In this respect the aural allusion differs markedly from Foley's model of immanent art, which describes the relationship between tradition and a component part of that tradition. Clearly, twentieth-century poems initiating an aural allusion to Old English do not belong to that triggered tradition. Indeed, if they did, the whole need to describe the phenomenon of aural allusion would not arise at all; rather, by deploying the tradition's conventional sound effects, they would be straightforwardly participating within that tradition. For this cross-corpus aural allusion to operate effectively, the triggering poems need their readers to be competent in the tradition they invoke; they need their readers to hear and recognize the aural weave and to know something of what has previously been voiced in it. In these respects the poems operate in ways not dissimilar to *Beowulf*. We have here two twentieth-century poems of the printed page that wish to be heard against the background noise of Old English poetry as recovered by modern editors. *Beowulf* is a late tenth- or early eleventh-century product of a scribal culture that wishes to be heard within the context of an oral tradition, as remembered, witnessed, or imagined by the book-learned. It seems that the narrator of *Beowulf* need not have been so anxious about the possibility of the sounds of the harp being audible in the courts of the future; "harp" is also a blues nickname for the harmonica, or mouth-organ, and there is one of those smuggled into the cabin of Edwin Morgan's "Spacepoem."

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Sounding Out Homer: Christopher Logue's Acoustic Homer

Emily Greenwood

This article presents a case study on sound effects in Christopher Logue's adaptation of Homer's *Iliad*, a project that began when Logue adapted Achilles' fight with the river Scamander from book 21 of the *Iliad* for BBC radio in 1959. Logue's Homer has been worked, performed, and reworked for almost fifty years (1959-2005). Albeit the result of accident rather than design, the prolonged time-span for publication has produced a complex publication history, with Logue's Homer poems circulating in different print versions and simultaneously existing as audio recordings (both on LP and CD) and live performances. Within the poems themselves, the stress on sound and music suggest that these performances should inform the meaning of the printed text, leading to a complex interdependence between the written and spoken word.[1]

Translation and the Living Word

Several twentieth-century translators have been acutely conscious of the potential ephemerality of their translations. Asked about his criteria for translating Homer,[2] Robert Fitzgerald stressed the importance of the living language as a means to engage the reader's imagination (Frank and McCord 1984:50):

> One wanted the English to be, as I've already said, fully alive. That this should be so, the colloquial register of the language had to enter into it. How far should you go with colloquialism? Would slang be useful? Answer: practically never. One would avoid what was transient in speech. The test of a given phrase would be: Is it worthy to be immortal?

Whereas Fitzgerald's approach to producing a translation of Homer that is alive privileged diction, his fellow translator, Robert Fagles, stresses the dramatic quality of the Homeric epics and, correspondingly, the importance of performance for his translations of Homer.[3] In an

[1] The distinction that I draw here between "written" and "spoken" word is one of medium: graphic medium versus phonic medium. See Österreicher 1997:191-92.

[2] Fitzgerald's translation of the *Odyssey* was published in 1961 and his *Iliad* in 1974.

[3] Fagles' translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were published in 1990 and 1996, respectively.

interview conducted in 1999, Fagles illustrated this conception of Homer as performance by quoting the dictum, from Alexander Pope's "Preface to the *Iliad* of Homer" (1715), that "Homer makes us Hearers," adding that one of the most important things for the translator is "to capture the dramatic sense that Homer conveys" (Storace 1999:152). Elsewhere in the interview Fagles reveals that his preferred metaphor for the relationship between the translator and the source text is that of an actor and the role that he has to play (156). This commitment to performance is born out by the success that his translations have achieved as audiobooks, read by the actors Derek Jacobi (*Iliad*) and Ian McKellen (*Odyssey*).

Stanley Lombardo, another contemporary translator of Homer, combines the approaches of both Fitzgerald and Fagles in order to produce a "living" translation.[4] On the subject of poetic register, Lombardo has said that he subjects the diction of his translations to a "fifty-year" rule. According to this rule, the diction of a translation should hold good for fifty years in either direction: that is to say that the language should sound readily intelligible and natural to imaginary audiences projected fifty years back into the past as well as to imaginary audiences projected fifty years into the future.[5] At the same time, Lombardo also echoes Fagles in the importance that he assigns to performance as a medium for translation. His translations of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were composed with an ear for performance, with feedback from actual performances informing the progress of his work.[6] In addition, he has also recorded audio versions of his *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (Parmenides Publications, 2006; reviewed in Mulligan 2007) and continues to perform his translations in front of live audiences, animating these performances with subtle but powerful percussion to accompany the stress patterns of the spoken voice. With Lombardo, even more so than with Fagles, the reader who reads the text in ignorance of its potential for performance is deprived of the all-important soundtrack.

The mention of percussion brings us back to Christopher Logue, the most musical and sound-conscious of Homer's contemporary adaptors. In fact, music has become a byword for Logue's Homer, which is now referred to as *War Music* (1981), a title that initially referred to a single sequence of the poem (Books 16-19 of the *Iliad*). Even the arresting titles of the last two installments (*All Day Permanent Red* [2003] and *Cold Calls* [2005]) bear the subtitle "War Music continued." Logue's adaptation of the *Iliad* meets both the anti-ephemerality clause and the dramatic performance clause established by other translators. His adaptation has inadvertently spanned almost fifty years, and as a work in progress it has consequently been updated with cultural references to an ever-changing present. Interviewed in the *Sunday Telegraph* (March 6, 2005) to coincide with the publication of *Cold Calls*, Logue revealed to the reviewer that his poet's workshop is littered with newspaper cuttings that he might use in his Homer adaptations—the example given is helicopter blades setting off car alarms (Farndale

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[4] See Lombardo's comments on "living poetry" and "living speech" in the "Translator's Preface" to his translation of the *Iliad* (1997:xiii). Lombardo's translation of the *Odyssey* was published in 2000.

[5] Considered during Lombardo's discussion with the audience during a reading at Haverford College, November 18, 2006.

[6] See Lombardo 1997:x-xi on the significance of performance for his translation of the *Iliad*, devised as a "performance on the page for the silent reader" (x).

2005:28).[7] But leaving aside such obvious interventions of the changing world in which he writes, Logue's earliest Homer adaptations have stayed new because contemporary referentiality and language are blended effortlessly with the diction and sound patterns of English literature across several centuries: Chaucer is present, as are Chapman, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Keats, and Pound.

If I have started by situating Logue's work in the context of translations of Homer, it is not because his Homer is a translation in the strict sense of the word, but because translations of Homer have been his constant companions throughout the composition of *War Music*.[8] In Logue's own words, *War Music* is "a dramatic poem in English based on my reading of translations of the *Iliad*" (Farndale 2005:26). In the context of sound effects, what interests me most is the extent to which Logue's Homer displays aural fidelity to the original text, insofar as such fidelity is possible in another language, at the hands of a Greek-less adaptor. In this context it is important to note that Logue enjoyed vicarious proximity to the Greek texts through line-for-line transliterations of the Greek text produced by the classicist Donald Carne-Ross,[9] as well as through listening to classicists vocalize Homer's Greek text for him so that he could hear the sound patterns of the Homeric hexameter.

Logue's Soundscape

Logue is not just an adaptor of Homer who is attuned to the quality of sound in poetry, but one who has extensive experience of poetry as song and the setting of poetry to music (see Greenwood 2007:158). He is a poet who in the 1950s and '60s collaborated with jazz musicians in setting his lyrics to music, resulting in releases such as *Loguerhythms*: *Songs from the Establishment*, featuring lyrics that he wrote to be sung at the London nightclub, The

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[7] Logue has followed this practice from the outset; in his biography he recalls how he set about his first adaptation of Homer, entitled "Achilles and the River," constantly turning over the episode in his head and adding to it "from a different part of the *Iliad*, or for that matter, from the day's newspaper" (1999:222).

[8] "The strict sense of the word"—by which I mean translation that is governed by strict criteria of fidelity. However, it is notoriously difficult to establish a normative definition for translation. Translation theory acknowledges a vast spectrum of approaches to translation and, in turn, these different approaches warrant different criteria for judging the success of any given translation. Earlier editions of Logue's Homer poems were marketed as "free adaptations" or "translations." For example, the dust-jacket for the 1962 Scorpion Press edition of *Patrocleia* is subtitled "Book XVI of Homer's *Iliad* adapted by Christopher Logue," with the addition of the adverb "freely" on the frontispiece ("freely adapted"). The 1967 edition of *Pax*, published by Rapp & Carroll, bears the subtitle "Book XIX of The *Iliad* translated by Christopher Logue" on the frontispiece. Later editions ceased to be marketed as translations; instead, the poems began to carry the disclaimer that this was not a translation "in the accepted sense of the word" in their prefatory material (see the Introduction to the 1981 edition of *War Music*). For further discussion of the impact of translation on the reception of Logue's Homer, see Underwood 1998b:56-68 and Greenwood 2007:150-58.

[9] Logue recalls asking Carne-Ross to produce cribs of the *Iliad* for him "à la Greek," with "Greek word order" (1999:223).

Establishment, which hosted a cabaret.[10] The centrality of sound to Logue's oeuvre is borne out by the fact that a compilation of his poetry, jazz lyrics, and adaptations of Homer has been released as a set of seven CDs entitled *Audiologue*.[11]

In the twentieth century, discussions of sound in translations of Homer tended to concentrate on questions of meter, which was one of the cornerstones of Homeric translation for Matthew Arnold.[12] However, this overwhelming focus on meter has tended to displace the other sound effects that are found in Homer and his translators. In the case of Logue, these sound effects include rhythm, rhyme, sound cues (see the word "thock" below), and the resonance of words both within and across lines through effects such as assonance, consonance, and alliteration.

Sense follows sound throughout Logue's Homer. Consider the following example, taken from his version of the speeches in the embassy to Achilles in *Cold Calls*. Logue has Achilles terminate the embassy with these lines, which meditate on the offense caused to him by Agamemnon's expropriation of his concubine, the captive Briseis: "I did not / Applaud his sticky fingers on my she's meek flesh" (2005:43). The sound effects in this line make the image of Agamemnon pawing Briseis tangible, as the consonance of "sticky" and "meek," and of "she" and "flesh," suggest the friction of contact. Phonetically, the effort of articulating this line (the plosive phonemes in "applaud" at the beginning of the line, and the fricative phonemes s and h) re-creates the tension between the two men and Achilles' distaste at envisaging Agamemnon with Briseis. Although this is not a direct translation of any line in the *Iliad*, it accurately communicates the gist of Achilles and Agamemnon's exchanges over Briseis.[13]

There is a paradox at the heart of Logue's Homer. Reading poetry aloud is a dying practice, as are the arts of elocution and declamation, yet his Homer preserves and perpetuates these institutions. In fact, to call *War Music* poetry, which it manifestly is, is to gloss over its peculiar properties. At a time when, for many readers, the experience of poetry does not necessarily imply the accompaniment of the spoken voice, it is important to stress the phonic dimension of Logue's Homer. *War Music* is a hybrid text, not just in its imitation and manipulation of visual media such as still photography and film, but also in its inventive use of typography to cue the voice and script performance. Logue's textual practice, with its profound phonic affinity, assigns a full role for the speaking voice over and above the demands of meter, in

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[10] See Logue 1999:282. *Loguerhythms* was released by Transatlantic Records in 1963, with Annie Ross singing Logue's lyrics and music from the Tony Kinsey Quintet.

[11] *Loguerhythms* is the seventh CD in this set.

[12] "On Translating Homer" (lectures delivered in Oxford, November 3 1860-January 26 1861; published in 1861). In addition to meter, the other aspect of sound that Arnold highlighted was the "rapidity" of Homer. This preoccupation with rapidity is evident in many twentieth-century translations of Homer. See, for example, Richmond Lattimore's "Note on the Translation," published as part of the prefatory material for his well-received translation of Homer (1961:55): "My aim has been to give a rendering of the *Iliad* which will convey the meaning of the Greek in a speed and rhythm analogous to the speed and rhythm I find in the original." Haubold (2007:36) points out that this "Arnoldian framework" also influenced Milman Parry's research into the composition of oral poetry, leading him to identify rapidity as one of the most important features of bards' oral performances.

[13] See, e.g., Homer, *Iliad* 9.335-57.

a way that is reminiscent of Shakespeare's dramatic art and the rhetorical flair of Milton's verse, both of whose blank verse he echoes. Logue's rhythms are emphatically not Homer's rhythms.

In spite of the immense cultural and historical distance that separates them, it is helpful to introduce an analogy between the orality of Homeric epic and the significance of the spoken word in Logue's poetry. In the case of Homeric epic, although the oral-derived, traditional status of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is not disputed, a great deal hangs on the participle "derived," as it is impossible to establish the precise relationship between the textual versions of the epic that are read today and putative, original oral performances. As scholars routinely note, the Homeric epics are incontrovertibly textual.[14] Rather than reading transcripts of a performance or hearing a genuine oral linguistic register, readers of Homeric epic are confined to looking for performance cues, for hints of oral traditions, and scrutinizing the text on the page in the hope of decoding the poem's communicative economy.[15] In Logue's case we are dealing not with orality, but rather the tradition of poetry as collaboration between text and voice. Logue's Homer circulates as a written text and the written word is fundamental to the process of poetic creation. However, without sound the potential of his Homer is unvoiced.[16] This is confirmed by a comment that Logue made about the fundamental importance of performance for poetry in the context of a discussion about the role of poetry readings: "The Literary voice is a fabrication. In verse, sound and sense are inextricable. Read silently, or aloud, poems perform" (1999:242).[17] Similarly, writing about the rhythmic properties of the Homeric hexameter, Ahuvia Kahane has suggested that "even in writing this rhythm remains an event: it calls for a speaker/reader/hearer [. . .] it is a performance" (1997:111).

The importance of sound as a function of poetry is not in itself remarkable, but Logue privileges sound effects to a degree that is rare in contemporary poetry outside of the spoken word performance circuit. This is where the analogy with Homeric epic proves useful. In an article on the textualization of traditional oral works, John Miles Foley starts with the practice of Dennis Tedlock's transcription of the songs of a Native American tribe, the Zuni, which he describes as a process of "mapping the oral event onto an augmented textual surface designed to bear more and different kinds of meaning than the conventional printed page" (Foley 1997a:2). According to Foley, Tedlock's approach to converting the Zuni songs into print employs a set of visual, typographic cues that result in an oral supplement to the printed text, amounting to "the overdetermination of the reader's activity" (*idem*).

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[14] The bibliography on this subject is huge. For a brief and accessible summary see Bakker 2003. On the tension between text and oral tradition in Homer epic more generally, see Foley 1991, 1997b, 1999, 2002:22-57, and Haubold 2007:espec. 41-44.

[15] Foley 1991 and 2002:109-24. See Österreicher 1997:207: "What exactly is the oral in oral poetry?" For an insight into different conceptions of the relationship between orality and performance, see the essays in Bakker and Kahane 1997.

[16] See Steiner 2002:6: "*War Music* is conceived for the ear and many of its splendours only unfold when read aloud."

[17] Cf. also Underwood 1998b:82.

Similarly, readers of *War Music* are confronted with a poem written not just with the spoken voice in mind, but with performance in mind as well.[18] Logue's Homer has a rich performance history, ranging across radio, CD, and stage.[19] Its success on stage, whether read by the poet or actors, or adapted and performed by theatre companies, is a testimony to Logue's dramatic art.[20] As with Homeric epic, so with Logue, the poet's verbal art cannot be disentangled from performance. The layout of his poem is often likened to a script, with the very deliberate alternation of text and blank space controlling the pace at which the reader moves through the text, signaling performance.[21] In fact, Logue's Homer contains a veritable soundscape; to the sound of the dramatic voice we can also add music, insofar as his language strives to reproduce both visually and aurally (on the page and in the ear) the music of war.

Echoing Homer

I propose to develop this discussion of sound in Logue by exploring what he does with a single simile from Book 16 of the *Iliad*. In the interests of the pace of his narrative, Logue has cut many of the similes in the Homeric episodes that he has chosen to adapt.[22] However, in those that he retains, he typically supplements the details present in Homer and maximizes the play on the senses that is a feature of the most vivid Homeric similes. In the early editions of his Homer adaptations (*Patrocleia*, 1962 and *Pax*, 1967), the similes were printed in italic font in order to mark a change of pause or lull in the narrative. This is how he reads the similes when you listen to the audio version of the poem: as a pause for breath that allows the listener to gather their senses and to punctuate the narrative with a vivid interlude. Following Logue, Lombardo employs this convention of rendering similes in italics and performing them in a different register (1997:x):

> In performance, I found myself isolating the similes somewhat and marking them—pausing a little before and after, changing the voice, dropping any percussion I may have been using—in order to bring out their quality as poetic events distinct from the poetry of the narrative and speeches. I

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[18] See Hardwick 2004:346-49 on performance poetry in Logue and other contemporary adaptations of Homer.

[19] On the performance history of *War Music,* see Underwood 1998a:61 and 1998b:82.

[20] At a recent colloquium in celebration of Logue's work, participants were treated to a performance of parts of *War Music* by members of the Old Vic Theatre School (Institute of Greece, Rome, and the Classical Tradition, University of Bristol, November 7, 2007). I was intrigued to learn that Bristol Old Vic currently uses Logue's Homer to introduce first-year drama students to the rhythm and cadences of blank verse.

[21] See the reflections of Liane Aukin on the recording of *War Music*: "Logue's musicality reminds us that words not only convey everyday meaning but are a notation. The punctuation, gaps between the lines, the length of a line, the changes of font indicate changes of pace, of tone, of variations in pitch and volume and, at times, of silence" (Logue 2001b:9).

[22] For a recent discussion of Logue's "assimilation" of Homeric similes, see Taplin 2007:181-84. See also Underwood 1998a:62-64.

found that the narrative resumed with a kind of quiet power after a simile had been given full attention in this way, and that the audience's engagement with the performance was deepened.[23]

The simile that I examine here occurs in Book 16 of the *Iliad,* and compares the noise produced by the Greek and Trojan forces fighting over the body of the Lycian warrior Sarpedon, an ally of the Trojans, to the crashing noise that arises in a mountain glen as two woodcutters fell trees (*Iliad* 16.633-37). To put Logue's version in context, I quote the Greek text (passage 1), followed by Martin Hammond's straighter prose translation of the simile (passage 2), before giving Logue's simile (passage 3) in three different versions—the 1962 version (a), the 1981/2001 version (b), and the audio recording (c):

1. Homer *Iliad* 16.633-37

τῶν δ' ὥς τε δρυτόμων ἀνδρῶν ὀρυμαγδὸς ὄρωρεν
οὔρεος ἐν βήσσῃς, ἔκαθεν δέ τε γίγνετ' ἀκουή,
ὣς τῶν ὄρνυτο δοῦπος ἀπὸ χθονὸς εὐρυοδείης
χαλκοῦ τε ῥινοῦ τε βοῶν τ' εὐποιητάων,
νυσσομένων ξίφεσίν τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν ἀμφιγύοισιν.

2. Hammond 1987:286-87

Then like crashing that arises in the glens of a mountain when woodcutters are at work, and the noise can be heard from far away, so from the wide-wayed earth rose up the thud and clash of the men's bronze and leather and well-made ox-hide shields, as they thrust at each other with swords and double-pointed spears.

3. Logue 1962:27 and 2001a:159

(a) 1962 edition of "Patrocleia"

Try to recall the pause, thock, pause,
Sounds that are made when axeblades follow
Each other through a valuable wood.
Though the work is going on on the far
Side of the valley, and the axeblows are
Muted by a mile of clear, still standing air,
They throb, throb gently in your ears.
And occasionally you can hear a phrase
Spoken between the men who are working
More than a mile away, with perfect clarity.

Likewise the sounds of
Spear against spear, shield against shield, shield

[23] Compare Martin 1997:144 on the rhythmic properties of Homeric similes, which "punctuate the narrative, giving it an almost musical rhythm and providing episodic definition."

Against spear around Sarpedon's body.

(b) 1981/2001a edition of "Patrocleia"

Try to recall the pause, thock, pause,
Made by axe blades as they pace
Each other through a valuable wood.
Though the work takes place on the far
Side of a valley, and the axe strokes are
Muted by depths of warm, still standing, air,
They throb, throb, closely in your ear;
And now and then you catch a phrase
Exchanged between the men who work
More than a mile away, with perfect clarity.

Likewise the sound of spear on spear,
Shield against shield, shield against spear
Around Sarpedon's body.

c) Sound Clip taken from Logue 2001b, CD 5, track 13

In Logue's adaptation, the nouns denoting sounds in the Homeric simile (*orumagdos*, *akouê*, and *doupos*)[24] are amplified in the evocative phrase "pause, thock, pause," which conveys the stilted rhythm of the axe-fall and also alludes to the pace of the poem and the pauses in the reading voice.[25] The axe-strokes are "muted" and "throb, throb" in your ear; then, to the sense of sound, Logue adds touch—the "warm, still" air. Further amplifying the sound effects in the Homeric simile, he adds voices—snatches of the woodcutters' conversation—to the sound of the axes in the Homer.

Notwithstanding his dependence on English translations of Homer, it is important to be alert to Logue's capacity to mimic the sound effects of Homer's Greek, which he gleaned by listening to classicists such as Donald Carne-Ross and Jasper Griffin read out Homeric hexameters. In the last three lines of Logue's version of the following simile, the sibilance of

[24] *orumagdos* ("noise" or "sound"); *akouê* ("hearing" or "sound heard"); *doupos* ("thud" or "dull noise").

[25] Logue echoes this simile in miniature elsewhere, where he uses the sound effect "thock" to describe the noise of war—"Arrows that thock," and describes the Greek warrior Bombax taking heads "Like chopping twelve-inch logs for exercise" (2001a:177).

Logue's verse seems to echo the last line of the Homeric simile "*nussomenôn xiphesin te kai egchesin amphiguoisin*" (*Iliad* 16.637), which contains five sigmas that conflict with the hard, clashing consonants ξ (*xi*), κ (*kappa*), χ (*chi*), and γ (*gamma*) to produce the sound of metal on metal:

> Likewise the sound of spear on spear,
> Shield against shield, shield against spear
> Around Sarpedon's body.

If we look at the two different versions of Logue's adaptation of this simile, we see that references to sound are less obtrusive in the revised version, published in the 2001 edition of *War Music* (previously published in 1981). In the 1962 edition there is more explicit, aural vocabulary: the noun "sounds" in the second line, the verb "hear" in the eighth line, and the participle "spoken" in the penultimate line. These three words have dropped out in the revised version, which is no less audible but more discreet in its use of aural vocabulary. The 1962 version also employs the device, referred to above, of rendering the similes in italics: typography mimics the acoustic design of the poem as spoken word, signaling that the voice should slip into another, quieter, slower register.

In Logue's lines not only do we have the internal echo (the rhythm "pause, thock, pause" of the woodcutter's strokes corresponds to the sound of "spear on spear," "shield against shield," "shield against spear"), but the chosen sound effects also echo previous translations, leading to the amplification of Homer in another, intertextual, sense. In his "Author's Note" at the beginning of *War Music*, Logue (2001a:vii) tells the reader that when he started out he relied on five famous translations of the *Iliad* [George Chapman (1611), Alexander Pope (1720), Lord Derby (1865), A. T. Murray (1924), and E. V. Rieu (1950)].[26] His mention of these translators clearly establishes that the composite history of the *Iliad* in English translation is the source for his own adaptation, rather than a putative Homeric Greek original.[27]

Garry Wills has suggested (2003:xv) that there is a debt to Chapman in Logue's version of the simile, although he does not say where the debt lies. I think he must be referring to the fact that Chapman slows down the course of the simile by pausing to dwell on the felling of the trees, which he describes in two different ways for emphasis: "chopping, chopping still" and "laying on on blocks and trees" (1998:339):

> And then, as in a sounding vale (neare neighbour to a hill)
> Wood-fellers make a farre-heard noise, with chopping,
> chopping still,
> And laying on on blocks and trees: so they on men laid lode,
> And beate like noises into aire both as they stroke and trod.

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[26] See Underwood 1998a:*passim*, but espec. 56-57; and Hardwick 2004:347-48.

[27] Armstrong (2005:176) discusses the theoretical implications posed by translations, whose "source text" is "a whole *series* of previous translations with perhaps only *some* input from the 'original,' or even none at all."

In Chapman's version the anadiplosis of "*chopping*, *chopping* still" and "laying *on on* blocks and trees" also slows down the verse. Similarly, Logue's "pause, thock, pause" halts the flow, as does the highly idiosyncratic detail of the "valuable wood" in the third line. I have debated the significance of this adjective with several audiences and have received a number of suggestions; whatever the rationale behind Logue's choice of this particular word, by the time the reader/listener has stopped to think about it, "valuable" has done its work in pausing the narrative.

The detail of the "axe strokes" (present in the 1981/2001 text of "Patrocleia," but not in the 1962 text) arguably takes after Chapman's description of the warriors, like the woodcutters, striking with their weapons ("as they stroke and trod"). While the pace of Logue's simile may derive its pace from Chapman's version, the ternary unit "pause, thock, pause" simultaneously winks at Pope's "Blows following blows." It is also in Pope's translation that the sound effects are most explicit: Pope's verse realizes the sound effects in Homer, performing the echo between the tenor of the simile (the thud / *doupos* of the weapons), and the vehicle (the sound / *orumagdos* of the woodcutters) (1906:329; Book 16, lines 766-72):

> And thick and heavy sounds the storm of blows.
> As through the shrilling vale, or mountain ground,
> The labours of the woodman's axe resound;
> Blows following blows are heard re-echoing wide,
> While crackling forests fall on every side:
> Thus echoed all the fields with loud alarms,
> So fell the warriors, and so rung their arms.

Pope's couplets bristle with sound-effects: the "shrilling vale" and the "crackling forests," as well as the internal echo: "the labours of the woodman's axe resound"—a sound effect that itself resounds in the next line in the participle "re-echoing" and subsequently in the line "Thus echoed all the fields with their loud alarms." Matthew Arnold judged Pope's rhyming couplets to be an alien intervention that highjack the movement of the poem by pairing lines that are independent in the original, changing the movement of the poem (1960:106). However, in this instance I would argue that the rhyming couplets are felicitous in that they enhance the very sound patterns that are present in both the form and the content of the lines. The rhymes call to each other, promoting the echo.

Commentators on this passage in Homer remark on its highly visual nature. For example, Richard Janko suggests that the detail of the sound carrying (*hekathen de te gignet' akouê*) "implies an observer; in fact both we and Zeus are watching" (1992:391). I would argue that this simile has a metapoetic function as well: the echo of the sound suggests the potential of the scene to travel to remote audiences, listening to the performance of the poem and visualizing these images in their minds' eye. Through evoking a familiar sound-image, the Homeric narrator bridges the distance between the war at Troy and the world of his audiences. Similarly, Logue situates the audience in the poem, with the detail that the axe strokes "throb, throb, closely in

your ear."[28] He is not alone in doing this; Robert Fitzgerald also imports the audience into the poem by translating the phrase *hekathen de te gignet' akouê* ("the sound is heard from far away") as "the echoes ringing for listeners far away" (Fitzgerald 1974:292).

There are interesting analogies to be drawn between the performativity of Logue's simile and the cultivation of intimacy between speaker and listener in Homeric similes. In Logue's adaptation, the second-person pronouns ("your ear… you catch") and the instruction "Try to recall" directly involve the reader/audience in the creation of meaning, linking the poem to their experience. Drawing on cognitive theory, Elizabeth Minchin has identified this "cultivation of intimacy" as one of the functions of the Homeric simile (2001:138). Foley suggests a different yet complementary approach; in a discussion of the role that figurative language can play in oral-derived poetry, Foley argues that the pivots in Homeric similes (typically "so," "as," and "like") can be read as performance keys[29] in that "they alert the audience to the nature of what is transpiring and tell them how to take it" (2002:88). Whereas Minchin stresses the cultivation of intimacy through the evocation of shared experience, making the simile and the text within which it is embedded more memorable to poet and audience alike, Foley emphasizes how these similes that demand the audience's attention constitute an important part of the poem's communicative economy.

In this simile from Book 16, both Homer and Logue cue their readers/audiences into an episode in the poem through a rich soundscape in which particular sound-bytes may serve as a hook to the reader. This is not a natural soundscape, since in both Homer and Logue the sound effects of poetry are the product of rhetorical and poetic traditions;[30] but the reality effect—the idea that the simile contains fragments of everyday experience—is an important part of the way in which the poets communicate with their audiences.

Conclusion

My discussion of this simile from "Patrocleia" has stressed the importance of performance in Logue's poetry, not merely as part of the history of the text but also as a guide to how to make sense of the poem through frequent performance cues. In conclusion, I will suggest that this simile is also typical of the way in which Logue hints at the performative force of his Homer poems. In the simile considered here, he reflects on the success of his own sound effects, claiming the quality of "clarity" for the voices of the woodcutters (2001a:159):

> And now and then you catch a phrase
> Exchanged between the men who work
> More than a mile away, with perfect clarity.

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[28] See Taplin 2007:182 on Logue's characteristic use of the second-person pronoun.

[29] For the concept of "performance keys," see Bauman 1977:15-25.

[30] In the case of Homer this rhetorical and poetic tradition is lost to us and must be constructed retrospectively.

The reference to the reader/audience ("you catch") hints that Logue's own words transmit these voices "with perfect clarity."[31] We can compare this wink at the poem's own performance with the end of *Cold Calls*, which is also where *War Music* ends.[32] Logue concludes his version of the embassy to Achilles with two striking lines in which the verbally challenged warrior Ajax quotes Shakespeare (2005:44):

> Lord, I was never so bethumped with words
> Since first I called my father Dad.[33]

These two lines epitomize the force of Logue's Homer and his instinct for judicious compression, embodying the character of the Homeric Ajax in just two lines, or indeed in the one word "bethumped." How appropriate that Ajax should physicalize the effect of language in this way. And last but not least, these lines articulate for the audience the pleasure of reading and hearing Logue's poetry, an experience that leaves this reader, at any rate, bethumped with the power of words.[34]

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[31] Compare Keats hearing Chapman "loud and bold," and the clarity that results, in the sonnet "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" (1816). See Greenwood 2007:165-68 on synaethesia in Logue's Homer and Keats' sonnet.

[32] *Cold Calls*, published in 2005, was intended to be the penultimate installment of *War Music*, but now looks set to be the end of Logue's Homer.

[33] Shakespeare, *King John,* Act 2, scene 1, 467-68: "Zounds! I was never so bethumped with words / Since I first called my brother's father Dad."

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