ORAL TRADITION

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Oral Tradition (http://journal.oraltradition.org) seeks to provide a comparative and interdisciplinary focus for studies in oral tradition and related fields by publishing research and scholarship on the creation, transmission, and interpretation of all forms of oral traditional expression. In addition to essays treating certifiably oral traditions, *OT* presents investigations of the relationships between oral and written traditions, as well as brief accounts of important fieldwork, and occasional transcriptions and translations of oral texts. In addition, issues will include the annual Albert Lord and Milman Parry Lecture on Oral Tradition. Submissions should follow the list-of-reference format (http://journal.oraltradition.org/files/misc/oral_tradition_formatting_guide.pdf) and may be sent via e-mail (journal@oraltradition.org); all quotations of primary materials must be made in the original language(s) with following English translations. If appropriate, please describe any supporting materials that could be used to illustrate the article, such as photographs, audio recordings, or video recordings. *Oral Tradition* publishes such materials online in an eCompanion designed to supplement the texts of articles. Most contributions will be reviewed by at least one specialist reader and one generalist reader before a final decision is reached.

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Editor's Column

With this issue *Oral Tradition* presents seven vistas onto the communicative spaces that the traditional verbal arts command and scholarly approaches to them; a septet of reports about the seemingly inexhaustible wealth and variety of humanity's traditional verbal arts. These essays reflect the high standards of scholarship that John Miles Foley established for the journal and represent part of the diversity and scope of the phenomena that are the bailiwick of *Oral Tradition*.

Michael Marmur opens the conversation with a study of quotation—a universal human behavior and powerful metonymic device—as it is manifested in the *longue duré* of Jewish voices negotiating the present, with its demands and requirements. From this sometimes precarious perch, individuals and institutions quote—Janus-like—with one eye (or ear, in this case) to the past and the other toward the future continuing a three-way conversation about tradition that necessarily regards its own continuity. Thus triangulated by its temporal coordinates, quotation reveals itself to be rhapsodic, constitutive, and conservative—containing dissension within the confines of a traditional discourse.

The warp and woof woven into quotation is reprised by Fleming Andersen's study of two distinct versions of a ballad collected on the same day from two women singers in a weavers village in South West Scotland. Marshaling a structural-formulaic approach to the analysis of the ballads, the essay dramatically illustrates the extent of an individual singer's creative control over the tradition's compositional dynamics: each singer weaves a version that makes the ballad her own.

Continuing in the Scots' realm, with one eye on the old *flyting* poems and the other on North American Hip Hop battle rap, Caitlin Flynn and Christy Mitchell compare common themes and techniques manifest in these contest poetries. Shared rhetorical techniques, characteristic circumstances, and prominent personalities in contemporary Hip Hop poetic polemics, offer footing for insights into the motives and objectives of the Scots' invective contests. Hip Hop emcees and *flyting* poets verbally destroy an opponent's pretension to possessing superior poetic skill and acumen with a primary purpose in mind: to acquire more elite social standing. This fruitful comparison invites extension to additional *comparanda* such as the Old Provenzal *partimen,* the Old Portuguese *cantiga d'escarnho*, or the scabrous 15th-century Spanish invective poems collected in the *Cancionero de Baena.*

Shifting to another facet of the rich vein of traditional poetics, Melissa Borgia offers an essay studying generational changes in story repertoire and storytelling among the Seneca residing in the Allegany Territory before and after construction of the Kinzua Dam on the Allegheny River in 1963. The dam flooded one-third of their territory, including the gravesite of their spiritual leader, and rent the fabric of close knit family enclaves. The Kinzua catastrophe manifests in Seneca storytelling. Tales about supernatural beings and events figure prominently in the tradition whether in the moralizing "life lessons" older residents remember from earlier generations or gravitating towards the cautionary tales or therapeutic vehicles for resolving the symbolic despair their dispossession entailed. The stories are threads sewn into the living cloth of Seneca culture.

Lila Grace Canevaro pinpoints common themes and techniques in two exemplars of sapiential discourse produced by societies distant by a millennium and twenty-five hundred miles: Hesiod's *Works and Days* and the eddic *Hávamál*. Drawing on the deep well of traditional wisdom poetry, and poised at the advent of writing, which became the vehicle for their transmission, both works foreground cardinal elements of early agrarian societies. The *collectanea* of precepts, maxims, and mythologies embody striking parallels in composition, content, transmission, and scholarly reception. Wisdom is a tricky business. Riddles hide meaning but their virtue is to sharpen the listener's interpretive acumen. Constants in both exemplars of the wisdom genre include concerns with balance and measure together with reciprocity and self-sufficiency. Canevaro concludes that interaction between tradition and innovation account for structural features shared by *Works and Days* and *Hávamál*. Whereas the gnomic and mythological features that are common to both works issued from oral traditions that predate writing, the shift to writing for their transmission negotiates a transfer of power from one class of performers to another.

William Duffy proposes that the narrative structures woven by the poetics of immanent verbal arts may also organize the narratives of other nonverbal performances, specifically the dialogic play between contenders in the contests staged in the rings of World Wrestling Federation. An overview of the emergence of modern-day staged wrestling matches from their carnival demimonde precursors uncovers a key in-house code word "kayfabe," referring to the subterfuge that maintains that a "staged" event between a "face" (hero) and a "heel" (villain) is "real" or "true" as far as the unsuspecting public is concerned. The essay contends that with the tools of oral poetic compositional analysis in hand, analysis of such wrestling matches demonstrates the formulaic nature of their tropes. Conversely, the study of wrestling tropes preserved in the thousands of hours of videotaped matches could yield important insights into the traditional verbal arts of now inaccessible and preterite performances, such as the Homeric corpus. Finally, the essay proposes that the origin and diffusion of specific Homeric epithets and formulae may have had less to do with their aesthetic expressiveness and more to do with the popularity of the singers and songs associated with them.

This issue closes with Ryan Platte's close study of the Homeric epithet κλυτόπωλος (of famous foals). Platte identifies a network of genetically related analogues in three cognate phrases in Greek, Vedic, and Gathic Avesta poetry and essays a scheme accounting for their diachronic development from Indo-European antiquity to archaic Greece testifying to a genuine lexeme in the poetic vocabulary of Proto-Indo-European. Additionally, Platte elucidates the argument that Greek oral poets' deployed κλυτόπωλος to refer to good horses and their owners in threats owing to the epithet's power to imply or herald the sudden death of the target against whom it is hurled: the epithet's traditional referentiality focalizes the force of the threat.

This issue sees the light of day thanks to the combined efforts of staff of the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition—Mark Jarvis, Hannah Lenon, Justin Arft, Elise Broaddus, Katy Chenoweth, Ruth Knezevich, Chris Dobbs, and recent arrival Rebecca Benson—and of the many colleagues who referee submissions giving us the benefit of their expertise and advice. *Oral Tradition* is indebted to you, its referees, for your guidance in maintaining the standard of scholarly excellence that John Miles Foley established for the journal. *Oral Tradition* is intended to be a forum for debate and discussion about all aspects of the world's verbal arts, traditional

and nascent. The fundamental importance of John's lifelong contribution to their study is universally recognized. The dialogue of inquiry that he fostered and promoted continues in the pages of this journal. It is again my pleasant duty to recognize the unwavering support this Center receives from the College of Arts & Science that makes this work possible.

As is customary, I invite you to share your research into the world's traditional verbal arts with us. Evaluation of submissions is made by two referees, a specialist and a generalist, and is generally reported to prospective authors within a trimester of receipt. Published online and free of charge, *Oral Tradition* is seen by more than 20,000 readers in 200 countries and territories. In closing, were these words endowed with incantatory power, calendar year 2015 CE would witness neither war, hunger, slavery, suffering nor fear.

John Zemke
Editor, *Oral Tradition*

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Why Jews Quote

Michael Marmur

Everyone Quotes[1]

Interest in the phenomenon of quotation as a feature of culture has never been greater. Recent works by Regier (2010), Morson (2011) and Finnegan (2011) offer many important insights into a practice notable both for its ubiquity and yet for its specificity. In this essay I want to consider one of the oldest and most diverse of world cultures from the perspective of quotation. While debates abound as to whether the "cultures of the Jews"[2] can be regarded integrally, this essay will suggest that the act of quotation both in literary and oral settings is a constant in Jewish cultural creativity throughout the ages. By attempting to delineate some of the key functions of quotation in these various Jewish contexts, some contribution to the understanding of what is arguably a "universal human propensity" (Finnegan 2011:11) may be made.

"All minds quote. Old and new make the warp and woof of every moment. There is not a thread that is not a twist of these two strands. By necessity, by proclivity, and by delight, we all quote."[3] Emerson's reference to warp and woof is no accident. The creative act comprises a threading of that which is unique to the particular moment with strands taken from tradition.[4] In

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[1] The comments of Sarah Bernstein, David Ellenson, Warren Zev Harvey, Jason Kalman, David Levine, Dow Marmur, Dalia Marx, Michal Muszkat-Barkan, and Richard Sarason on earlier versions of this article have been of enormous help.

[2] See Biale 2002 for use of this term.

[3] Emerson 1968 [1859]:178. This quotation constitutes the first sentence of an important book on Biblical quotation; see Schultz 1999:9. Fishbane (1989:17) describes tradition as "the warp and woof of creative talent, the textual content whose lexical or theological knots are exegetically unraveled, separated, or recombined." The image is employed in an 1899 essay to describe the pervasive role of the Bible within Jewish culture. See Feldman 1899:584.

[4] There is a longstanding and deep connection between text and texture, and for that matter between sewing and singing. See for example McFarland 1995 and Chouard 1998. The craft of the rhapsodist calls for stitching together sources and themes. Regier (2010:104) quotes the seventeenth-century scholar Robert Burton who likened his activity to the work of a good housewife weaving a piece of cloth from "divers fleeces." Compagnon (1979:15-17) argues that quotation is a basic instinct, foreshadowed when a young child plays with scissors and glue. The connection between dreaming and quotation deserves investigation. In dreams, phrases from quotidian life or from literature and culture often appear. The unconscious cuts and pastes.

the ancient world "[o]riginality consists not in the introduction of new materials but in fitting the traditional materials effectively into each individual, unique situation and/or audience."[5]

The term "quotation" hardly does justice to the array of referential techniques to be found in most forms of literature through the ages: direct quotation, allusion, paraphrase, mention, cliché, echo, suggestion, pastiche, plagiarism, and many more. All of these are examples of "literature in the second degree,"[6] and despite attempts to provide comprehensive taxonomies, the lines between the various techniques remain blurred.[7] For our present purposes we may see all these as aspects of quotation.

In this essay I want to sketch some of the key aspects and functions within one ancient and still vibrant patchwork of traditions. Why do Jews quote with such enthusiasm? What is achieved by this activity, which seems to be prevalent in virtually every genre of Jewish creativity? Why have so many throughout history been keen to present their own views as nothing more than a rehearsal of previously stated sources?[8]

Jews Have Always Quoted

The prevalence of quotation in Jewish culture is attested to by the sheer weight of quoted sources to be found in virtually every genre of Jewish literature. It is rendered largely invisible, or at least pushed to the farthest recesses of Jewish cultural consciousness, because explicit references to the practice of quotation in Jewish tradition are few and far between. Just as the threads in a fine garment are rarely considered, so the key aspects of Jewish quotational practice have been largely ignored.[9]

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[5] Ong 1982:60. Harold Bloom (1973 and 1975) has written of "the anxiety of influence," suggesting that every strong poet struggles with the fear that they will not be able to surpass their strong predecessors. It may be, however, that in more traditional societies the anxiety is of a different kind. For example, it has been suggested (quoted in Orr 2003:88) that in East Asia "literary language is, by definition, precedented language and if there is anxiety, it may be more properly be termed the anxiety of not being influenced."

[6] Gerard Genette (1997a and 1997b) lists five forms of transtextual relationship, and he risks confusion by identifying the first of these forms by Julia Kristeva's term intertextuality. Quotation is adduced as the most direct version of this first type. See also Plett 1991, especially 8-17; Allen 2000.

[7] Some scholars have attempted to mount a defense against the tendency to collapse all distinctions regarding the act of quotation. For examples of such attempts, see Beal 1992 and Charlesworth 1997.

[8] Two examples of this phenomenon may suffice in our present context. In the introduction to his great work *Bet ha-Beḥirah*, Menachem ben Solomon Hameiri (1249-1306) states that what may appear to his readers as innovations are in most cases novel juxtapositions of existing Rabbinic traditions (see Hameiri 1965:29). The introduction to the eighteenth-century ethical work *Mesillat Yesharim* by Moshe Ḥaim Luzzatto (1707-1747) opens with the assurance that there is little new to be found in the book (see Luzzatto 1948:1). Rather, it contains ideas so well known to all that their true significance has become obscured through routine. Luzzatto claims that he aims merely to remind his readers of that which they already know well. This disclaimer is itself quoted by later authors. See for example Briskin 1895:2b. Significantly, both authors leave open the possibility that they have contributed something original, but this is conceded rather than trumpeted.

[9] In this sense, Sabrina Inowlocki's (2006:4) observation that "'quotation technique' is apparently lacking from the theoretical discussions of the ancients" can be extended to Jewish literature as a whole. The methods employed in Inowlocki's study are of great importance. For a summary of her findings, see 287-98.

The literature, language and folklore of the Jews throughout history has included a cascade of sources and references. "Jewish culture is a cumulative culture par excellence; it assumes that the earlier is very often the better."[10] As a consequence, Jewish expressions from one era refer to precedents and echoes from previous generations.

It is difficult and perhaps futile to disentangle the textual from the oral dimensions of this Jewish pre-occupation with quotation. Noting with David Carr (2005:7) that "societies with writing often have an intricate interplay of orality and textuality," we can assert that the tendency to cite sources is common to almost all kinds of Jewish expression, written and oral, as they have come down to us through the ages. This common thread has been illustrated well by Galit Hasan-Rokem (1981), who has traced the deployment of one Biblical verse through Rabbinic literature and in the words of a contemporary Jewish storyteller of Bukharan descent.

"In actual usage a quotation may be . . . experienced as acoustic reality as well as, or perhaps more than, through written apprehension" (Finnegan 2011:166). Finnegan's assertion is borne out by a perusal of forms of quotation in a variety of Jewish cultural settings. With regard to rabbinic culture, Martin Jaffee (2001:20) has argued convincingly that "the oral-performative literary life of Second Temple scribal culture is the foundation of what would later emerge in ideological garb among the rabbinic Sages as Torah in the Mouth, an oral tradition represented as a primordial and necessary complement to a canonical corpus of sacred writings . . . ." In Steven Fraade's incisive formulation (1999:45), "To love Torah as a revealed tradition is not so much to read it, as to return it repeatedly to the plenitude of its orality of reception," all the while upholding the canonical status of the sacred texts. Quotation, in oral settings both formal and informal as well as in texts, plays a pivotal role in this oral-textual maneuver.[11]

The Hebrew Bible is the *fons et origo*, the source back to which this torrent can be traced. The most quoted source in human history, it is the bedrock of the Jewish culture of quotation. It permeates virtually every subsequent stratum of Hebrew literature, and literatures from every continent. The pre-eminence of the Bible as a *quoted* source has obscured to some extent its standing as a *quoting* work, although recently a significant body of scholarship has turned its attention to the phenomenon of inner-biblical allusion, quotation and exegesis.[12]

Quotations, the words of one person or source reported by another, play a ubiquitous role in the Bible. The words of contemporaries are reported as part of Biblical narrative[13] and in Biblical poetry we find quotation of one's enemies, of oneself, of God, and of the community.[14]

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[10] Idel 2002:5. The Bible has a unique and unassailable role in any history of Jewish quotation theory and practice. See Fishbane 1989:41.

[11] See Niditch 1996, particularly 18.

[12] Any survey of scholarly works on Biblical quotation should perhaps begin with the contributions of Robert Gordis to the field. See Gordis 1949 and 1981. Michael Fishbane (1985 and elsewhere) has played a major role in furthering understanding of inner-Biblical allusion. See also Eslinger 1992. For an excellent study of the question, see Sommer 1998. A thorough review of and important addition to this debate is provided by Schultz 1999, particularly 216-39. See also Fox 1980.

[13] See Goldenberg 1991; Miller 1995; Riepe 2009; Savran 1988. Savran's book is a major contribution to the discussion.

[14] See Jacobson 2004.

Quotations play an essential role in Wisdom literature, too.[15] Only very rarely does the Hebrew Bible offer a source self-consciously quoted from a previous identifiable Biblical text. An outstanding example of this is to be found in Jeremiah 26.18, rendered here in the New International Version:

> Micah of Moresheth prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah. He told all the people of
> Judah, 'This is what the LORD Almighty says:
> 'Zion will be plowed like a field,
> Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble,
> the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.'

By even the most stringent criteria, this verse contains a quotation of Micah 3.12, and it allows for a range of questions to be posed: how accurate is the quotation, and what ends does it serve? What is the relationship between the quoting and quoted source, and what authority does the original hold for the quoting text?[16] In the main, however, quotation in the Hebrew Bible involves less explicit examples, and it requires more subtle techniques of identification and analysis.[17]

As Jewish history unfolds, the words of the Bible come to be seen as the original raw material from which any subsequent fabric may be spun. The primacy of the Biblical text does not obviate the need for creativity: it is the first word, not the last. But the existence of a canonical text with a unique metaphysical status means that deployment of these raw materials rather than invention of new ones becomes the standard means by which Jews "sing to the Lord a new song."

The as-yet unwritten history of Jewish quotation has been transformed by the discovery of the Qumran library.[18] A number of studies have catalogued and analyzed the citation formulae and the Biblical quotations themselves. The existence of discrepancies between the Biblical text quotes at Qumran and Masoretic traditions has prompted different interpretations—while one opinion sees this as evidence of the existence of variant textual traditions, others are more inclined to regard this phenomenon as evidence of the sectarians' tendency to quote from

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[15] See Gordis 1949. For the suggestion that Ecclesiastes quotes from the Epic of Gilgamesh, see Senapatiratne 2008.

[16] See Hoffman 1998.

[17] Savran's (1988) analysis of the the role of quotation in Biblical narrative distinguishes between the imparting of new and "old" information, between neutral and strategic delivery, between quotation for the sake of self-justification and accusation, and more. For a systematic treatment of quotation and citation in the Hebrew Bible, see Spawn 2001.

[18] See Fishbane 1988 and Fabry 2000. Important studies on the use of earlier sources in the scrolls have been produced since the 1950s. See Gottstein 1953; Wernberg-Moller 1955; Fitzmyer 1974; Vermes 1989; Bernstein 1994; Brin 1994; Høgenhaven 2002; and Metso 2002.

memory, and perhaps also of their more fluid understanding of the boundaries separating revelation and interpretation.[19]

Evidence from the Dead Sea Sect, the New Testament,[20] and other sources demonstrates that quotation was already a widespread and significant characteristic of Judaism in the period of the Second Temple.[21] A sensitive reading of the available sources has led some to the conclusion that a major transformation took place in the first pre-Christian century. Earlier approaches to Jewish law privileged custom over textual support. It may even have been the influence of alternative models provided by the Qumran sect which saw the appeal to Torah as an authoritative source become a central feature of the Rabbinic worldview.[22] The decades preceding and following the start of the Common Era saw the rise of a text-based culture, in which the Rabbis "found in the creation of an explicitly and pervasively intertextual literature the ideal generative and reconstructive tool" (Boyarin 1990:38-39). Whatever the dynamics which gave rise to this change, it is in Pharisaic and later Rabbinic culture that the practice of quotation attains a new level of variety and intensity, and the centrality of quotation in Jewish culture is established.[23]

This pervasive quotation practice speaks to the very self-understanding of the entire literary and spiritual enterprise of the Rabbis, in which "Rabbinic documents . . . offer themselves to the reader as approximations of the ideal of a fluid totality of statements for which no arrangement is necessary—perhaps the ideal of oral Torah as the totality of all rabbinic knowledge."[24] Quotation epitomizes the Rabbinic attitude to tradition and to the world. The term *shene'emar* ("as it is said") appears in more than 3300 instances in the Babylonian Talmud alone,

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[19] For a discussion of these various positions, see Greenstein 1993. He suggests that quotation likely was from memory in most cases, so many of the discrepancies may best be attributed to *lapsus memoriae*. On the tendency of the sectarians to interlace Biblical quotations with their own commentary, see Baumgarten 1992 and Lim 1997 and 2002. One fruitful area for research would be the many examples of the Rewritten Bible from the Second Temple period and beyond, and the relationship of these works to the quotation of sources.

[20] For a number of articles on the Hebrew Bible, the intertestamental period, and the New Testament, see Carson and Williamson 1988. There is a large and burgeoning literature relating to citations in the New Testament. In recent years some important studies have been published. See Allison 2000; Brooke 2012; Daube 1987; Davies 1983; Edgar 1963; Menken 1996 and 2001; O'Day 1990; Porter 1997; Stanley 1992; and VanderKam 2002.

[21] For various aspects of quotation in Second Temple literature, see Colson 1940; Dimant 1988; Jacobson 1989; Knox 1940; Lange and Weigold 2011; and Snaith 1967. For discussions of the first two books of the Maccabees, see Rappaport 1998 and Schwartz 1998.

[22] For an important discussion of the "revolutionary innovation of first-century BCE Judaism," see Schremer 2001.

[23] For an important comparison of Rabbinic literature with the literature of the Second Temple period, see Fraade 2007.

[24] Samely 2007:111. For examples of discussions of Rabbinic citation practices relating both to the Bible and to the reported speech of other sages, see Kalmin 1988; Neusner 1989, espec. 17-22, and Neusner 1992, 1993a and 1993b; Septimus 2004. The Mishnah is a particularly interesting area for research in this regard. Compared to other genres of Rabbinic literature we find a relative dearth of quoted sources, but a number of reflections on the ethics and mechanics of quotation. For the phenomenon of quotation in the Mishnah, see Metzger 1951; Pettit 1993; Samely 2003. A penetrating discussion of this phenomenon is offered by my colleague Jason Kalman (2004), who raises the possibility that some of the Scriptural citations in the Mishnah are later additions. I have learnt much about the citation of the Bible in Rabbinic literature from Kalman 2010.

and the term *dichtiv* ("as it is written") appears there more than 3200 times. To quote in this literature is to embody and to exemplify a fluid, all-embracing Torah, both self-referential and self-propelling.

Over time the Sages' attribution of canonical authority to Biblical sources underwent significant changes. Indeed, in later generations, the canon is extended even to include the key Tannaitic works.[25] As the theology of the Rabbis takes hold, the understanding of what represents the pure raw material from which new garments can be wrought extends to include the Oral Torah, or at least its written manifestations.

In the years following the redaction of the Talmud, as the foci of Jewish life and the range of cultural influences multiply and diversify, most genres of Jewish literature are marked by intense quotation—of the Bible, of the Rabbis, of legal and aggadic (non-legal) literature, of philosophical and mystical treatises, and more.

The efflorescence of the Jewish art of quotation reaches its apogee in the rich diversity of genres and styles that constitute medieval Jewish literature. The art of citation became an ever-present aspect of post-Talmudic Jewish creativity: poetry, kabbalah, philosophy, legal writings, ethical literature, the world of Ḥasidism—all are suffused with sources quoted with relish and enthusiasm.

In the Middle Ages Jews become exposed to other traditions of quotation which impact many aspects of literary and intellectual activity.[26] In principle, many of the great figures of philosophy and esoteric wisdom adopted the position that "an authentic disciple is a faithful transmitter: he is basically a witness to the tradition; he alters nothing, does not innovate, and certainly never disputes his master's teachings."[27] However, beneath the veneer of conformity, quotation is a significant vehicle for the inculcation of new ideas and approaches.

The role of quotation is no less central in poetry than it is in philosophy. In liturgical and secular poetry of the Middle Ages the use of Biblical and other ancient quotations was intensive and often virtuosic: the fact that Hebrew poets could rely on their audience's familiarity with the Bible allowed for the possibility of creative allusion. Often these poems demonstrated great malleability in their treatment of the Biblical raw materials.[28] Indeed, the literature of *piyyut* has felicitously been described as "a *locus classicus* of intertextuality."[29]

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[25] Chernick 2009, particularly 33-68. On the contrast between Tannaitic practices and those of Qumran, see Schiffman 1994, especially 222. Schiffman posits the theory that the Rabbis demurred from quoting the Prophets as legal prooftexts in response to the tendency of early Christian sources to make use of prophetic material in this way. The Qumran sectarians predate this polemical concern.

[26] See, for example, Decter 2006.

[27] See G. Cohen 1967, especially lviii.

[28] See Elizur 2006; Yahalom 2006. Laura Lieber's work (2010:especially 93-131) on *piyyut* in general and Yannai (who lived in the Land of Israel probably in the sixth century) in particular includes a highly significant chapter on quotation and related topics. There is no doubt that approaches to quotation in Islamic and Christian culture influenced Jewish literature. For an example from the poetics of the medieval Arab world, see Scheindlin 2002, especially 67-68.

[29] Granat 2002:64. This article has many important insights about the relationship of *piyyut* in general to the Bible. See also Mirsky 1985, especially 80-98.

Quotation in Jewish preaching has its own distinct history. The deployment of canonical sources in a performative context necessitated and stimulated certain forms of quotational expertise. Evidence of this consciousness can be found in the Jewish *ars praedicandi* literature of Renaissance Italy,[30] but the phenomenon precedes its own self-conscious examination by centuries. Beyond the confines of homiletics, oral performance in traditional Jewish settings is replete with quotation. Analyzing the roles played by these quotations in the development of folklore and popular culture, and the existence of distinctions in quotational practice between written and oral settings, is one of the challenges to be met in the future development of this field.[31]

The literature of the Kabbalah and the rest of the esoteric tradition and its antecedents covers a wide range of quotational practices.[32] Some works present themselves as accounts of secret wisdom imparted from teachers, others as commentaries, and yet others as systematic theological speculations. Of particular interest in our context is the phenomenon described by Moshe Idel as "mosaic writing," in which the text produced is a tapestry of quoted sources.[33]

Practices of quotation change through time. While much research remains to be done on these questions, it can be observed that in general the earliest strata of Jewish literature references are direct—a source is introduced and then cited. As works proliferate, and as technologies for reproducing them are developed, we observe a steep rise in the use of referential pointers, such as the instructions *'ayen* and *reeh*, both of which encourage the reader to refer to a source which may not be immediately visible or available.

As in other aspects of Jewish history, it is important to trace lines of communication and influence between the quotational practices to be found in Jewish sources and those in use in other cultures and civilizations. Do Jews quote in different ways than Christians and Muslims, and do Jews influenced by these cultures quote in distinct ways? And does the inculcation of contemporary Western approaches to citation and reference mean the end of "authentic" patterns of Jewish quotation?

Modernity certainly represents a watershed in the history of the Jewish art of quotation. The practice of quotation both expresses and mediates the rupture between the past and the

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[30] See Sosland 1987, especially 63-79; Saperstein 1996, especially 164-78. See also Altmann 1981. For medieval Christian parallels, see Bland 1997.

[31] An excellent example of this kind of approach is offered by Hasan-Rokem (1981). She traces the role played by a verse as it attains the status of a "proverbial quotation" in Rabbinic literature and also in contemporary folklore.

[32] See Hayman 1984. Liebes (2000, especially 66, 160, 230, 276 n.2 and 299 n.25) argues that this work saw itself at least at the level of the Biblical works and therefore had no reason to quote from them. For examples of how quotational practices are used to analyze the provenance of particular works, see Scholem 1941:183, 198, 199. The Zoharic image of the tailor cutting textual swathes to fit a certain design is worthy of further discussion. See Zohar III 27b Ra'ya Mehemna.

[33] See Idel 1998:18-32. It may be argued that the particular dynamics of Kabbalistic discourse place an emphasis on quotation. At its base, language in general, and the Bible in particular, is itself a quotation, so the lines separating originality and tradition are blurred. For a discussion of a fascinating echo of this idea in Naḥmanides' introduction to the Torah, see Pedaya 2003:127-30.

present.[34] Those seeking to articulate various Jewish responses to modernity quote different sources, and they do so in different ways. Some have adopted Western academic practices, while others perpetuate Rabbinic traditions of quotation. Yet others eschew quotation, since an emphasis on immediacy sees little merit in swathing self-expression with parallels and precedents. The stereotype of the "new Jew" promulgated by the Zionist movement was far removed from the Diaspora Jew swaddled in precedents and ornate allusions.[35]

In a recent work by the Israeli novelist Haim Be'er (2010:176), two non-Jewish characters are discussing the protagonist, a Ḥasidic rabbi undergoing a crisis of faith. One of them comments that if the Renaissance painter Guiseppe Arcimboldo were to paint this rabbi's portrait, it would not be rendered in the artist's usual style by employing fruit and other foodstuffs taken from the marketplace. Rather, his portrait would be constructed using all the verses and adages and Ḥasidic sayings and homiletical teachings which the rabbi employs. The character goes on to wonder what the face of the rabbi would look like if it were stripped of all these referential cosmetics. Who is there behind the quotations? Here a modern sensibility challenges the hyper-quotation characteristic of traditional Jewish practice, and raises the possibility that the individual has been stifled by allusions and citations.

It is a prominent Jew of the twentieth century, Walter Benjamin, who is credited by many as being a key theoretician of modernity and quotation.[36] Benjamin collected quotations obsessively, but his project was far from any "traditional" approach to tradition. Hannah Arendt's analysis of Benjamin's fascination with quotation evokes the sense of rupture in the fabric of tradition (*Schriften* ii, 192):

> Walter Benjamin knew that the break in tradition and the loss of authority which occurred in his lifetime were irreparable, and he concluded that he had to discover new ways of dealing with the past. In this he became a master when he discovered that the transmissibility of the past had been replaced by its citability . . .
> This discovery of the modern function of quotations . . . was born out of despair . . . of the present and the desire to destroy it; hence their power is "not the strength to preserve but to cleanse, to tear out of context, to destroy."[37]

An examination of methods and sources in some key works by, say, Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), Naḥman Krochmal (1785-1840), Abraham Geiger (1810-1874), Hermann Cohen (1842-1918), Emma Goldman (1869-1940), Martin Buber (1878-1965), Franz Kafka

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[34] See Knowlton 1998, especially 15-80. See also Compagnon 1979:314-18. For an acute example of quotation as a meditation on past and present, see Goetschel 2004:266-78. For a profound reflection on quotation, anachronism, displacement and modernity, see Garber 2003:7-32.

[35] Almog 2000:138-59.

[36] For outstanding discussions of Benjamin's approach to quotation, see Perloff 2010, especially 24-49; Sieburth 1989.

[37] Arendt 1968:38-39. See also Alter 1991:81 where he discusses Benjamin's notion, developed in his 1931 essay on Karl Kraus (1874-1936), that only in quotation is language fully consummated. For a recent excellent discussion of Benjamin on quotation and Kraus, see Sax 2014.

(1883-1924), Shmuel Yosef Agnon (1888-1970), Gershom Scholem (1897-1982), Joseph B. Soloveitchik (1903-1993), Hannah Arendt (1906-1975), Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972), Ovadia Yosef (1920-2013), Philip Roth (born 1933), Dahlia Ravikovitch (1936-2005) and Haviva Pedaya (born 1965) would reveal much about commonalities and differences beyond the usual denominational appellations. Jews have always quoted, but today different Jews quote radically different sources in radically different ways. Why do they do it? Or to be a little less ambitious: which core functions of the act of quotation can be identified across Jewish history, and to what extent can they be identified in literature and discourse generated by Jews in our times?

I want to suggest a response to this question which takes six dimensions of the act of quotation into account. It may be helpful to consider six spheres to which the act of quotation is addressed. Quotation relates to every stage of a process which ranges from i) tradition in general, to ii) a particular quoted source, to iii) the quoting author, on to iv) a specific text produced by that author, to v) a community of discourse and thence to vi) the world in general. Taken together, the threads woven in these various directions constitute what may be termed a rhapsody of quotation. The functions of quotation in Jewish culture can best be understood in terms of this continuum which extends out of tradition and back into it, reaching from what might be termed "anterity" toward posterity and eternity. Upon this framework the tapestry of Jewish quotation is woven.

Quotation and Tradition

To quote as a Jew is to speak. To speak as a Jew is to quote. More even than an individual speech act (what Saussure called *parole*), it is an expression of *langue*, "a hoard deposited by the practice of speech in speakers who belong to the same community, a grammatical system which, to all intents and purposes, exists in the mind of each speaker."[38] Schisms and polemical disputes between Jews sharing a common *langue* are quite different in nature from confrontations of Jews with no such hoard in common. One of the characteristics of the contemporary condition of the Jewish people is that various parties address each other at cross purposes, armed with different canons, speaking in different *langues*.

To quote is to see the present through the prism of tradition. Contemporary events are understood to be echoes or correspondences of that which has already taken place. When a Jew remarks "This is the day the Lord made, we shall be happy and rejoice in it" (Psalms 118.24), the language of tradition is used to express a current response to a contemporary event.[39] Quotation places the quotidian events of life into the framework of tradition. By searching for correlations between earlier and later events, or apparently diverse concepts, the tendency to quote epitomizes the notion that "there is nothing new under the sun." A quoting Jew places

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[38] I have used the translation of Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics* in Culler 1986:40.

[39] To cite one example, this verse is the refrain of a poem sung at weddings in the tradition of the Jews of Cochin.

contemporary experiences into the framework of a particular tradition, and in so doing perpetuates and expands that tradition.

In the fourth Order of the Mishnah we are witness to two rare references to a kind of theory of halakhic quotation. In the first chapter of Tractate Eduyot, there is a discussion concerning the citation of opinions which are not considered normative:

> Why are the opinions of Shammai and Hillel mentioned when they are not accepted? In order to teach generations to come that a person should not be obstinate in their opinion, since even the Fathers of the World [Shammai and Hillel] were not obstinate.
>
> And why is the minority opinion brought alongside the majority opinion, even though the law follows the majority opinion? Because it may happen that a court in the future will prefer the minority opinion and rule according to it . . .
>
> Rabbi Judah said: If so, why is the minority opinion brought alongside the majority opinion? So that if someone were to say: I was taught according to the following tradition, he might be told: your tradition is that of this particular sage.

Three kinds of reasons are offered for the citation of rabbinic opinions which do not seem to serve any direct halakhic (legal) function. The first is educational and ethical in nature—the example of these sages should provide a spur to humility and a corrective to arrogance. The second is in essence jurisprudential: the minority opinion, though rejected, may yet serve as a basis for a new decision. Implicit in this reasoning is the sense that the acceptance of a minority opinion is to be preferred over an act of innovation.

If the second reason is to provide the basis for change within the accepted boundaries of normative legal discussion, the opinion of Rabbi Judah offers a reading quite conservative in nature. It is of course ironic that this opinion be brought by a single sage, following the anonymous majority opinion![40] His reasoning appears to be that by naming the tradition which a future interlocutor may cite, the potential of a novel opinion to overturn the hegemony of tradition is limited. By means of quotation, tradition acts to keep innovation and disagreement within its boundaries.

A further insight into the way in which the Sages quoted is provided by a Rabbinic aphorism which presents itself as a kind of Scriptural quotation. A passage in Sanhedrin 72a reads:

> Rava said: what is the reason for the law of breaking in? Because it is certain that no man is inactive where his property is concerned; therefore this one [the thief] must have reasoned, If I go there, he [the owner] will oppose me and prevent me; but if he does I will kill him. Hence the Torah decreed, If he come to slay thee, forestall by slaying him.

The sense in which the Torah decrees such a teaching is certainly not literal: it is not a Biblical verse. We also find the phrase introduced with the same formula in Berakhot 58a, where this quasi-verse is used to support the notion of *din rodef*, mandating the use of pre-emptive

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[40] This irony is removed in the parallel to this source in the Tosefta, where the opinions are reversed.

deadly force.[41] The formula *ha-torah amrah* means literally "The Torah said" and would therefore appear to be a quotation formula. Indeed, many examples can be adduced to show that often this term or the almost identical term with these words reversed is used in Rabbinic literature to introduce a direct Biblical quotation. Invariably, it is the Pentateuch which is quoted as Torah in this context.[42] How, then, is a term denoting the quotation of a supremely authoritative and canonical text employed to cite what appears to be nothing more than a Rabbinic aphorism? Clearly, there is more than one meaning to the statement "The Torah says." Here it signifies "The Torah means," or "Tradition teaches."

This is certainly how Midrash Tanḥuma understands the phrase, and it suggests that the call to oppress the Midianites in Numbers 25.17 is the basis for this teaching.[43] Rashi, on the other hand, links the teaching with Exodus 22.1, emphasizing this point both in his commentary on the Talmud and on the Pentateuch.[44] Later, when the issue of pre-emptive force is discussed and the teaching quoted, it appears variously in the name of the Torah,[45] the Sages,[46] and as something "we" say.[47] In today's Israel, this quasi-verse serves everyone from basketball coaches to defenders of the assassin of Yitzḥak Rabin.[48]

Quotation both generates and preserves Tradition in general. In quoting, one places oneself within a tradition or network of traditions. We turn now to the particular men and women whose names are invoked as their quotations are cited.

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[41] See also Berakhot 62b, and Yoma 95b.

[42] In the reverse order the phrase can be found in Mishnah Ḥullin 12.5 (Deuteronomy 22); See for example Sifre Numbers 107 (Leviticus 6); BT [Bablyonian Talmud] Pesaḥim 27b (Exodus 12); Yoma 57a (Leviticus 16); Yevamot 25a (Exodus 23); Ketubot 17a (Exodus 23); Gittin 99a (Deuteronomy 24). Kiddushin 73a (Deuteronomy 23); Baba Kamma 34b (Exodus 21); Babba Kamma 72b, Sanhedrin 9a, 25a, 27a (all Exodus 23); Sanhedrin 72b [and Mekhilta of R. Ishmael to Exodus 23.7] (Genesis 9); Avodah Zarah 62a (Leviticus 25); Zevaḥim 107a (Numbers 5).

[43] Tanḥuma Pinḥas 3. See also Numbers Rabbah 25.4; Hameiri, *Bet Habeḥirah* to Sanhedrin 72a, and Rabbenu Baḥya to Numbers 25.17.

[44] See Rashi to Exodus 22.1. See also Rashi to Berakhot 58a and Sanhedrin 72a, and an interesting reference to the aphorism in his commentary to Babba Kama 117b.

[45] For example *Sefer Ḥasidim*, 45, where the behavior of David in not attacking Saul is singled out for mention despite the fact that the Torah says to kill one's putative assailant.

[46] See ibn Shuaib 1573. In the Zohar an Aramaicized version of the aphorism appears with the formula *taninan*, implying (accurately) a Rabbinic teaching. See Zohar I, 138a.

[47] Tosafot to Avodah Zarah 10b. The translation of this text from the political-juridical realm to that of the inner struggle in the literature of Ḥasidism is in itself fascinating, but ancillary to our current discussion. For an example of this reading, see *Sefat Emet*, Balak 5661.

[48] On October 22, 2010, the coach of the Maccabi Tel Aviv basketball team was quoted in a number of media ahead of his team's match against Zalgiris Kaunas of Lithuania. He cited the saying to explain his gameplan. An entry in the website *Intifada* under the pseudonym Shushi states with confidence that the actions of Baruch Goldstein and Yigal Amir are sanctioned by this saying, which, he asserts, is written in the Torah. See: http://intifada.co.il/forum/forums.php?az=show_mesg&forum=111&topic_id=1942&mesg_id=1945&page=3, accessed May 21, 2011.

The Quoted Source: Citation as Resuscitation

A Rabbinic tradition suggests that whenever a Sage is quoted after their death, their lips are animated even in the grave.[49] So long as one is quoted, one has not yet finally departed this world. It is the words of the Sages which act as their memorial. In this sense, the bringing of sources is the ultimate act of inter-generational affirmation. This could be a precarious affair. Catherine Heszer (2010:84) has noted that "deceased sages' views could be easily forgotten or remembered by one student only."

The interplay between the old and emerging generations is given powerful expression in this passage from the Palestinian Talmud (PT Shabbat 1.1, 3a):

> Whoever hears a passage of Torah from their grandson it is as if they heard it from Mount Sinai. And how is this proven? ". . . and make them known to your children and to your children's children. The day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb . . ." (Deuteronomy 4.9-10). Rabbi Hezekiah, Rabbi Jeremiah and Rabbi Ḥiyya in the name of Rabbi Joḥanan: if you can link the teaching all the way back to Moses, do so. If not, relate either to the originator of the tradition or to the last tradent. And how is this proven? " . . . and make them known to your children and to your children's children. The day you stood before the Lord your God at Horeb . . ." (Deuteronomy 4.9-10). Gidel said: Whoever brings a tradition in the name of its originator, should see the source of the teaching as if he were standing before him.[50]

The span of generations from Moses to one's grandchildren is included in this rich source for the understanding of the dynamics of quotation. By bringing a saying of a predecessor the solitude of mortality is alleviated both for the quoter and the quoted. The quoted source is realized, almost revivified.[51] At that moment tradition is constituted. As Finnegan (2011:262) puts it: "The words and voices are from the past. But to quote is not only to see them as before and beyond, but to bring them to the present and to take them to yourself."

Citation acts in this case as a form of resuscitation. When the words of a dead person are quoted, be they a recently deceased relative or a Talmudic sage, they are given life. Not to be quoted is a kind of death penalty, as is suggested in a story of political intrigue among the Tannaim as recounted in the Babylonian Talmud, Horayot 13a-b. The Patriarch Rabban Shimon ben Gamliel punishes Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Nathan for conspiring against his authority. Initially he has them removed from the house of study. When his colleagues object, he changes the punishment, allowing them into the House of Study but decreeing that traditions will not be brought in the names of these two eminent Rabbis. Traditions emanating from Rabbi Meir would

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[49] See PT Shekalim 2.7 47a—this is an extraordinarily rich source for understanding Rabbinic attitudes to citation, and it deserves close attention. Immediately preceding this saying, for example, we find a reflection on King David finding eternal comfort in the fact that his words are quoted in synagogues and houses of study. For parallels to these traditions, see Yevamot 96b; Midrash Shmuel (Buber) 19. In Tanḥuma Ki Tissa 3, the tradition takes another turn, as the sages left in this world refuse to give the departed Master any peace in the grave!

[50] PT Shabbat 1.1, 3a. The source also appears in PT Kiddushin 1.7, 61a. For another intergenerational theme linked to the bringing of sources, see Tanḥuma Noaḥ 3.

[51] See Jaffee 2001:150-51.

be attributed to "others," and those from Rabbi Nathan would be introduced with the formula "some say."

Years later, so the source from the Talmud recounts, the Patriarch Rabbi Judah the Prince is teaching his son and cites a tradition in the name of "others" (Horayot 13a-b):

> [His son] said to him: who are those others whose waters we drink and whose name we do not mention? He answered: they are men who tried to uproot your honor and the honor of your father's house. The son said to his father: *Their loves, their hates, their jealousies have long since perished* (Ecclesiastes 9.6). The father replied: *The enemy is no more, but the ruin lasts for ever* (Psalms 9.7).

Following this exchange of views through the medium of quoted verses, the son persuades his father to relent, and the tradition is brought in the name of Rabbi Meir, although Rabbi Judah the Prince is only prepared to use the expression "They said in the name of Rabbi Meir" and not "Rabbi Meir said."[52] The Patriarch attempts to use his authority to exact a heavy punishment on the conspirators: he attempts to banish them from posterity, from admission to a trans-generational conversation which is at the heart of Rabbinic culture. To remove an individual from the canon of citation is tantamount to the Biblical punishment of having one's name cut off after death. This is the ultimate excommunication.

The attempt to pronounce such a sentence on these two sages did not succeed. Whenever a Jew cites a source by name, it is not only tradition in general which is enlivened: citation acts as a form of resuscitation. Indeed, it is presented in tradition as a redemptive act. Perhaps the single most famous and explicit reference to the act of citation in all of Rabbinic literature is to be found in Tractate Avot. To be more precise, it is from the sixth chapter, a later accretion to the tractate known as *Kinyan Torah*. At the conclusion of a catalogue of forty-eight virtues through which Torah is acquired, we read (Avot 6.5):

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[52] The Maharsha (Rabbi Samuel Edels) in his commentary to this Talmudic pericope offers a remarkable comment on the use of plural forms for the anonymous citation. He argues that had the formula been "another said" and "someone says," the students would be forced to ask the identity of the anonymous source. He suggests that the teaching from Avot discussed above according to which correct attribution beings redemption to the world would have been understood as an ethical imperative to find the source. Interestingly, it is just this curiosity which brings Rabbi Shimon the son of Rabbi Judah the Prince to investigate the source of the teaching. Note also the way in which father and son conduct a debate through the medium of quoted verses. This source is explicated in Rubenstein 1999:176-211.

. . . by being precise in transmitting what he has learned; by quoting his source. From this we learn that a person who quotes his source brings deliverance to the world, as it is written. "And Esther spoke to the king, in the name of Mordechai" (Esther 2.22).[53]

In *Ḥelkat Ya'akov*, a collection of *responsa* by Rabbi Mordechai Yaakov Breisch (1895-1976), we find a *responsum* relating to the provenance and application of the adage from Avot (Breisch 1992:63-65). Breisch writes a relatively short *responsum*, some six paragraphs in length, in response to a question posed to him by a Rabbinical colleague. All of the queries relate to the dictum from Avot—is it prescriptive or binding law? Does it apply to aggadic (non-legal) sections as well as halakhic (legal) passages? Is the reproof of masters towards students who omit to quote the source of their teaching merely a matter of honor, or are there other considerations at work? What is the status of traditions brought in the name of the Sages, with no specific appellation attached? If a tradition is in some way corrupted or incomplete, is it necessary to note this fact when quoting it? The questions posed here delineate the outline of an ethics of quotation.[54]

The injunction to bring a teaching in the name of its originator appears not only as an exhortation, but also as a prohibition—it is forbidden not to do so.[55] Tellingly, a different verse is employed to make this point. "Never rob a helpless man because he is helpless" (Proverbs 22.22) is applied to the domain of attribution. To bring unattributed sources is not merely disrespectful and subversive. It is also regarded as an act of aggression and exploitation perpetrated against the defenseless. It is to dispossess a weaker party of his or her intellectual property.

These various motifs come together in a section of the Tanḥuma which I consider to be the most complete reference to our teaching in Rabbinic literature (Tanḥuma Buber, Numbers 27):

> R. Ḥezekiah and R. Jeremiah the son of Abba taught in the name of R. Joḥanan: He who does not quote a source, of him it is said "Never rob a helpless man because he is helpless." When a person hears a teaching, he should repeat it in the name of its originator, even at three degrees of separation. Thus our masters have taught [in Peah 2.6]: R. Naḥum the Scribe said: I have received from R. Mayasha, who received [from Abba, who received from the pairs, who received] from the elders, a law of Moses from Sinai. So it is with reference to whoever does not say something in the name of the one who said it that the text says; "Never rob a helpless man because he helpless." But

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[53] Some Rabbinic sources privilege accurate citation as a way of underscoring the appropriate way for the generation of students and descendants to relate to the generation of teachers and parents. For a Ḥasidic expression of this idea with reference also to Esther, see Tschernowitz 1938:71c. One's deeds and teachings should be rooted in the soil of precedent. When Elazar in Numbers 31.21 cites God's teaching in the name of Moses to whom it was imparted, he is exemplifying this kind of appropriate behavior. See Sifre Numbers 157, where Esther 2.22 is used as a comparison—Elazar is referring to Moses just as Esther was later to do with regards to Mordechai. So in this case the "precedent" for the use of precedent appears in a subsequent and less authoritative text. In the minor tractate known as Kallah the main focus is the relationship between master and student, where respectful distance is to be enforced on pain of death. See Kallah 1.24.

[54] Two highly significant works in this context are the introduction to Margaliot 1989:7-37, and Shechter 1957. They both provide highly valuable compendia of rabbinic sources on citation.

[55] This is discussed extensively by Rabbi Ezekiel Landau (1960:11-12).

everyone who does repeat a source in the name of its originator brings redemption into the world. From whom do you learn this? From Esther. When she heard of the matter from Mordechai, she said to Ahasuerus according to what is stated [in Esther 2.22]: "And Esther spoke to the King in the name of Mordechai." Ergo: if you hear a teaching, cite it in the name of the one who said it.[56]

To quote is to be part of a continuous chain, to redeem the world, to affirm tradition, and to revive the quoted party. But what of the person doing the quoting?

The Quoter: Erudition and Misprision

In modern as in ancient times, the capacity to cite germane sources has been considered evidence of the *bona fides* of the quoter. Quotations have often been seen as "a kind of badge of learning."[57] A thin line divides mastery of sources on the one hand and an obsessive concern with obscure source-hunting. In Jewish literature as elsewhere, the hyper-quotation of erudite scholars has been the subject of parody over the years.[58]

In his introduction to Tractate Avot, Maimonides offers a famous dismissal of the practice of pedantic attribution and citation of sources, while promoting the culture of quotation nonetheless (1912:35-36):

Know, however, that the ideas presented in these chapters and in the following commentary are not of my own invention, neither did I think out the inventions contained therein, but I have gleaned them from the words of the wise occurring in the Midrashim, in the Talmud, and in others of their works, as well as from the words of the philosophers, ancient and recent, and also from the works of various authors, as one should accept the truth from whatever source it proceeds. Sometimes I may give a statement in full, word for word in the author's own language, but there is no harm in this and it is not done with the intention of glorifying myself as presenting as my own something that was said by others before me, since I have just confessed (my indebtedness to others), even though I do not say "so and so said," which would necessitate useless prolixity. Sometimes, too, the mentioning of the name of the authority drawn upon might lead one who lacks insight to believe that the statement quoted is faulty, and wrong in itself, because he does not

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[56] For a related source which lists non-attribution as one of seven deadly sins, see Midrash Proverbs 6.16. See also the introduction to *Siftei Cohen* (Hamburg, 1690), 1b-2b. The author, Mordechai Hacohen of Safed (1523-1598), offers an important reading of the term "three degrees of separation." His claim is that his only sources are Rabbenu Baḥya, Rashi, R. Menaḥem Recanati, and the Zohar. Rabbenu Baḥya ben Asher also alludes to the expression under discussion here. In his introduction to his commentary, he states that he will remain faithful to the commentaries of Rashi and Rabbenu Ḥananel, and adds: I will remember each thing according to the name of its originator, and not wrap myself in a tallit which is not my own.

[57] Morawski 1970:690. For a discussion of the role of quotation in modern academic culture, see Grafton 1977, especially 22. The social sciences and the humanities have adopted canons of authority and verifiability from the natural sciences, albeit with significant adaptation. The extent to which a work is cited in reputable scholarship has become a criterion for assessment and promotion. See Moed 2005.

[58] See Regier 2010:97-100. For an outstanding example of a parody of Jewish hyper-quotation in the name of erudition, see Levinsohn 1899:27-29, where Levinsohn quotes in the exaggerated manner of Samson Bloch.

understand it. Therefore, I prefer not to mention the authority, for my intention is only to be of service to the reader, and to elucidate for him the thoughts hidden in this tractate.[59]

The precise attribution of sources is eschewed, purportedly for the sake of brevity and humility. Maimonides' readers over the centuries, defenders and detractors alike, have suspected that his ambivalence with regard to the citation of sources is not simply a safeguard against prolixity.[60]

Despite Maimonides' arguments, the capacity to quote and attribute sources from the Jewish canon has long been regarded as a core virtue of Jewish scholarship. It was the signal lack of this attribution which had much to do with the ferocity of the Maimonidean controversy. Rabbi Abraham ben David (1125-1198), whose comments on the *Mishneh Torah* appear in the printed version of that work, decries the departure of Maimonides from "the authors who preceded him, for they brought proofs to support their words, and brought those proofs in the name of their originators."[61] His view represents the overwhelming trend in Jewish literature of virtually every genre before the twelfth century and since.

Gauging the accuracy of a quotation, however, is less straightforward than may appear. To quote is to quote out of context, and thereby to corrupt an aspect of the original source. All quotation involves, therefore, an element of what Bloom (1973:7-8) calls "misprision," even if every word of the quoted text is rendered with precision. Even the source from Avot mandating accurate attribution discussed above is unattributed, and it has been mistakenly attributed in the course of its transmission.[62] Thus the classic source enshrining the principle of accurate attribution is itself a classic example of the lack of consistent adherence to the principle it adumbrates.

While Rabbinic tradition privileged accuracy of citation, the very act of "cutting and pasting" gives rise to boundless possibilities of misprision. When Rabbi Moses Sofer (1762-1839) coined the expression *ḥadash asur min ha-torah*, "the new is Scripturally prohibited," he and his listeners were aware that an Halakhic teaching from a wholly different context was being appropriated for polemical purposes. Accuracy of citation can coexist with creative misprision.

An outstanding example of a traditional mandate for misprision can be found in the thirteen attributes of the Divine, recited in the Temple ritual and later the Jewish liturgy for the High Holydays. The undoubted source for this declaration is Exodus 34.6-7, and a slight variant

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[59] Maimonides' Introduction to the tenth chapter of Tractate Sanhedrin, notable as it is for many theological innovations, is replete with references to references. Most of the prevailing five opinions noted at the start of the introduction are characterized by the way in which they bring sources to bolster their views, and Maimonides ends the introduction with the claim that he has brought appropriate proofs to bolster the veracity of his assertions. A close reading both of his sources and of his characterizations of other views may yield important insights.

[60] Different aspects of Maimonides' citation of sources are discussed in many works. For some outstanding examples, see Diamond 2002; Finkelstein 1935; Greenberg 1993; Twersky 1980, espec. 143-62.

[61] Introduction to the *Mishneh Torah*. He uses the Hebrew term *beshem omram*, a direct reference to the language of the teaching in Avot mandating attributed citation.

[62] See also Megillah 15a and Kallah 1.24, where the tradition is reported in the name of Rabbi Eliezer. See also Hullin 104b and Niddah 19b.

can be found in Numbers 14.18. In both cases, the Biblical list of Divine characteristics includes the expression *ve-nakeh lo yenakeh*—God does not remit all punishment.

The penitential liturgy quotes the words of Exodus 34, but it truncates the verse and reverses the meaning. By ending the list of Divine attributes with *ve-nakeh* the worshipper recites a verse which carries a quite different meaning to that offered in the Bible. Crucial words are omitted, and the meaning transformed.[63]

If all quotation carries within it an element of misprision, Rabbinic tradition elevates it to an art form. Phrases and verses are taken out of their original context and re-assigned to perform a wide variety of roles. Misprisions of many kinds are to be found within Jewish culture. Some are the result of techniques of truncation and ellipsis. Others are the result of errors of transmission, while yet others would seem to be motivated by theological or polemical interest. Some may even result from a sense of intimate proximity to the quoted source. For example, when considering the degree of accuracy to the printed text with which Abraham Joshua Heschel quotes Jewish sources, it is striking that the greatest discrepancy is to be found when he cites Ḥasidic traditions. Heschel grew up immersed in these traditions, and if he appears to "mis-quote" it is not for lack of knowledge. It seems rather to imply that the version of certain traditions contained in books is not to be preferred to orally-transmitted versions.[64]

The ways in which an author brings sources and the choice of sources have long served as a mark of quality and a badge of identity. Ḥayim Naḥman Bialik is reported to have described Naḥman Krochmal thus: "It is as though he has digested the Hebrew Bible, the Talmud, the Kabbalah, Jewish Thought and general philosophy, and one cannot tell that all this is external to him. It all seems to derive from within him, from within his very soul. That is how it ought to be . . . ."[65]

This ideal holds sway in the halls of traditional Jewish learning and in the groves of academe, in the pulpits of Orthodox and Liberal congregations, in public discourse and private debate. Quotation indeed has its ethics, as it also has its politics and sociology. How one quotes and who one quotes provide major clues to one's affiliations and presumptions. To quote Philo, or the New Testament, or a Gaonic *responsum*, or a *piyyut*, or an article from an academic journal, or Martin Buber—in all these cases and countless others the quoter chooses to be placed within particular contexts. Who and how you quote may say more about you than the opinions you declare or the commitments you profess.

The Text: Authority, Stimulation and Ornament

I have suggested that to quote as a Jew means to be in relationship with Tradition in general, and certain tradents in particular. I have also noted that the quoting individual quotes in

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[63] Weisblit (1970) demonstrates that this liturgical change is influenced by Rabbinic readings of the verse. See Fishbane 1985:347; Newman 1998. See Tosefta Yoma 2.1; 4.9; Yoma 86a; Pesikta deRav Kahana 6, 1; Pesikta Rabati, Friedmann ed., 194.

[64] See Marmur 2005:218-60.

[65] Krochmal 1961:6. The translation is mine.

order to establish his or her own standing. We now turn our attention to the text or indeed the oral performance itself, and the particular claims made within it. What role does quotation play within an argument? Why the need to bolster claims with early precedents and parallels?

Three functions of quotations within texts and arguments are worthy of particular mention: they provide a basis of authority: they stimulate and amplify the text; and they also fulfill an aesthetic and ornamental role.

Authority, Testimony, Proof

Aristotle regarded the citation of sources as one of a number of rhetorical techniques at the disposal of the orator who is arguing a case. He described these sources as "witnesses," parallel to the live witnesses which one might call to substantiate one's case in a legal action. The ancient witnesses are more trustworthy than contemporaries, "because they cannot be corrupted."[66] Following this approach, some see citation in its original form as a juridical procedure designed to assure the fidelity of testimony.[67] While this appeal to authority has been derided as "a device for ducking independent thought,"[68] Jewish tradition in its various manifestations has been far more generous in its appraisal of this function.

In Halakhic discourse, sources are cited to bolster claims and judgments. In legal literature from the time of Sages we are witness to what David Weiss Halivni (1986:4) has called "the Jewish predilection for justified or vindicatory law." Rabbinic assumptions about the validity of cited prooftexts may be adduced from the prevalence of an expression which can be translated as meaning "although there is no absolute proof, there is a suggestion for this." The phrase is found in some sixty sources attributed to the Tannaitic period, so it occupies a significant place in an early stratum of Rabbinic literature. The phrase is employed when verses from a non-Pentateuchal book of the Bible or from a narrative section of the Pentateuch are brought to provide authority on a point of Halakhah.[69]

Use of this term, at least in the School of Rabbi Ishmael, implies a certain set of assumptions about the basis of authority of Halakhic arguments and claims. Ideally, any such claims should be supported by a canonical verse. To quote such a source is to demonstrate this authority. If a text cannot be adduced for purposes of testimony and proof, then at least a "suggestion" should be found, indicating the correspondence between the current issue at hand and the sources of tradition.

As the literature of the Halakhah develops, the marshaling of sources on either side of a debate becomes the accepted means of conducting and controlling the argument. One contemporary example from the Sea of Halakhah may help illustrate this point. In a 1989

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[66] See Aristotle, *Rhetoric* I.xv.13, and II.xx.9. Aristotle's conception of cited texts as "witnesses" is discussed by Ricoeur (1980).

[67] Schapira 1997:108. On quotation and validity, see Hirsch 1967:169-73. Jacobson (2004, especially 7) takes issue with the applicability of this courtroom model as understood by Morawski (1970).

[68] See Morawski 1970:693.

[69] See Rosen-Zvi 2009; Chernick 2009:33-68.

responsum from his collection *Tzitz Eliezer* (Section 18, clause 39), Rabbi Eliezer Judah Waldenburg alludes to the question of sleeping lightly while wearing phylacteries. As is the case with *responsa* for more than a millennium, Waldenburg quotes or makes reference to a large array of sources ranged on either side of the debate, and he concludes with a witticism: he who dozes (while wearing phylacteries) has mighty pillars on which to lean. The opinions he quotes and cites act as authorities, and their support is palpable enough to allow a tired person to lean upon them.

It is not only in Halakhah that we find expert witnesses summoned. In classic works of Jewish philosophy, one often finds a tension between the appeal to reason on the one hand and on the other a tendency to ground assertions in textual precedent. The case of Saadiah's *Book of Beliefs and Opinions* provides a signal example of this tension. Saadiah presents arguments which are accompanied and bolstered by verses from the Bible. The Hebreo-Arabic term כמא קאל as it is written, is often used to introduce the verse, implying a correlation between the philosophical ideas being promoted and the core texts of the tradition.

In all aspects of the Jewish literary tradition, legal or otherwise, in which the impact of Rabbinic literature has been felt, sources are quoted in order to provide an argument with heft and authority. It is worth heeding Walzer's (1968:1) reminder that "arguments from authoritative texts are not necessarily less controversial or erratic than the speculations of men who admit no authorities whatsoever." Nevertheless, most forms of Jewish expression through the ages have looked to canonical sources to provide proof of authority.

To illustrate this point, I will bring one example from a source whose provenance is much in doubt. Louis Ginzberg (1960:227) published a midrashic tradition found in a Yemenite liturgical work. In this tale, Samael comes to earth accompanied by a being in the form of a child. In the gruesome tale which unfolds, and which unsurprisingly did not become a staple of Jewish folklore, Adam and Eve end up eating this child, and then denying any knowledge of its whereabouts. Samael reproves Adam and Eve and constructs an argument designed to shame them into a confession. He says to them: you are lying, and in the future God will give the Torah to Israel, and in that Torah falsehood will be outlawed. He cites Exodus 23.7 explicitly. Here the devil not only quotes Scripture, but he does so retroactively and in the best tradition of legal argumentation.

In the case of modern Jewish thought from the German- and English-speaking traditions, the bolstering of argumentation with Jewish sources is more sporadic. Seminal works by Martin Buber (Buber 1958) and Mordechai Kaplan (Kaplan 1994) are remarkable for the extent to which they eschew the traditional Jewish art of quotation in the construction of their arguments. *I and Thou* is notable for its apodictic style. The claims of the work are made without recourse to the buttresses of tradition. *Judaism as a Civilization* does quote traditional Jewish sources: the Babylonian Talmud is cited over 20 times, and Rabbinic literature in general appears on more than 60 occasions. Rarely if ever, however, do we find Kaplan employing these sources to do anything other than exemplify one of his claims. Jewish sources do not underpin *I and Thou* or *Judaism as a Civilization*, and this absence may present as much of an obstacle to their acceptance into a broad Jewish discourse as the theological thrust of the works themselves.

It may be informative to contrast these works with Hermann Cohen's *Religion of Reason: Out of the Sources of Judaism* (1972), the very title of which implies that its arguments will be

hewed from the quarries of Jewish tradition, and Franz Rosenzweig's *Star of Redemption* (1985). In these cases we find many of the key claims of the works surrounded and supported by an array of quoted and cited sources. In the closing sentences from the Introduction to the *Star*, allusions from liturgy and Scripture are sewn into the argumentation (Rosenzweig 1985:111):

> . . . revelation is at all times new only because it is primordially old. It makes the primeval creation over into an ever newly created present, because that primeval creation is nothing less than the sealed prophecy that God "renews day by day the work of creation." . . . But the divine word is more than symbol: it is revelation only because it is at the same time the word of creation. "God said, Let there be light"—and what is the light of God? It is the soul of man.

Hermann Cohen's approach to quotation has been discussed with great acuity by Almut Bruckstein. She sees the art of citation as operating simultaneously in the past, the present, and the future. First, "[b]y being cited at the decisive moment in time at which reasoning reaches its impasse . . . the text has become the original warrant for the priority of ethics over ontology."[70] Second, it is not ancient monuments which are being respected in the moment of citation, but rather the continued validity of timeless ideals. And thirdly, most paradoxically, she suggests that the true reading of the text is to be found in the future. In modern Jewish thought the authority of the quoted source becomes a fluid commodity.

Stimulation and Amplification

The literature of Midrash is replete with bold statements, the proof of which is offered in the form of quoted sources. The following example from Leviticus Rabbah (1.14) is one of thousands, and it affords an opportunity to consider the ways in which quoted sources act not only as authorities but also as prompts and stimuli:

> What difference is there between Moses and all other prophets? R. Judah b. Il'ai and the Rabbis [gave different explanations]. R. Judah said: Through nine *specularia* did the prophets behold [prophetic visions]. This is indicated by what is said, *And the appearance of the vision which I saw, was like the vision that I saw when I came to destroy the city; and the visions were like the vision that I saw by the River Chebar; and I fell upon my face* (Ezek. 33.3); but Moses beheld [prophetic visions] through one *specularium*, as it is said, *With him do I speak . . . in a vision and not in dark speeches* (Numbers 12.8). The Rabbis said: All the other prophets beheld [prophetic visions] through a blurred *specularium*, as it is said, *And I have multiplied visions; and by the ministry of the angels have I used similitudes* (Hosea 12.11). But Moses beheld [prophetic visions] through a polished *specularium*, as it is said, *The similitude of the Lord doth he behold* (Numbers 12.8).

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[70] See Bruckstein 2004:xxxv. For an extensive study of Rosenzweig's hermeneutic of citation, and of the role of quotation in modern Judaism, see Sax 2008.

Rabbi Judah and the Rabbis have distinct speculations concerning the difference between Moses and the other prophets. The verses they adduce in order to support their positions may not provide proof for such speculations, but they do serve as more than an appended afterthought: the nine versions of the verbal root *r-a-h* implying vision in the verse from Ezekiel are the basis for the assertion that the prophets saw through nine *specularia*.

The verse adduced by Rabbi Judah, and by extension many quoted sources throughout Jewish culture, are not only pillars upon which an argument leans. Such verses are also often employed as foundations for literary creativity and spiritual insight. In his taxonomy of functions of quotation, Morawski describes this as the stimulatory-amplificatory function. In his view quotation acts as (1970:694) "a kind of 'surgical appliance' doing duty for a part of his own argument, or as a springboard for speculations . . . ."

An outstanding example of the application of this stimulatory-amplificatory function in Jewish literature is to be found in the tradition known as *Shibutz*.[71] Biblical verses are sewn into the text of the poem and come to serve a variety of functions. In point of fact the lines of distinction between the decorative and the generative aspects of quotation are blurred in the extreme. Just as a quotation beautifies, it also amplifies. The sources become the basis for almost unbridled creativity, and, at its apogee, the art of applying these verses blurs the distinction between the extrinsic and the intrinsic, much like the Bialik's assessment of Krochmal, cited above.

Ornament

An example of the ornamental use to which quotation is put in Jewish sources through the ages can be found in the authors' introductions to philosophical and ethical works throughout the Middle Ages. Baḥya ibn Pakuda's *Duties of the Heart*, *Sefer Ha-Ḥinukh*, Joseph Albo's *Sefer Ha-Ikkarim*, Isaac ben Moses Arama's *Akedat Yitzḥak* (which span a period from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries) and a host of other works all conclude the introduction with one or more verses. Arama signs his name with verses, another ornamental flourish to be found in several works of the Middle Ages.

We may also note here the tendency to close a stanza, a section, a sermon or a poem with a quoted verse. Adherence to this structural convention can show virtuosity; it is stimulatory and amplificatory, opening up new possibilities of interpretation. Further, it adds beauty.[72] The intensive use of quotation at the end of a section is certainly well known in early Rabbinic literature. The last Mishnah of Tractate Berakhot ends with the quotation of a number of Biblical verses:

> . . . it was ordained that a man should salute his fellow man by using the Divine Name. For it says, "And behold, Boaz came from Bethlehem, and he said to the reapers 'may God be with you,'" and they said to him, "and may God bless you." (Ruth 2.4) And it says, "The Lord is with you, O mighty man of valor." (Judges 6.12) And it says, "Do not despise your mother when she is

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[71] For one example in a host of possibilities, see ibn Gabirol's *Aromimkha Ḥizki veḤelki*.

[72] See Bergman 1992.

old." (Proverbs 23.22) And it says: "It is time to work for the Lord, your Torah has been made void." (Psalms 119.126) Rabbi Nathan says: Your Torah has been made void, [so] it is time to act for the Lord.

A number of verses are strung together with the term *ve-omer* ("it says").[73] This is a particularly ambivalent phrase, since by its use the distinctions between literacy and orality are blurred. The text speaks.[74] It is especially telling that the same term is used to quote the teaching of Rabbi Nathan, which is nothing more than an inverted quotation of the verse from Psalms.

To illustrate the particular role played by quoted sources at the end of sections, and to exemplify the blurring of the authoritative, generative and ornamental roles of quotation, Emil Fackenheim's *To Mend the World* is worthy of consideration. Fackenheim concludes the introduction to that work by noting that the wish to "announce a new day while there is still night" necessarily makes theology written in the immediate aftermath of tragedy "both fragmentary and uncertain." He concludes his introduction thus (1982:30):

> In my earlier *Preface to Future Jewish Thought* I cited Rabbi Tarfon, to the effect that the day is short, the work is great, the laborers sluggish, the wages high, and the Householder urgent. Now, almost a decade later, another saying of the same rabbi seemed even more fitting for Jewish thought in our time:
>
> לא עליך המלאכה לגמר
> ולא אתה בן חורין להבטל ממנה
>
> It is not incumbent on you to complete the work. But you are not free to evade it.

No other Hebrew work is cited in Hebrew in the body of the text of *To Mend The World*. Fackenheim turns to it in order to provide a resonant conclusion to the book's introduction.

The work's conclusion provides another example of this quotational style, and another example of Fackenheim's self-consciousness about the way he quotes sources. The closing thought is that the Jews are indispensable to the world, and to God. Two midrashim are cited in furtherance of this idea, the second of which is based on the phrase from Isaiah 43, "You are my witnesses, says the Lord." With considerable theological daring, a midrash reads the verse thus:

> . . . if you are My witnesses, I am God, and if you are not My witnesses, I am, as it were, not God.[75]

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[73] The term is employed in the Mekhilta and the Shiur Komah literature, to name but two examples. Of the nine scriptural passages quoted in the entire tractate, five are to be found in this one Mishnah. Houtman (1996:89) describes this Mishnah as "difficult to understand."

[74] See Alexander 2007. I am grateful to my colleague David Levine for bringing this essay to my intention, and for several fruitful discussions on themes related to this chapter.

[75] Fackenheim mistakenly attributes this teaching to the Midrash on Psalms. It can be found in Pesikta de Rav Kahana 12.6.

In a footnote to this Rabbinic teaching, Fackenheim comments that "I first cited this Midrash nearly thirty years ago [see *Quest*, 39]. The careful reader will notice that its significance has changed for me in these many years—with an immense burden now falling on the "as it were."[76] So ends one of the most significant works of Jewish thought of the twentieth century—a (wrongly attributed) source followed by a reflection on the ways in which the author's way of quoting the source have changed since its appearance in an earlier work (Fackenheim 1968:39).

One more example of quotation at the end of a chapter or section deserves mention, particularly in the pages of *Oral Tradition*. BT Temurah 14b cites Psalm 119.126 in order to overrule the ban on committing the words of the Oral Torah to writing. The nineteenth-century Ḥasidic sage Menahem Mendl of Kotzk commented that one flimsy verse was not sufficient to overturn the prohibition on writing down the Oral Law. Instead, he commented, in truth the Oral Torah was never written down.[77]

The twentieth-century Jewish thinker Abraham Joshua Heschel was very taken with this teaching, and quoted it at least three times in his writings. One of them comes at the end at a crucial section of what is arguably Heschel's most significant theological work, *God In Search of Man*. The second of that book's three parts is devoted to Revelation, and its very last subsection pulls away from an intense discussion of the unique significance of the Biblical text. Heschel (1955:276) chooses to end the chapter, and indeed the heart of the book, by offering a paraphrase of the Ḥasidic teaching. It is intended to resonate in the ears of his listeners:

> Rabbi Mendel of Kotsk asked: How could the ancient Rabbis abolish the fundamental principle of Judaism, not to write down what is kept as an oral tradition, on the basis of a single verse in the book of Psalms? The truth is that the oral Torah was never written down. The meaning of the Torah has never been contained by books.

These examples are intended to highlight three key functions of quotation across genres and eras. In sermons, *responsa*, mystical speculations and philosophical investigations, in books and essays, quotations testify, amplify, and beautify. Our attention turns now from the functions —authoritative, generative, decorative—played by quotations within the fabric of a Jewish text, to the role they play within communities.

Quotation Within Communities: Citation and Recitation

Ruth Finnegan (2011:57) quotes an anonymous interviewee as saying: "The whole point of using quotations is surely that the listener will understand the reference; it's a way of using shorthand, of bonding speaker and listener closer together." In the act of quotation lines of demarcation are established. Quotation defines a community which transcends geography and

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[76] Fackenheim 1982:331. For a discussion of this and other examples of the quotation of this tradition in the literature of modern Jewish thought, see Marmur 2012.

[77] This teaching can be found, for example, in *Emet MiKotzk Tizmaḥ* (Bnei Brak, 1961):99, section 321.

history. To be a part of the community means, first of all, to be capable of identifying and understanding the material being quoted. Next comes the ability to quote successfully within the norms and conventions of the community. At the pinnacle of achievement one's own words are quoted, and themselves become part of this unfolding tradition.

The synagogue has been a central venue for Jewish communal life, which makes the great prevalence of quotation within Jewish liturgy particularly significant. Citation and recitation are intimately linked. The reading of the *Shema* is given theological significance as the acceptance of the yoke of the kingdom of Heaven, yet the act itself is one of mindful recitation of a number of Biblical verses. The *Shema* is the original example of a verse uttered "when you lie down and when you rise up." Each day is ended and begun with the recitation of verses.[78]

Jewish prayer involves community maintenance through quotation. Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 4.6 relates to the Additional Service for the New Year:

> One should not recite less than ten verses relating to sovereignty, ten relating to memory, and ten to the Shofar. Rabbi Joḥanan ben Nuri says: he who recites three of each has fulfilled the requirement. One should mention neither the memory of power nor the shofar of disaster. One should begin by quoting from the Torah and conclude with a prophet. Rabbi Jose says: he who concludes with a verse from the Torah has also fulfilled the requirement.

The entire liturgical unit known as *Malkhuyot, Zikhronot* and *Shofarot* comprise verses. It appears from the Mishnah here, which does not cite examples of the verses to be read, that broad guidelines were being established rather than a fixed litany. In this sense the phenomenon is distinct from the ritualized recitation from Deuteronomy 26, or for that matter the *Shema*. Here, the worshipper is enjoined to select verses which show a link with the theological themes ordained for that particular prayer, and is encouraged to quote a number of them, presumably for the sake of raising consciousness of these themes at this special time.[79] Citation becomes recitation.

This phenomenon, described as "collation of Biblical verses," appears in Richard Sarason's comprehensive introduction to the appearance of Midrash in liturgy. The range and intensity of citation of Biblical and other canonical literature within the corpus of Jewish liturgy is amply demonstrated in that survey, which concludes with the observation that "'praying with Scripture' in the synagogue is absolutely continuous with 'writing/discoursing with Scripture' in the study house."[80]

Prayer formulae from every generation are included in Jewish liturgies, and the worshipper negotiates these sources. The Rabbinic injunction to make one's prayers flow on

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[78] See Marx 2010:23-90.

[79] See Newman 2006. For a particularly insightful discussion of the Bible in Rabbinic liturgy, see Naeh 2006.

[80] Sarason 2005:478 and 492.

one's lips can be seen as an expression of the highest level of membership in this community of quotation.[81]

The communal dimension of quotation is not only expressed in prayer. When a Jew quotes, he or she also teaches. David Carr (2010:17) has argued brilliantly that "the main point of the textual production and reception process in the educational/enculturational context was . . . to 'incise' such texts word for word on the minds of the next generation." Hence the Biblical injunction (Deuteronomy 6.7) to impress these words on one's children. Constant quotation is in one sense a fulfillment of this commandment.

The Jewish art of quotation both relies on and contributes to an educational process. In the twelfth century we find Abraham ibn Ezra excoriating sages whose grasp of the Bible is deficient (presumably because of the primacy of Talmud learning in some circles). He argues (ibn Ezra 2002:74-75) that a person schooled in Rabbinic lore who has not learned Bible will not know how to read the verses quoted with such formulae as "as it is written" throughout the literature of the Rabbis.

A story recounted by a contemporary sociologist illustrates that the ability to quote has been seen as an educational desideratum. This researcher was interested in interviewing an Ultra-Orthodox Jew. After some conversation an agreement was struck: the interviewee would avoid the risk of *bittul torah* (wasting time which could be spent in Torah study) by agreeing to answer every question with a Biblical quotation. Quotation acts here as a form of demarcation between inner and outer reaches of a community. By answering mundane questions with sacred verses, boundaries are strengthened and distinctions maintained.

If Jewish quotational practices have depended on the existence of a wide audience capable of identifying quoted sources, they have also relied on the fact that the resonance of these quotations is not understood in the same way by all. Jewish manifestations of "persecution and the art of writing" (to use a term coined by Leo Strauss) have taken advantage of this fact, citing verses and teachings in such a way that initiates will understand their profound meaning without undermining the more naïve faith of the masses.

In BT Berakhot 8a we are told of the custom of the Jews of the Land of Israel to ask a newlywed husband the question: "found" or "finds"? Without an understanding of the context of these two words, it is impossible to know the true import of this question. In point of fact, two verses from Scripture are being referenced. The first (Proverbs 18.22) expresses a highly positive view of women, while the second (Ecclesiastes 7.26) finds woman to be more bitter than death. By making reference to these verses, the men of the Land of Israel make of quotation a private language, a shorthand of euphemism.

New referential devices developed in the course of Jewish history create new possibilities of concealment and hinting. By referring the reader to another source without quoting it directly, new layers of contact between author and audience are added. Only a select few will have access via memory or bibliography to the sources. And only an elite will be able to understand the nuance of the way in which a particular tradition is mentioned. A brilliant study of the rise of the footnote in the European academic tradition provides an example of a comparable phenomenon: Anthony Grafton (1977:8) notes that the reference cf. in an historical footnote "indicates, at least

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[81] See Naeh 1994.

to the expert reader, both that an alternate view appears in the cited work and that it is wrong." Notes, allusions, and references add new dimensions, and new possibilities for the expression of ambiguity.

Quotation and Incantation

The recitation of verses and other canonical Jewish sources can be understood as being directed to the farthest reaches of the cosmos. The performance of excerpts taken from the tradition has been understood as offering protection and effecting change. Thus in one sense a Jew quotes in order that the words uttered intervene in the order of things. One list of the Jewish magical uses of Bible verses includes functions as diverse as driving off demons and evil spirits, curing sterility, causing an enemy to drown, and causing a man who has sworn falsely to die within a year.[82]

The act of creation is described in the Book of Genesis as an act of speech. The notion that the utterance of words has the potential to impact the workings of the universe is in this sense a foundational notion in Jewish culture. Recitation of sections of the Bible and the liturgy has been seen as exerting influence on the person reciting and beyond. To cite two examples among many, two different verses in Genesis 49 found their way into Jewish folklore with prophylactic or apotropaic functions. While 49.22 is still used in some circles to ward off the evil eye, 49.18 was deployed as a response to hearing someone sneeze.[83]

Examples of deployment of written or spoken excerpts from the Bible and other canonical texts for the purpose of exerting a degree of influence on one's environment are plentiful, and perhaps the Book of Psalms provides an outstanding example of this phenomenon. Jeremy Smoak (2012:235) has suggested that certain psalms "contain vestiges of incantations that were recited orally and in certain cases scratched upon metal and worn around the neck for protection."

Contemporary practices related to the recitation of Psalms demonstrate that this kind of activity is not limited to circles of mystic adherents, but rather has seeped into common practices in many communities.[84] On any public bus in the Jewish parts of Jerusalem today (if a non-empirical source of evidence be allowed), someone is reciting Psalms, perhaps both as a way of transforming mundanity into meaning, and in order to provide an extra layer of protection.

I mentioned above the recitation of verses and other canonical material every night and every morning. This quotidian ritual finds its echo at the end of life itself: a compendium of psalms and verses to be recited by others in a person's final stages of life appears in the

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[82] Trachtenberg 1939:110-11. See also Bohak 2008:308-14.

[83] The connection between Genesis 49.22 and the evil eye is connected to a reading by Rashi of that verse, while the custom of reciting Genesis 49.18 after a person has sneezed is mentioned in Mishnah Berurah, 230.7.

[84] For an excellent discussion of the role of Psalms in various aspects of Jewish culture, see Hoffman 2003.

seventeenth century.[85] Isaiah Horowitz (1565-1630) explains that the recitation of these verses and the use of the Hebrew language creates a level of sanctity appropriate to the hour of death.[86] The funeral service itself consists in large measure of the recitation of Biblical and Rabbinic sources.

Quotation as Rhapsody

I have attempted to set out at least some of the major functions of quotation as they come to expression in Jewish culture. To quote as a Jew is to place oneself within a web of traditions, and to resuscitate past tradents. The way in which one quotes establishes one's own standing and integrity. Within a text, quotations provide authority to the claims, stimulation and amplification to the ideas, and beauty to the work. Quotations fulfill an educational function, and they provide a means by which complex or controversial ideas can be communicated to some while being concealed from others. As acts of performance, quotations bolster the life of the community, and have been believed to effect cosmic change. Quotation speaks from "anterity," reaches out to posterity, and brushes shoulders with eternity.

To return to the warp and woof mentioned by Emerson at the start of this essay, I might suggest that the act of quotation is rhapsodic in the original sense of that term. A rhapsodist sews song, creating poetry from patchwork. As Finnegan states (2011:183): "However it is defined, quotation in one or another of its many transformations weaves through the literary arts and rites of humankinds, as creators and hearers evoke and play upon the words and voices of others." The garment resulting from the Jewish art of quotation is like the priestly robe described in Exodus 28.32:

וְהָיָה פִי רֹאשׁוֹ בְּתוֹכוֹ שָׂפָה יִהְיֶה לְפִיו סָבִיב מַעֲשֵׂה אֹרֵג כְּפִי תַחְרָא יִהְיֶה לּוֹ לֹא יִקָּרֵעַ

The opening for the head shall be in the middle of it; the opening shall have a binding of work round about it—it shall be like the opening of a coat of mail—so that it does not tear.[87]

In this act of interlacing traditions and inserting teachings, Jews span the generations and form a multi-generational community. Woven together in a unique way, the strands of tradition are used to create a new song, with a binding of work round about it that does not—that may not—tear.

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[85] See Isaiah Horowitz 1993:120-22. I am grateful to Dalia Marx for pointing me to Aharon Berachia ben Moshe's *Ma'avar Yabok*, published in Mantua in 1626.

[86] It is worth bringing to mind the example of a recently deceased scholar who asked friends to read Bible passages in their original language to him on the telephone during his final hours.

[87] The Hebrew of this verse includes four references to mouth and tongue, and the interpretative possibilities of that ambiguity were explored by Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel of Apt (1748-1825). See Heschel 1863:102-03.

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Voices from Kilbarchan: Two versions of "The Cruel Mother" from South-West Scotland, 1825

Flemming G. Andersen

Introduction

It was not until the early decades of the nineteenth century that a concern for preserving variants of the same ballad was really taken seriously by collectors. Prior to this ballad editors had been content with documenting single illustrations of ballad types in their collections; that is, they gave only one version (and often a "conflated" or "amended" one at that), such as for instance Thomas Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* from 1765 and Walter Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* from 1802. But with "the antiquarian's quest for authenticity" (McAulay 2013:5) came the growing appreciation of the living ballad tradition and an interest in the singers themselves and their individual interpretations of the traditional material. From this point on attention was also given to different variations of the same ballad story, including documentation (however slight) of the ballads in their natural environment.

William Motherwell (1797-1835) was one of the earliest ballad collectors to pursue this line of collecting, and he was very conscious of what this new approach would mean for a better understanding of the nature of an oral tradition. And as has been demonstrated elsewhere, Motherwell's approach to ballad collecting had an immense impact on later collectors and editors (see also, Andersen 1994 and Brown 1997).

In what follows I shall first give an outline of the earliest extensively documented singing community in the Anglo-Scottish ballad tradition, and then present a detailed analysis of two versions of the same ballad story ("The Cruel Mother") taken down on the same day in 1825 from two singers from the same Scottish village. The fact that Motherwell's material includes alternative performances of the same ballad story from the same area allows us to get one of the earliest glimpses into ballads as a living oral tradition. We may assess at close hand the degree of variability and multiformity that is characteristic of texts in oral tradition (Foley 1998:5), and thus gain an appreciation of the ballads as a living cultural phenomenon.

Motherwell and his Ballads

The two versions of "The Cruel Mother" in question were recorded in the village of Kilbarchan, Renfrewshire, which was the most fertile hunting ground for William Motherwell,

who paid about ten visits to that area spread over eight months in 1825 and 1826 (see also Brown 1996 and McCarthy 1987). There is no indisputable proof that Motherwell, in fact, undertook all the collecting trips himself; in the preface to his *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern* (1827) Motherwell acknowledges the assistance of "my friend Dr. Andrew Crawfurd of Lochwinnoch, Mr. Robert Allan of Kilbarchan, and Mr. Peter Buchan of Peterhead, as having rendered me most essential help in procuring copies of ballads not hitherto printed, and different sets of others already edited" (civ). This acknowledgement is the only reference to Robert Allan, poet of Kilbarchan, and we can only speculate as to his exact role in the fieldwork. We know that it was Andrew Crawfurd who—on Motherwell's behalf—collected most of the ballads taken down from Mrs. Storie of Lochwinnoch (Lyle 1975:xvii-xxiv). Motherwell's entry in the *Notebook*: "To expenses in sundry trips to Kilbarchan in quest of old ditties" might refer to his visiting only Robert Allan; but the notes preserved in the *Notebook* concerning August 24, 1825, demonstrate that Motherwell did some active fieldwork in Kilbarchan.[1]

In all William Motherwell collected 48 complete ballad texts from this village, which constitutes a unique corpus of popular oral tradition.[2] Motherwell's contribution to ballad scholarship in general is well-documented by McCarthey (1987 and 1990) and Brown (2001), among others, but in order to place the two texts in their proper, immediate context I shall give a detailed account of how he came to acquire his ballads from Kilbarchan.

Motherwell was the first ballad editor to pay consistent heed to local and contemporary traditions. He sought systematically to discover both personal and regional repertoires, and consequently he was generally at pains to attribute the collected material to named singers of specific villages and towns, even though he sometimes seemed reluctant to reproduce the names in his own published edition. It is characteristic of Motherwell's interest in the ballad tradition that he entitled his collection *Minstrelsy, Ancient and Modern*. Both aspects of the tradition were to be considered: ballads are old *and* new, and consequently the contemporary singing tradition was to be treated with the utmost care and accuracy (1827:iv):

> The almost total absence of written monuments to support the claims of Scotland to an inheritance
> of Ancient National Minstrelsy enforces the stern necessity of not wantonly tampering with the
> fleeting and precarious memorials tradition has bequeathed to those latter times. Hence it has
> become of the first importance to collect these Songs with scrupulous and unshrinking fidelity . . .
> It will not do to indulge in idle speculations as to what they once may have been, and to recast
> them in what we may fancy were their original moulds.

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[1]A letter of June 6, 1825, from Motherwell to the Edinburgh antiquarian David Laing, offers additional evidence of Motherwell as a fieldworker, demonstrating that he did sometimes himself check the versions that he had had others take down on his behalf: "As you are fond of first Editions I send you the copy of it taken by the illiterate scribe whom I employed to write it down from his old relation. I called on the woman afterwards and got her to sing it over—the Corrections are interlined by me." (Edinburgh University Library MS La. IV.6). Motherwell is here referring to Widow McCormick's version of "Child Morris" (compare 1827:282).

[2]Also refer to William McCarthy, who maintains that "there is no comparably intense set of data in the whole field of classical English and Scottish popular ballads" (1978:21).

In his introduction Motherwell provides one of the earliest accounts of singers and their attitudes towards their ballads, and it is worth quoting extensively from this account here for its unique insight into how an oral tradition lived and survived in a small community, and how it would be influenced by its geographical context (1827:xxvii):[3]

> It is well known by all who have personally undergone the pleasant drudgery of gathering our traditionary song, that the old people who recite these legends, attach to them the most unqualified and implicit belief. To this circumstance may be ascribed the feeling and pathos with which they are occasionally chaunted; the audible sorrow that comes of deep and honest sympathy with the fates and fortunes of our fellow kind. In the spirit too, with which such communications are made, in the same spirit must they be received and listened to. . . . Reciters, moreover, frequently assign special localities, to the ancient ballads, which they gladly indicate to the inquisitive, and to these they appeal as a triumphant refutation of every objection which learned scepticism may urge to the accuracy of the facts, thus traditionally preserved. . . . For, a ballad, when it has become a favourite of the people in any particular district, is soon fitted with localities, drawn from the immediate neighbourhood.

The Community Context

In Kilbarchan parish Motherwell recorded ballads from five named singers: Agnes Lyle, Mrs. Thomson, Agnes Laird, Mrs. King, and Janet Holmes.[4] But, apart from the names and the occasional note of date of performance, Motherwell offers no information about the circumstances of the recordings. It appears that the singers in question can be linked to the weaving industry—which flourished in this particular part of Scotland at the time. Motherwell notes that Agnes Lyle's father was a customary weaver of neighboring Locherlip (*Manuscript* 331), and that Edward King (son of Mrs. King) was a weaver (*Manuscript* 9). Most of the sparse information about the singers is repeated in various works containing Kilbarchan material, but otherwise the local records are silent with regard to the lives of these singers.[5] Thus, information about their social and cultural environment will have to be gleaned from other sources.

Because the textile industries had developed widely in the region, it is extremely likely that the singers concerned were, in some way, involved in either weaving or cotton spinning. Industrialization in the area began in the middle of the eighteenth century, and that development in the village of Kilbarchan is summarized by Robert Mackenzie in his parochial history (1902:175):

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[3] Motherwell also gives an account of a performance in *chantefable* style; see *Manuscript* xiv-xv.

[4] We know of one other singer in Kilbarchan, but no songs have survived from her, and no name is given. Motherwell merely observes "A friend of Agnes Lyle's in Kilbarchan has some verses of Lizie Wan and part of what I suspect is the ballad of Richard Storie. Got the last." (*Notebook* 56).

[5] See Child 1965; Mackenzie 1902:282-83; Lyle 1931:39. I am grateful to Emily Lyle for answering my queries concerning Motherwell's *Notebook* and *Manuscript*, and for presenting me with a copy of her father's edition of ballads.

In 1695 there were in the parish only thirty or forty weavers including apprentices, and these were probably all *customer* weavers. In 1739 John Barbour built a factory, probably in the Stack Yard, and began to make thick linen. In 1742 Allan Speirs began the manufacture of a higher class of goods—lawns, cambries, etc.—for which he found a market chiefly in Dublin. In 1782 this industry was still on the increase, Alexander Speirs, John and Humphrey Barbour in company, John How, John Barbour, jun., and John Houston employing amongst them three hundred and sixty looms. Semple calculates that each weaver could in 1782 make £65 per annum, and Rev. Robert Douglas says that at the end of the century a good workman could earn as much as 10s. a day. In 1791 there were 383 looms in the village and 34 in the county district.

The cotton industry thrived as well. Mackenzie notes that in 1793 the Old Red Mill, which had 2,120 spindles, employed 70 people; and in 1794 another mill was built that was planned to have nearly 25,000 spindles and to employ around 1,800 people (1902:176). But these prospects were never fulfilled.[6] At the turn of the century hard times had set in the textile industries, in Scotland as well as in Northern England, owing to the introduction of power looms in the villages both the customary weavers (who took orders from individual customers in the villages) and the weavers in handloom factories were in rapid decline (Elbourne 1980:5-8; Slaven 1975:104). The weaver poet Will Thom notes that in the Aberdeen area where he was working, a skillful factory weaver would earn 40 shillings per week, in a four-day week, at the end of the eighteenth century, whereas in the period when he was himself employed at the spinning mill, from 1814 to 1831, the wages had dropped to 6 shillings per week (Thom 1844:9-10).

The first decades of the nineteenth century were disastrous to the previously profitable weaving trade, and this economic crisis for the weavers coincided with the general political and social upheaval of the Chartist movement. Some radical Scottish groups, many of them recruited from among the weavers (Ellis and Mac a'Ghobhainn 1970:22), were working for a revolution against English supremacy, but nothing much came of it. In 1819 the movement amounted to no more than a few incidents and strikes, whereas in April 1820, the Chartists read aloud a proclamation of "independence," with 150,000 people in the streets of Glasgow; but the rebels were severely punished by the English: many Radical Scots (among them many weavers) were convicted, by English law, and three people were executed (Ellis and Mac a'Ghobhainn 1970:238).

In this context it is interesting to note that William Motherwell—in his capacity of sheriff-clerk deputy—was physically involved in the upheaval. In September, 1819, Motherwell had been "assaulted and knocked unconscious" by angry radicals (Ellis and Mac a'Ghobhainn 1970:120), and on April 3, 1820—the day after the Glasgow proclamation—he raided a house "with soldiers and police . . . looking for pikes and guns" (Ellis and Mac a'Ghobhainn

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[6] In the chapter on Kilbarchan in the *New Statistical Account of Scotland* the Rev. Robert Douglas notes that the four cotton mills occupied 500 workers, and that there were about 800 hand looms in the village (1845:373, 376-77). Wages had dropped: at the Linwood Company Mill eighty workers earned between 16 and 30 shillings per week; 200 workers earned between 6 and 13 shillings per week, and 120 workers earned between 3 and 6 shillings per week.

1970:158).[7] Chartism was also present in Kilbarchan, but according to the Rev. Mackenzie, who was writing some 80 years later, it was evidently not enthusiastically supported. He quotes one Arthur Snoddon, who observes that a Paisley contingent of agitators had to return to Paisley, as they found the Kilbarchan inhabitants soundly asleep, in spite of an agreement to participate: "I was of the opinion that the Kilbarchan people had begun to see the folly of the whole matter, and, being a shrewd set of villagers, had cut the connection" (Mackenzie 1902:280).

Besides being politically articulate, weavers cultivated an active interest in songs and poetry. Thom mentions that the songs of James Hogg, also known as the Ettrick Shepherd, and Tannahil, a weaver of Paisley, were particular favorites. In his somewhat inflated style Thom observes (1844:15, 14):

> Song was the dew drops that gathered during the long dark night of despondency . . . Let me again proclaim the debt we owe to those Song Spirits, as they walked in melody from loom to loom, ministering to the low-hearted.

We can only speculate as to whether the singers of Kilbarchan used their ballads in the same manner as the Paisley singers. There is no external evidence documenting their political stand, so what we might learn about their world views will have to be inferred from the ballads themselves.[8]

The Two Ballads of "The Cruel Mother"

The ballads that were collected in the village of Kilbarchan survive in two sources: one known as Motherwell's *Notebook* (which seems to have served as his *vade mecum* on field trips), the other as his *Manuscript* (which contains fair copies of all the ballads and songs that were taken down from recitation, plus occasional texts that were sent to him).[9]

As far as our evidence goes, all but one of the ballads from the Kilbarchan area were taken down in the year 1825.[10] Being a collection of fair copies of ballads and songs, the *Manuscript* itself is not chronologically ordered, and it seems that Motherwell changed his

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[7]It is indeed paradoxical that Motherwell, with his Tory leanings in the conflict should later become so much involved with the weaving community, which was closely related to the Chartist movement. For a balanced account of Motherwell's political views, see Brown 2001:16-17 and 34-56.

[8]McCarthy offers the following observation on Agnes Lyle: "whether or not Agnes Lyle was sympathetic to the political ideals and aspirations of the weaving fraternity, she could not have been ignorant of them or indifferent to them" (1978:12). We simply don't know.

[9]The original of Motherwell's *Notebook* is held in Pollok House, Glasgow. A copy has been made by James Murdoch in The Houghton Library, Harvard University (MS 25242.16). The original of Motherwell's *Manuscript* is held in the Glasgow University Library (MS Murray 501). The *Manuscript* as a whole is a miscellaneous collection of songs from contemporary tradition (oral and written). The bulk of material, however, can be categorized as "traditional ballads" in terms of narrative technique. For more details on the two sources, see McCarthy 1987; and Brown 2001:85-88.

[10] For a full account of the Kilbarchan repertoire, see Appendix I.

method of compilation in the course of collecting. In the early pages of the *Manuscript* he apparently wanted to make a selection of versions of the same ballad story, whereas later— obviously under the influence of a letter from Sir Walter Scott (who also encouraged him to note names of singers and dates of performance)—Motherwell became more interested in documenting repertoires of individual singers.[11]

Surveying the recorded Kilbarchan corpus we find that eight ballads have been known by two or more singers,[12] and in the following section I shall look at one of the two ballads that are shared by Agnes Lyle and Agnes Laird their two versions of "The Cruel Mother" (Child 20E and 20H).

The texts are printed below in the shape in which they appear in Motherwell's *Manuscript*, stanza numbering added (*Manuscript* 390-91 and 402-03, respectively):

"The Cruel Mother."
This comes from the recitation of Agnes Lyle Kilbarchan, 24 August 1825.

The following ballad is also from Agnes Laird Kilbarchan. 24. Aug., 1825. She heard it with two different choruses. These are both given in the first Stanza. The ballad is a different copy of the ballad given before under the title of "The Cruel Mother."

1. There was a lady she lived in Lurk York
    Sing hey alone and alonie O
    She fell in love with her father's clerk

    Down by yon greenwood sidie O.

    Down by the green wood sidie O.

2. She loved him seven years and a day
    Till her big belly did her betray.
    ----

3. She leaned her back unto a tree
    And there began her sad misery.

4. She set her foot unto a thorn
    And there she got her two babes born.

1. There was a lady brisk and Smart
    All in a lone and a lonie O
    (Three and three and three by three)
        variation
    And she goes with child to her father's
        clark

    /Ah me some forty three/ variation
    ----

2. Big, big oh she went away
    And then she set her foot to a tree.

3. Big she set her foot to a stone
    Till her three bonnie babes were borne.

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[11] For a discussion of Scott's impact on Motherwell's view on editing, see Hustvedt 1930:76-77; McCarthy 1987; Andersen 1994:31-33; Brown 2001:82-83.

[12] For a comparative analysis of the two Kilbarchan versions of "The Twa Sisters" sung by Agnes Lyle and Mrs. King, see Andersen 1997:125-37.

5. She took out her wee penknife
    She twin'd them both of their sweet life.

6. She took the sattins was on her head
    She rolled them in both when they were dead.

4. She took the ribbons off her head
    She tied the little babes hand + feet.

7. She howkit a grave forenent the sun
    And there she buried her twa babes in.

5. She howkit a hole before the sun
    She's laid these three bonnie babes in.

6. She covered them over with marble stone
    For Dukes and lords to walk upon.

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8. As she was walking thro' her father's ha'
    She spied twa boys playing at the ba.

7. She lookied over her father's Castle wa'
    She saw three bonnie boys playing at the
    ba.

8. The first o' them was clad in red
    To shew the innocence of their blood.

9. The neist o' them was clad in green
    To shew that death they had been in.

10. The next was naked to the skin
    To shew they were murder'd when they
    were born.

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9. O pretty boys if ye were mine
    I would dress ye both in the silks so fine.

11. O bonnie babes an ye were mine
    I wud dress you in the satins so fine.

10. O mother dear when we were thine
    Thou ne'er dressed us in silks so fine.

12. O mother dear when we were thine
    Thou did not use us half so kind.

11. For thou was a lady thou lived in Lurk
    And thou fell in love with thy fathers clerk

12. Thou lived [sic] him seven years and a day
    Till thy big belly did thee betray.

13. Thou leaned thy back unto a tree
    And there began thy sad misery

14. Thou set thy foot unto a thorn

And there thou got thy two babes born.

15. Thou took out thy wee penknife
    And twin'd us both of our sweet life.

16. Thou took the Sattins was on your head
    Thou rolled us both in when we were dead.

17. Thou howkit a grave forenent the sun
    And there thou buried thy twa babes in.

13. O bonnie babes an ye be mine
    Whare hae ye been a' this time.

14. We were at our father's house
    Preparing a place for thee and us.

15. Whaten a place ha'e ye prepar'd for me
    Heaven for us, but hells for thee!

18. But now we're both in heavens hie
    There is pardon for us but none for thee.

16. O mother dear but heaven's high
    That is the place thou'll ne'er come nigh.

19. My pretty boys beg pardon for me—Sing hey
    There is pardon for us but none for thee!
    Down by the green wood sidie O.

17. O mother dear but hell is deep
    'Twill cause thee bitterlie to weep.

August 24, 1825 was the day when Motherwell transcribed the Kilbarchan ballads—nine in all. This was also the only day—as far as we know—that two versions of the same ballad—the two texts above—were recorded.[13]

The immediate repertoire context of Agnes Lyle's version is fairly heterogeneous; the group of ballads recorded on that day was a miscellaneous lot: a fragment of a broadside ballad, a supernatural "kempy" ballad ("The Wee Wee Man"), two ballads with tragic outcomes ("The Cruel Mother," in which two infants are cruelly murdered, and "The Turkish Galley," in which a seaman's loyalty is cruelly betrayed), and two ballads with a happy resolution ("Johnie Scot," who wins his true love after a violent fight, and "Young Hyn Horn," who gains his true love after years of absence). Compared to this thematic variety, Agnes Laird's version of "The Cruel Mother" is in much better tune with the other ballads she sang that day: "There was a knight in Jessamay" is the story of a cruel stepmother who in the most atrocious manner disposes of her

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[13] Agnes Lyle's text is found in both *Notebook* and *Manuscript*. The discrepancies between the two texts are very slight indeed (see APPENDIX II). In the *Notebook* Motherwell copied the first stanza of Agnes Laird's text. This memorandum was taken down on August 18 under the heading: "Agnes Laird of Kilbarchan has the following ballads" (27).

husband's daughter, and "Willie o' Winsbury" tells of a king who is so infuriated with his daughter's pregnancy that he threatens to have her lover hanged.

There is no surviving evidence that Agnes Lyle and Agnes Laird knew each other, nor is there evidence that they were brought together on this occasion to sing to Motherwell. Motherwell probably visited them in their separate homes, and since he collected from them on the same day, they must have lived fairly close to each other; in all likelihood they would have known of each other as singing ladies, and they would have been conscious of the fact that ballads appear in different shapes. It can be assumed that the differences between the texts reflect an effort on the singers' part to keep their versions distinct. Singers will typically attempt to produce the ballads as they originally learned them, gradually adjusting the texts to make them their own.[14]

Agnes Laird quite evidently knew at least two versions of the ballad. She draws Motherwell's attention to alternative "choruses" (st. 1), but this is presumably not to say that she would sometimes use these alternatives lines as a refrain in connection with this particular version. The opening stanza of "The Cruel Mother" was taken down by Motherwell on August 18, as well, and it gives the same refrain as in the text above.[15]

The subsequent analysis I offer is based on a structural-formulaic approach (see, for example, Andersen 1985), which seeks to demonstrate how traditional narrative structures and traditional formulaic diction may be employed to produce two distinct versions and interpretations of the same ballad story.[16] The analysis will divide the narrative into four scenes: introduction, birth and burial, discovery, and rebuke.

Introduction: Lyle sts. 1-2; Laird st. 1

In both versions the essential information is given promptly: a woman is pregnant. Agnes Lyle employs two stanzas, supplying the additional point that the lady had fallen in love with her father's clerk, which serves as partial explanation (and "excuse") for the state of affairs. Unlike Agnes Laird's version, which merely states the fact of the pregnancy, Agnes Lyle attempts—by the briefest means—to create a proper narrative development, with the expected progression of falling in love > being in love for seven years > pregnant.[17]

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[14] This, at least, is the case with contemporary singers today, who are acutely aware of other singers' (different) versions of the ballads they themselves sing. Refer to observations made by the Stewarts of Blairgowrie in Scotland (private tape 1980); see also James Porter's important study from 1976.

[15] This refrain is used in most versions of this ballad; the numerical nonsense refrain appears only in Child's C-version (which is also from Motherwell's *Minstrelsy*—of unknown origin).

[16] And such tools are very potent indeed, as per John Miles Foley's general observation (1991:7): "Structural elements are not simply compositionally useful . . . ; rather they command fields of reference much larger than the single line, passage, or even text in which they occur. Traditional elements reach out of the immediate instance in which they appear to the fecund totality of the entire tradition, defined synchronically and diachronically."

[17] The same tendency is true of Agnes Lyle's rendition of "The Twa Sisters" (see Andersen 1997:127).

From Birth to Burial: Lyle sts. 3-7; Laird sts. 2-6

The scene opens with an account of the babies' births, and in both versions this is narrated in terms of formulaic diction that alludes to the nature of the drama to come. The formula family employed here ("SHE'S SET HER BACK UNTILL AN OAK") is used to signal "clandestine birth of illegitimate children," and consequently carries the key to the story with all its ominous overtones. In whatever shape it occurs this particular formula constitutes the dramatic core of a ballad. Both singers have the formula participate in a characteristic repetition pattern, but with slightly different perspectives: Agnes Laird creates a simple progression pattern often found in connection with this formula, from "tree" to "stone" (Laird sts. 2-3):

> Big, big oh she went away
> And then she set her foot to a tree.
>
> Big she set her foot to a stone
> Till her three bonnie babes were borne.

Agnes Lyle, in a similar pattern, elaborates slightly on the narrative events. She seems to elaborate on the emotional involvement as well (see the term "betray" from st. 2^2); and the phrase "and there began her sad misery" (3^2) both stresses her empathy and offers an explicit hint, on top of the signal provided by the formula itself, of the tragic nature of subsequent events (Lyle, sts. 3-4):

> She leaned her back unto a tree
> And there began her sad misery.
>
> She set her foot unto a thorn
> And there she got her two babes born.

In an abortive attempt to keep the pre-marital sexual affair secret, the lady commits her "unnatural" crime, which in both versions is narrated in a set of parallel structures: five successive lines in the same syntactic pattern (actor + action) relate, step by step, how the infants are disposed of: Lyle sts. 5^1, 5^2, 6^1, 6^2, 7^1, and Laird sts. 4^1, 4^2, 5^1, 5^2, 6^1. But the propositional contents differ. In Lyle's version, the mother mechanically—as if in a trance—takes the knife, "twins" the infants of their lives, takes the "sattins," rolls the babies in them, digs a grave, and buries the two babies there. The account in Laird's version is less straightforward. The babies are not stabbed to death—as they are in most versions of this ballad story—nor are they explicitly strangled with the ribbons. Their hands and feet are tied, and the next thing we hear in the ballad is that the babies are placed in the grave, which uncannily suggests that they are being buried alive. So far Agnes Laird reports the story "objectively," but at this point she appears to intervene in the narrative. Whereas Lyle's interpolations are generally concerned with establishing narrative coherence (providing motivations for events) and with stressing emotional concern for the protagonists, Agnes Laird appears to intervene on the symbolic level; the account of the

burial in st. 5 is followed by description of how the mother covers the grave (conceals her crime), placing the marble stone "for Dukes and lords to walk upon" (st. 6^2). It becomes clear, then, that in order to save her position in the world, the mother gave birth clandestinely and afterwards killed the infants. The act of covering the grave with marble stone is not itself a formulaic expression (it has hardly any recurrence in traditional balladry), and hence any loaded meaning of the phrase will have to be "explicitly suggested"—for instance in the way that Agnes Laird has chosen to do it here by allowing for guesses as to who may have made the poor girl pregnant.

The Discovery: Lyle st. 8; Laird sts. 7-10

With the crime committed, the story moves quickly to the resolution, which consists of a very brief discovery scene and a more elaborated final scene in which the victims rebuke the mother for her monstrous act, and point to the inevitable fate that will befall her.

Agnes Laird's initial stanza is a combination of two formulas:

> She lookit over her father's Castle wa'
> She saw three bonnie boys playing at the ba. (Laird, st. 7)

The "LOOK OVER THE CASTLE WALL" is a formula presaging dramatic confrontation—often of a fatal nature—between the person looking and the one(s) observed in the distance (Andersen 1985:138-47). In this case, however, there is no physical fight, but the verbal blows in the ensuing dialog are no less damaging: they sentence the mother to eternal damnation. The second line about the boys playing at the ball constitutes another formula with presaging function, and is typically employed to point to a disastrous love affair (Andersen 1985:119-23). This supra-narrative potential, however, is overruled by the "LOOK OVER THE CASTLE WALL" formula, which carries all the power of prediction. While "PLAYING AT THE BALL" seems not to fit in sequentially here, it does fit in well with the associative field of an illicit love affair. What we are about to witness in the ballad is the dramatic confrontation between two parties that ought to have loved each other; and their tragic fate is precisely occasioned by illicit love. Two spheres of associations curiously mix—a feature which may be safely termed context-bound since it is exceptional to have two different ballad formulas interact in this manner.[18] As the story moves on, however, Agnes Laird's version becomes even more exceptional in that she employs a sequence of explicit symbolism in sts. 8-10, disclosing the significance of how the three babies are dressed ("in red," "in green," and "naked"). Stanzas of this openly interpretive nature are found in no other version of the ballad;[19] while the use of symbolism is of course part

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[18] The combination of "LOOK OVER THE CASTLE WALL" and "PLAYING AT THE BALL" is found in Child's D- H-, I-, J-, K-, L-, N-, Appendix IV- and Appendix V-versions of this ballad, and in Lizzie Higgins's version on the record *Up and Awa wi the Laverock*. Outside the ballad of "The Cruel Mother" this particular constellation of formulas appears only in one stanza of contemporary versions of "Lady Mary Ann," a ballad which was presumably remolded by Robert Burns on two traditional stanzas.

[19] Child's N- and O-versions, and Bronson's 20.27 all have a stanza relating how the babies were clothed, but that stanza offers no key as to how the colors are to be interpreted.

of ballad language, it is very rarely forced upon the listeners so insistently as in the present case where we have three successive stanzas devoted to the babies, and in each stanza the second line begins with the conspicuous "to show . . .". Agnes Laird's prime concern here appears to be the symbolic significance of the events, not the narrative itself. The story almost becomes allegorical: Innocence has been murdered to protect Worldly Reputation, which is comparable to Laird's stanza 6^2.

Agnes Lyle handles this scene in the ballad very differently. Here too the discovery is described in terms of the "PLAYING AT THE BALL" formula, but there is no "LOOK OVER THE CASTLE WALL" to precede it. Instead we see the protagonist walking through her father's hall—which has none of the formulaic overtones—so Agnes Lyle leaves all the supra-narrative signalling work to the "PLAYING AT THE BALL" formula, which—as we saw above—is slightly off target in this particular ballad.[20] But then Agnes Lyle can afford to be somewhat low-key at this stage, in view of the explicit forewarning she gave in st. 3^2.

The Rebuke: Lyle sts. 9-19; Laird sts. 11-17

In both versions the mother fails to recognize the true identities of the boys, and putting on a caring attitude, she addresses them by saying that she would have dressed them in fine clothes had they been her own babies. But she receives an immediate rebuttal from them, disclosing in one sentence the identity of the babies, and the hypocrisy of the mother. But after this the two versions part company.

Agnes Laird engages in a sequence of parallel structures, in which the dialog proceeds in balancing steps of increasing intensity towards the final condemnation. The mother's courteous remark in st. 11 shows that she still seeks to conceive of herself as belonging to "polite" society:

> O bonnie babes an ye were mine
> I wud dress you in the satins so fine

But by means of "causative repetition" she is soon brought back to the real world; and when the terrible truth dawns upon her she, panic-stricken, rephrases her own wording from st. 11^1 to inquire where they have been all this time. And as she is told that (Laird, st. 14):

> We were at our father's house
> Preparing a place for thee and us

she realizes that all is lost. Unable to act of her own accord (not even able to fill a stanza of her own) she now echoes the words of her babies to ask what is in store for her (Laird, st. 15^1):

> Whaten a place ha'e ye prepar'd for me.

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[20] Only one other ballad combines the "PLAYING AT THE BALL" formula with a reference to someone walking through the hall: Mary Macqueen's version of "Gil Brenton" (Crawfurd 1 st. 10), and here the formula-line exploits its 'normal' associative potential of marking the secret love between the man "seeing" and one of the ladies "playing": "As he was walking through yon green ha / He saw se'en ladies playan at the baw."

And the verdict is as brief as it is merciless, pronounced within that same stanza (st. 15^2):

> Heaven for us, but hells for thee!

The dichotomy between these two realms is then accentuated by Agnes Laird in the two final stanzas, which in terms of emphatic repetition restate the contrasting fates of the two sets of characters (mother and children). With the explicit Heaven-Hell opposition (st. 15^2), and with the line about the babies being "at our father's house" (st. 14^1), the story has now been imbued with Christian overtones, and the symbolic account of "murdered innocence" (sts. 8-10) is resolved within a Christian framework: the slaying of the innocents has been brought before the Supreme Judge, and he intervenes to set things right.

As noted above, Agnes Lyle opens this scene in much the same manner (sts. 9-10; causative repetition). But then in sts. 11-17 the two boys recapitulate the entire story—verbatim —cf. sts. 1-7. The horrid deed is re-enacted before the mother, and she is openly confronted with the heinous details. This sequence seems to operate on two levels: in one sense the babies themselves speak the words, but in another the account may be replayed in the mother's mind. It is her guilty conscience coming to the fore. The story is "internalized" here, and according to William McCarthy this "perfectly symmetrical song" displays "considerable subtlety" (1990:104-05): "The ballad technique is especially effective here: a few simple adjustments transform an objective statement of fact into a damning accusation."

This narrative transformation keeps the attention firmly fixed on the lady—which seems to be Agnes Lyle's main concern—but it does not reflect a personal transformation on the mother's part. Lyle knows that the plot is revealed, but in contradistinction to Agnes Laird's version the mother is still trying to save her own reputation. She despairingly asks the babies to pardon her (st. 19^1), but they most emphatically refuse to do so, as in the repetition between sts. 18^2 and 19^2. Although there is a reference to the babies being in "heavens hie" (st. 18^1), there are no strong religious overtones in Agnes Lyle's version. Her story portrays a mother in dire distress, in "sad misery" (st. 3^2), and the almost overburdened repetitive structure of the ballad fixes the focus on the mother and her mental state. The structure of the ballad largely determines the outcome of the story, and the resulting "internalization" shows that Agnes Lyle is a compassionate singer. She is emotionally involved in the story she narrates, focusing on the "sad misery" of the protagonist. The ballad, in Lyle's rendition, is very much a tragedy on the personal level.

Agnes Laird's ballad, on the other hand, emphasizes the psychological development in the mother. She comes to realize the transitory—and indeed fatal—nature of worldly considerations. The transformation in this ballad concerns the mother's (and by implication everybody's) view of life. The change sets in with the formula presaging death in st. 7; is substantiated by the progressive repetition of symbolic stanzas (sts. 8-10); and is accomplished in the emphatic repetition of the last two stanzas. In Laird's version the ballad has a more pronounced didactic aspect to it: it becomes a story with an explicit moral/religious lesson to be learned—for singer and audience alike.

Conclusion

As we have seen, there are very few duplicate texts in Motherwell's material, and there are very few textual differences between the ones we encounter. That this is so strongly suggests that singers generally would resort to the same, memorized version of a ballad at each rendition of it. This suggestion is substantiated by Lyle herself: after she has given her version of "Geordie Lukely," she mentions that her father sang a different version, and she quotes two stanzas in which her father's version differed from the one she used to sing (*Manuscript* 370). It is obvious that Agnes Lyle, being aware of both versions, kept them distinct in her memory.

Agnes Lyle can apparently be seen as an innovative singer in the sense that she sang the ballad slightly differently from the version her father sang, and as conservative in the sense that she had a clear notion of what was her *own* version of the ballad, which would not be changed. There is always a balance to be struck between innovation and preservation in the ballad tradition. The language and narrative technique constitute a stabilizing factor, and what is variable is the way in which these traditional tools are being employed.

Although the two singing ladies in question clearly narrate the same story and employ the same traditional narrative tools in doing so, we can see that these tools may be used in manners that produce very different renditions, each with their own individual focus (which, we may speculate, may in some way reflect the two singers' different tastes, personalities, and world views). What we can say for certain, however, is that the traditional narrative technique of employing of formulaic diction and repetitions is very powerful in the hands of such competent singers as Agnes Lyle and Agnes Laird, and in this way the two ballads illustrate the balance between stability and variation by which oral traditions are and have been kept alive.

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APPENDIX I

The Kilbarchan Repertoire

The following table presents the recorded repertoires of the six known singers in Kilbarchan, and each repertoire is arranged according to date of performance, whenever possible. The titles provided here—which may vary slightly from the *Notebook* to the *Manuscript*, and indeed within the *Manuscript* itself—are those given in the *Manuscript* on the page from which the text has been copied. The dates and titles are followed by the Child number of the ballads in question, and references to where Motherwell copied the texts. Fragments are noted in brackets.

Ballads taken down in Kilbarchan 1825

Singer	Date	Title / First line	Child number	Manuscript page	Notebook page
Mrs. Thomson	Feb.	Lord Brangwill	5	219	
Mrs. Thomson	Feb 25	Lady Marjory	65	1	
Mrs. Thomson	Feb 25	Lambert Linkin	93	15	
Mrs. Thomson	March	Chield Morice	83	165	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	Catherine Johnson	221	75	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	King William going a hunting		101	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	Rob's Bridal		144	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	Earl Robert	87	149	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	Skipper Patrick	58	153	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	There was a May and a bonnie May	217	175	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	Susie Cleland	65	179	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	Lord Saunders	61	196	
Mrs. Thomson	no date	Johnie Scot	99	213	
Mrs. King	Feb 9	It is talked the warld all over	15/16	286	
Mrs. King	no date	Lamerlinkin	93	9	
Mrs. King	no date	There were three Sisters	10	104	
Mrs. King	no date	Hindhorn	17	106	
Mrs. King	no date	What bluid's that on thy coat lap	13	139	
Agnes Laird	1825	The Brown Bride and Lord Thomas	73	157	
Agnes Laird	June 21	Bonnie Johnie Scot	99	211	
Agnes Laird	June 21	Lord Robert & Mary Florence	87	321	
Agnes Laird	Aug 18	The Gay Goss Hawk	96	415	27
Agnes Laird	Aug 24	There was a knight in Jessamay		399	(26)
Agnes Laird	Aug 24	The Cruel Mother	20	402	(27)

Agnes Laird	Aug 24	Willie o Winsberye	100	404	(27)
Agnes Lyle	July 19	Lord Dunwaters	208	331	
Agnes Lyle	July 19	The Dowie Downs o Yarrow	214	334	
Agnes Lyle	July 19	Mary Hamilton	173	337	
Agnes Lyle	July 19	The Eastmure King and the Westmure King	89	341	
Agnes Lyle	July 19	Lord Jamie Douglas	204	345	
Agnes Lyle	July 19	Young Patrick	58	348	
Agnes Lyle	July 27	There were three sisters	14	174	
Agnes Lyle	July 27	Davie Faw	200	381	
Agnes Lyle	July 27	The Bonny Bows o' London	10	383	
Agnes Lyle	Aug 24	The Cruel Mother	20	390	33 (31)
Agnes Lyle	Aug 24	Johnie Scott	99	394	35
Agnes Lyle	Aug 24	The Wee Wee man	38	195	40
Agnes Lyle	Aug 24	Young Hyn Horn	17	413	42
Agnes Lyle	Aug 24	The Knight & Lady	112		(45)
Agnes Lyle	Aug 24	The Turkish Galley	286	392	50
Agnes Lyle	Sep 28	The Knight & Lady	112	410	
Agnes Lyle	no date	Fair Janet and Sweet Wllie	64	357	
Agnes Lyle	no date	Sweet William's gone over seas	254	361	
Agnes Lyle	no date	The Broom blooms bonnie[21]	15/16	365	
Agnes Lyle	no date	Geordie Lukely	209	367 (370)	
Agnes Lyle	no date	Lord Barnabas' Lady	81	371	
Agnes Lyle	no date	Four and twenty ladies fair	222	375	
Agnes Lyle	no date	Earl Richard has a hunting gone	68	377	
Janet Holmes	July 18	Fair Annie	62	351	

Ballads taken down in 1826

| Mrs. ? | Jan 3 | Ritchie Storie | 232 | 426 | |

These texts constitute the known Kilbarchan repertoires. Complete duplicate texts occur only in connection with the texts that were taken down in August 1825, and the editorial differences between them are of the slightest nature, amounting to little more than inconsistencies in spelling and punctuation. Only on very few occasions is there any evidence of "multiple performances," that is, the same ballad sung by the same singer: in his Agnes Laird

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[21] "The Broom blooms bonnie" recorded before October 8 (see Child 1965, v: 210), as were presumably the rest of this group.

memorandum of August 18 Motherwell quotes a few stanzas of ballads (*Notebook* 26-27), and these stanzas were produced again, together with the complete texts, on August 24 (*Manuscript* 399-404). This is also the case with Agnes Lyle's "The Cruel Mother:" the memorandum, probably of August 18, gives the opening stanza (*Notebook* 31), while on August 24 the whole ballad was taken down (*Notebook* 33 and *Manuscript* 390), and five stanzas survive from the first interrupted recording of "The Knight & Lady" on August 24, while the full version (twenty stanzas) were eventually taken down on September 28. In all these instances the variations between the duplicate stanzas are minute indeed.

Motherwell's collecting trips in the west of Scotland took place between January 1825 and September 1825. He seems to have paid only one visit to Kilbarchan itself in 1826: On January 3, 1826 he noted a version of "Ritchie Storie" from an unidentified Mrs. ? (*Manuscript* 426). Motherwell's first recorded visit to the village took place in February: On February 9 he heard "It's talked the warld over" from Mrs. King (*Manuscript* 286),[22] and on February 25 he collected two ballads from Mrs. Thomson: "Lady Marjorie" and "Lambert Linkin" (*Manuscript* 1, 15). Motherwell probably paid a third visit in February, for another of Mrs. Thomson's ballads ("Lord Brangwill") is merely headnoted "Feb." (*Manuscript* 219). Motherwell called on Mrs. Thomson again in March to record her version of "Chiel Morice" (*Manuscript* 165), while the remaining nine texts of her recorded repertoire are copied in the *Manuscript* with no indication of date of performance. Occasionally he left blank pages to be filled in later, so it is impossible to infer dates of performance from the sequence in which the items were entered.[23]

Most of the collecting work was done during the summer. In June Motherwell was back in Kilbarchan, this time visiting Agnes Laird, from whom he recorded the ballads of "Bonnie Johnie Scot" and "Lord Robert & Mary Florence" on June 21 (*Manuscript* 211, 321). The following month ballads were collected on three occasions: On July 18 he visited Janet Holmes (also cited as "Nancy Holmes" in Motherwell's "List of old singing Women" in the *Notebook* [52]), who gave him her version of "Fair Annie" (*Manuscript* 356)—the only text surviving from her repertoire; the next day, July 19, Motherwell took down no less than six ballads from Agnes Lyle—which are all recorded successively in the *Manuscript*, and roughly a week later, on July 27, Agnes Lyle produced three more ballads for Motherwell.

The closest insight into the collection and performance contexts is provided in relation to Motherwell's visit in August, for it appears that part of his field notes on that occasion have survived in the *Notebook*. On page 26—which bears the date August 18—Motherwell noted a memorandum concerning Agnes Laird, who, it says, "has the following ballads," and then follow fragments of three ballads, all of which were to be recorded in full length at a later date. Number four (inaccurately listed by Motherwell as "number five") is Agnes Laird's version of "The Gay Goss Hawk," which appears to be the only complete ballad text that was taken down on this

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[22] The rest of Mrs. King's ballads are undated.

[23] The *Notebook*, on the other hand, seems to have served as a fieldwork notebook on two occasions in August 1825.

occasion.[24]   Apparently on that same day Motherwell made another memorandum, which concerned the ballads from Agnes Lyle's repertoire. On pages 31-32 he lists a number of fragments "to take from Agnes Lyle," but unlike the fragments assigned to Agnes Laird, Motherwell never managed to get all of the texts of the memorandum: when he returned to Kilbarchan on August 24 he called on Agnes Lyle, and he did begin with the first item on the memorandum list, the ballad beginning "There was a lady she liv'd in Luke" (*Notebook* 33), which is a version of "The Cruel Mother." Then Motherwell took down the third item "Johnie Scott's a hunting gone" (*Notebook* 35), but after that he seems to have abandoned his list, and instead he noted the ballads in the order in which Agnes Lyle chose to sing them. For now follow texts that were not mentioned in the memorandum: "As I was walking mine alone" (erroneously ascribed to Agnes Laird in the *Manuscript* [195]) (40), "Young Hyn Horn" (42), and a fragment of "There was a knicht was drunk with wine" (45), which comes to a sudden halt after the fifth stanza, either—as McCarthy (1987:308) suggests—because Agnes Lyle "was unable to finish at that time," or because Motherwell asked her to stop singing, recognizing that this particular text had very strong broadside features, which was not the kind of material that had his primary interest.[25] Motherwell himself offers no clues.

Finally Motherwell returned to his memorandum, and recorded as the last song that day the fourth item in the memorandum: Agnes Lyle's version of "Turkish Galley" (*Notebook* 50). The remaining titles and fragments from the memorandum were apparently never recorded; they appear in neither *Notebook* nor *Manuscript*.[26] Still on this day, August 24, Motherwell visited Agnes Laird to collect the ballads he had noted in his memorandum of August 18.[27] Strangely, however, none of them were recorded in the *Notebook*, once again for reasons unknown. In the *Manuscript* Motherwell simply recorded in successive order the three ballads of the

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[24] The text was later copied in the *Manuscript*, with erroneous ascription of singer and date of performance: the text is here headnoted "It is from the recitation of Agnes Lyle Kilbarchan 24. Augt 1825" (415), obviously being confused with the ballad that Motherwell did record from Agnes Lyle on that day.

[25] The reason why he returned in September to collect the whole version may be that in the meantime he had discovered another version of it in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (first published 1765), and therefore wanted a modern version—cf. his note to the text in the *Manuscript*: "there is a much improved and considerably longer version in Percy's *Reliques* Vol. II p. 371" (412). Although Motherwell generally was no purist it is perhaps significant that the texts from Lyle's memorandum which were *not* recorded appear to have close broadside affiliations—and indeed the text of "There was a knicht was drunk with wine" does have a special status in Lyle's recorded repertoire.

[26] McCarthy (1978:39-47) seeks to identify these first lines and titles (most of them broadsides), and he discusses the relevance of these pieces to the recorded repertoire of Agnes Lyle—which seems reasonable enough— but we do not know whether these bits were more than fragments in her repertoire (although in other instances Motherwell did note that a singer would know a song imperfectly; cf. *Notebook* 1, 6, 7, 22). But whatever their status in the repertoire we can only speculate about their actual wording, so the fragments can be used merely as an illustration of the *kind* of songs Agnes Lyle would be interested in. We can hardly include them in a textual analysis —as does McCarthy, claiming that "probably all the songs have more or less fixed texts, unlike the orally recreated pieces in her repertoire. And yet all show that the singer was no slave to any printed text. Taken line by line the fragments demonstrate varying degree of reworking by a traditional singer or line of singers" (1978:47). We simply cannot tell.

[27] This is obviously the cause of the confusion between the two Agnes's in *Manuscript* and *Notebook*, referenced above.

memorandum—"There was a knight in Jessymay" (399), "The Cruel Mother" (402), and "Willy o Winsberye" (404)—giving August 24 as the date of performance.

Only one of Agnes Laird's texts is recorded without exact date of performance: "The Brown Bride" (*Manuscript* 157), which is merely headnoted "1825," while seven of Agnes Lyle's ballads bear no date. They were apparently taken down, as a group, before October 8, 1825, when the text of "The Broom blooms bonnie"—together with "The Turkish Galley"—was sent to C. K. Sharpe, who had published his own collection of ballads, *A Ballad Book*, in 1823 (Child 1965, v:142, 210).

The documented Kilbarchan repertoire thus runs to 48 complete ballad texts, and in his *Notebook* Motherwell reveals that the costs incurred in the course of his field work were significant. In March 1827 he made an account of all expenses (*Notebook* 156-57). Motherwell meticulously notes all items, disclosing that frequently he paid his singers for their services, including an entry reading "To Agnes Lyle + c in Kilbarchan 8/6" (156). In total the various expenses amounted to no less than 20 pounds, which occasions a note of lament inserted just below the figures: "So much for a Hobby horse in riding of which there is neither fame nor thanks. WM" (*Notebook* 157).

APPENDIX II

Agnes Lyle's text is found in both *Notebook* and *Manuscript*. The discrepancies between the two texts are very slight indeed:

	Notebook	Manuscript
2^1	7	seven
3^2	begun	began
4^1	upon	unto
5^2	[blank]	twin'd
5^2	t her ['t' added]	their
6^1	[blank]	sattins
8^1	thro / ha [apostrophes deleted]	thro' / ha'
8^2	two	twa
9^2	wud	would
10^2	neer	ne'er
11^2	clk	clerk
12^1	loved	lived
12^1	7	seven
13-17	Repeat verse 3-4-5-6-7	[sts. 13-17]
18^1	were	we're
18^1	the heavens	heavens
19^2	there is none	none
19^{1+3}	[no refrain]	[refrain]

In the *Notebook* Motherwell copied the first stanza of Agnes Laird's text. This memorandum was taken down on August 18 under the heading: "Agnes Laird of Kilbarchan has the following ballads" (27).

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"It may be verifyit that thy wit is thin": Interpreting Older Scots Flyting through Hip Hop Aesthetics

Caitlin Flynn and Christy Mitchell

Poetic invective traditions have developed across many cultures throughout history.[1] This study examines Older Scots flyting, a little known instance of medieval poetic invective. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) defines this tradition as "a kind of contest practised by the Scottish poets of the sixteenth century, in which two persons assailed each other alternately with tirades of abusive verse." Poetic flyting among the Scottish *makars*, or poets, seems to have been inspired by a broader culture of flyting in Scottish society of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (Todd 2002:236). But very few formal poetic flyting texts have survived, and since the late eighteenth century scholars have been baffled by this tradition (Lord Hailes 1770:274; MacKay 1893:cxiv; Scott 1966:175). The extinct tradition of Scottish flyting bears a striking resemblance to American Hip Hop battle rap, a modern day manifestation of poetic invective that developed in the late 1970s among African-American youths in New York City.[2] Adam Bradley (2009) describes this poetic phenomenon as "a verbal cutting contest that prizes wit and wordplay above all else" (177). By comparing Older Scots flyting with Hip Hop battle rap we hope to recover something of the tone and purpose of the medieval tradition, namely, that the poets who engaged in these public invectives were actually amicable rivals competing for increased court status and wealth.[3]

Foley (2002:61-62) observes that the act of textualizing oral poetry is intrinsically antithetical. The scholar of flyting, who depends solely on written text, must come to terms with the permanently distant and disjointed context of the flyting texts (45-50, 63-64). In order to

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[1] Bawcutt 1983:5, 1992:136; Bradley 2009:176; Gray 1984:278-86; Hesk 2006, 2007; Rosen and Marks 1999 all discuss invective traditions and their widespread presence in many cultures.

[2] See Dimitriadis 1996 for a discussion of the early culture of Hip Hop, particularly the way in which performance can be used to trace the development of Hip Hop culture. Throughout this essay, we have capitalized "Hip Hop" to reflect the notion of it as a cultural movement, whereas rap is just one element of this culture, which also includes dance and art.

[3] The label "medieval" here is relatively fluid: in each European vernacular the medieval period covers slightly different dates. As one moves from Southern to Northern Europe the beginning of the early modern era begins increasingly late. In Scots literature, whose earliest recorded text dates from around 1375, the medieval period lasts until the latter half of the sixteenth century and the linguistic term "Middle Scots" runs right up to 1600 (Aitken, McDiarmid, and Johnson 1977). Discussions of the specifically *medieval* practice of flyting, medieval Scottish literature, and William Dunbar as a medieval writer can be found in Gray 1984; Lyall 1983, 1989; and Bawcutt 1983, 1992; among others.

recover some of this context, we will demonstrate the thematic and stylistic parallels shared by flyting and battle rap and use this relationship to explore further the lost flyting performances. By examining live recordings and interviews we have found that the emcees discussed here have competed in these battles for reasons at times surprising: all express respect for their opponents and attest to the fact that their battles were meant to determine linguistic and artistic supremacy. We argue that flyting shares this essentially constructive purpose with battle rap.

In a recent historical study Todd (2002) sets kirk session records of public flyting in relation to the wider context of Protestant culture in Early Modern Scotland. Flyting seems to have transcended gender and social bounds: cases are recorded from all levels of society, between those of different social ranks, and between the sexes (232-36). Todd makes the plausible assertion that flyting was not a subversive practice—rather it served as a formalized mode of initiating public involvement in the resolution of conflict (235-37). Much like the flytings composed by the Scottish makars, public flytings at the local level were highly formulaic, and insults tended to be thrown in pairs or triads, to use alliteration, to depend on expanding themes, and respondents generally mirrored insults thrown by the first participant in slightly altered language (237-41). Kirk session records of this kind only appear after the Reformation of 1560, but the existence of early sixteenth-century poetic flyting suggests that public flyting was a common practice in Scotland as early as the late fifteenth century.

Priscilla Bawcutt's 1983 paper, "The Art of Flyting," was the first modern study exclusively focused on the tradition of flyting.[4] Prior to this, discussion of flyting was largely confined to the notes of critical editions. Flyting has not always been deemed obscure and too rude for print: the tradition remained popular until the eighteenth century. But Lord Hailes voiced deep contempt for this kind of poetry in his *Ancient Scottish Poems* (1770) and this seems to have set the tone thereafter, with flyting poems most often either ignored or incurring further criticism (274).[5] Although early twentieth-century poets such as W. H. Auden and T. S. Eliot recognized the beauty of flyting (Bawcutt 1992:221-22), their interest was purely aesthetic admiration; and in 1966 Tom Scott observed that flyting produced "the most repellent poem known to me in any language" (175).

Rap has fared better than flyting, although it has only recently become the subject of literary criticism. Like flyting, its "repellent" language seems to have discourage scholarship and Shusterman observes that many critics have dismissed rap lyrics as "crude and simple-minded . . . the rhymes raucous, repetitive, and frequently raunchy" (1991:613). Pate's preface to *In the Heart of the Beat* (2010) calls attention to the defensive stance commonly adopted by Bradley (2009) and Shusterman (1992), among other scholars of Hip Hop poetics: "when the general public turns to discuss rap, it is almost never about the surprising skill and power of these poets. It is usually about a profane idea or action that is described in one of these poems" (Pate

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[4] See also Bawcutt 1992:221-22 and Gray 1984. Critics often use the term "flyting" in reference to other medieval and early Renaissance English invective forms, with varying degrees of accuracy. Cochran reasonably employs the term flyting to describe insult contests in the Mystery Plays, "these comic exchanges are the dramatic equivalents to flytings . . . which ultimately derive from the insult contests of ritual and festivity" (1979:186), but Eric Nebeker inaccurately applies it as a label for "for public, text-based discourse" (2011:5) that ranges from "appropriate public speech to almost childish insult and mockery" (1).

[5] See also MacKay 1893:cxiv.

2010:xvii). Scholars have recently begun to expand beyond the study of Hip Hop history, development, and socio-political contexts to examine the poetics of this tradition in their own right.[6] Despite the expanding interest in rap poetics, the phenomena of rap battles and cyphers (a collaborative freestyle circle that, at times, develops into a battle) are often neglected (Alim 2012:552).

Flytings enjoyed popularity in their age and for centuries thereafter, but as with much of Older Scots literature there is not a large corpus of original texts available to scholars. "The Flyting of Dumbar and Kennedie" is the earliest surviving Scottish poetic flyting, probably composed sometime between 1490 and 1505,[7] and is also the most influential text in the corpus (Bawcutt 1998b:429-431).[8] Later works, such as Sir David Lyndsay's "Answer to the Kingis Flyting," composed in the 1530s, claim to be a flyting between Lyndsay and James V—although if there was a flyting by James V it no longer survives (Hadley Williams 2000:257). Alexander Montgomerie and Patrick Hume of Polwarth kept flyting a prestigious practice in the court of James VI as seen in James' 1584 treatise on Scottish poetics, "Reulis and Cautelis to be Observit and Eschewit in Scottis Poesie" ("Rules and Warnings to be Observed and Avoided in Scottish Poetry"), which repeatedly uses flyting—and particularly the Montgomerie-Polwarth flyting—to demonstrate various poetic techniques.[9] The "Invectuies Capitane Allexander Montgomeree and Pollvart," dating between 1580 and 1583,[10] relies on the tropes established by the Dunbar-Kennedy flyting while creating its own unique style. For their influence, as well as their high degree of technical skill, this study examines "The Flyting of Dumbar and Kennedie" and "Invectuies Captain Allexander Montgomeree and Pollvart."[11]

Kool Moe Dee's battle with Busy Bee Starski in 1981 is the first recorded use of invective in a live performance. This battle, marking the inception of modern battle rapping, is integral to this study's comparison of flyting and battle rap. The 1986 battle between KRS-One of Boogie Down Productions and MC Shan of Juice Crew has been chosen as a result of the high profile of the crews (an artistic collective in Hip Hop culture), wide dissemination of the battle

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[6] Toop 1984 and Rose 1994 are both pioneers in Hip Hop criticism. Banks 2010, Ciccariello Maher 2005, Dimitriadis 1996, Perry 2004, Shusterman 1991, 1992, and ya Salaam 1995 all provide important insights into Hip Hop culture and rap aesthetics.

[7] Bawcutt 1998b:429 notes that the poem has been given various dates by different critics (all within this range), but her main clues for dating the poem are the mention of two poets (Stobo and Sir John the Ross) who both die by 1505 and Kennedy's gibes that Dunbar is still seeking a benefice, which he did not receive until 1510.

[8] This flyting may have drawn upon a lost flyting jointly composed by Quintin and Kennedy. The "Cursing of Sir Iohine the Ros" is also associated with this flyting.

[9] In Chapter I (463) James VI uses flyting to demonstrate rhyming the last syllable of a line, in Chapter III (466) as an example of choosing words and sentences according to the subject matter, and in Chapter VIII (470) during his instruction on verse forms. He specifically refers to Montgomerie's line, "I'se fell the lyk any fluik flat on [th]e fluir" (I.43), to demonstrate choosing appropriate diction and the use of contractions.

[10] Bawcutt 1983:6 says that the poem is generally dated c. 1580 and Parkinson 2000b:126 observes that the crest on the title page of the invective belongs to William Murray of Tullibardine who died in 1583.

[11] Throughout this essay Bawcutt's 1998a edition is relied upon for the Dunbar-Kennedy flyting and Parkinson's 2000a edition is relied upon for the Montgomerie-Polwarth flyting.

recordings, and the technical skill of the emcees.[12] This study does not argue that flyting in some way influenced rap, nor does it argue for direct parallels in social or political context. Rather, we argue that flyting and rap share common thematic and stylistic techniques and that both function as constructive, positive venues for artistic expression and experimentation.

"To red thy rebald rymyng with a rowt:"[13] Forms and Themes

In flyting simple and familiar language is combined with the inventive exploitation of formal rhetorical devices to prove the superiority of one poet over another. Through their attention to specific stylistic and thematic patterns, flyting poets signaled their participation in an established tradition. Flytings use established Scottish stanza forms, particularly the eight-line alliterative stanza, and variations on the alliterative thirteen-line bob-and-wheel form.[14] Montgomerie and Polwarth test the bounds of these traditional stanza forms, and their opponents duly note any perceived blunders.[15] Dunbar and Kennedy use alliterative stanzas astonishingly dexterously—rhyme and alliteration often weave between lines and across stanzas. This careful manipulation and subversion of a familiar form signals the immense skill of the flyters composing these apparently lewd and repellent invectives.

Like flyters, emcees competing in rap battles also work in and against established form and style tropes. This formal tradition is anchored by the use of sixteen-beat verses and isochronous line structure: each line consists of four beats with any number of unstressed syllables in between (Bradley and DuBois 2010:xlvii). Dimitriadis (1996) describes Run-DMC's 1983 single, "It's Like That," as the first successful transition into "the traditional popular song structure, including the use of a chorus . . . and theme . . . and collective delivery—often used as a loose, non-thematic framing devise by early collectives . . . is employed . . . in an organized and thematic manner" (184-85). The battles discussed here date between 1981 and 1986 when this verse structure was still in the early stages of development. These battles, which ultimately influenced the development of the tradition as a whole (*Beef* 2003), are innovative in their development of theme and use of technically difficult verse.

Thematic parallels between these traditions are evident in the nature of the taunts and insults used by the poets. These exchanges use themes of poetic legitimacy and originality,

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[12] Bradley and DuBois's 2010 edition is used for Kool Moe Dee's battle against Busy Bee, though we have applied our own line numbers. The battle between MC Shan and Boogie Down Productions has been transcribed from a compilation of sources including: Bradley and DuBois 2010, MC Shan, *The Bridge*, from *Down by Law (Deluxe Edition)* 2007, Cold Chillin' Records, m4a; MC Shan, *Kill That Noise*, from *Down by Law (Deluxe Edition)* 2007, Cold Chillin' Records, m4a; Boogie Down Productions, *South Bronx*, from *Criminal Minded (Elite Edition)* 2010, Traffic Entertainment, m4a; Boogie Down Productions, *The Bridge is Over*, from *Criminal Minded (Elite Edition)* 2010, Traffic Entertainment, m4a; Rap Genius, http://www.rapgenius.com.

[13] "To strike down your contemptuous rhyming with a shout."

[14] Eight- and thirteen-line alliterative Scottish stanzas have been proven to be technically difficult forms. See Turville-Petre 1974, MacKay 1975, and McClure 2008.

[15] According to Turville-Petre 1974:3, the Montgomerie-Polwarth flyting is the last medieval work to use the thirteen-line alliterative stanza.

plagiarism, death via rhyme, and opposed poetic identities to differentiate the victor from the lesser poet. Ultimately, the poet seeks to publicly humiliate and disgrace his opponent in such a way that he will be declared superior in skill and talent. The thematic parallels listed above are often addressed through the use of strikingly similar stylistic techniques. Establishing these shared rhetorical techniques and tropes will enable us to develop our argument that battle rap is a useful tool for reconstructing flyting performance.

First and foremost, both of these invective forms are concerned with creativity, originality, and poetic legitimacy. Kool Moe Dee's battle with Busy Bee Starski, from 1981, features Busy Bee's older style of crowd calling, repetitive chants, and non-semantic vocable routines, as well as Kool Moe Dee's new style of personalized insults, complex rhyme scheme, and defined thematic progression.[16] In this battle Kool Moe Dee mystified the audience with an aggressive six-minute invective ruthlessly insulting Busy Bee Starski's poetic legitimacy. He dismisses Busy Bee: "Hold on, Busy Bee, I don't mean to be bold / But put that ba-diddy-ba bullshit on hold" (4-5). The staccato alliteration on "b" emphasizes his insult of Busy Bee's non-semantic vocable routine, "ba-diddy-ba," as "bullshit." He goes on to say, "you're not number one, you're not even the best / and you can't win no real emcee contest," (38-39) and, "but in a battle like this you know you'll lose . . . because they hear your name, you're gonna hear boos" (44, 47). By continually highlighting Busy Bee's inability to create complex invectives and dismissing his status as an emcee, Kool Moe Dee emphasizes the importance of composing creative and original verse.

Flyting is also concerned with demonstrating poetic legitimacy and skill through composing innovative verse. Montgomerie and Polwarth return to this theme several times in their flytings. Polwarth pays particular attention to Montgomerie's supposedly drunken attempts to compose verse (III.9-12):

> Thy raggit roundaillis, reifand royt,
> Sum schort, sum lang and out of lyne
> With skabrous collouris, fowsome floyt
> Proceiding from ane pynt of wyne
>
> (Your irregular roundels, thieving fiddler
> Some short, some long, and out of line
> With harsh, unpolished metres, nauseating flute[-player]
> Proceeding from a pint of wine)[17]

In similar style to Kool Moe Dee, Polwarth dismisses Montgomerie's identity as a poet by referring to him as a "fiddler" ("royt") and "flute-player" ("floyt")—both lowly court entertainers. Polwarth continues his critique of Montgomerie's style: "with mankit, manschocht, manglit meitter / Trottand and twmbland top over taill" (["with defective, mutilated, and

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[16] Dimitriadis 1996 uses "Di bi di bi, pop the pop pop you don't dare stop" (184) as an example of a non-semantic vocable routine.

[17] Parkinson's translation of lines 9 and 11 2000b:143. All other translations are our own.

mangled meter, trotting and tumbling top over tail"] IV.19-20). In the first line he ingeniously parodies Montgomerie's alliterative heavy-handedness while disparaging his poetry and in the second line jeers at the way in which Montgomerie's words tumble over each other ineffectively. This attention to style—although exaggeratedly condemning of Montgomerie—emphasizes the technical skill required in flyting.

  These poets often accuse each other of plagiarism in order to establish their own poetic legitimacy. Kool Moe Dee accuses Busy Bee of plagiarism twice (9-23):

> You even bit your name from the Lovebug
>
> And now to bite a nigga's name is some low-down shit
>
> If you was money man, you'd be counterfeit
>
> . . . .
>
> He [Busy Bee] begged for the rhyme, asked for it twice
>
> He said, "Spoonie Gee, I'll buy it at any price"
>
> Well, Spoonie finally sold it, oh, what a relief
>
> Busy Bee stole it like a fuckin thief

The practice of selling rhymes is a relatively frequent occurrence in rap, but emcees that steal rhymes are commonly referred to as "biters."[18] Kool Moe Dee unequivocally rejects Busy Bee's poetic legitimacy because Busy Bee has supposedly attempted to buy rhymes (albeit unsuccessfully) and has subsequently resorted to stealing. According to Kool Moe Dee, he has even stolen—"bit" (9)—his name from Lovebug Starski, another rapper from the period. By sketching Busy Bee's unsavory character, Kool Moe Dee establishes himself as the opposite through his distanced (and disgusted) attitude towards these methods. The Montgomerie-Polwarth flytings also refer to plagiarism, specifically Polwarth's use of Chaucer and Lyndsay. Montgomerie asserts: "Thy scrowis obscuir ar borrowit fra sum buik. / Fra lyndsay þow tuik, þow art chawceris cuik" (["Your obscure scrawlings are borrowed from some book. You took from *Lyndsay*, you are *Chaucer*'s cook"] I.44-45). These lines are woven together using internal and end rhyme with "buik"/"tuik"/"cuik"—each rhyme pointedly emphasizing an element of the insult.

  Images of death are pervasive in both invective forms. These images primarily appear in two forms: the first, in flyting, as a depiction of the physical appearance of an opponent, and the second, found in both forms, in relation to killing the opponent for the crime of terrible poetry and/or as a result of the devastatingly clever rhymes of the poet delivering the invective. Dunbar is particularly fond of describing Kennedy's gruesome appearance (161-65):

> Thow Lazarus, thow laithly lene tramort,
>
> To all the warld thow may example be,
>
> To luk vpoun thy gryslie peteous port;
>
> For hiddowis, haw and holkit thyne ee,
>
> Thy cheikbane bair and blaiknit is thy ble.

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[18] See Bradley and DuBois' discussion of "biting" and "ghostwriting" 2010:41, xlii.

(You leper, you loathly emaciated carcass,
You may be an example to the world,
To look upon your grisly piteous countenance;
For your eyes are hideous, decayed and a wan, green-blue
Your jawbones are bare and your complexion is pallid)

This gruesome imagery serves two purposes: the first is to humiliate Kennedy by likening him to a decayed and reanimated corpse, and the second is to showcase Dunbar's impressive ability to conjure such a realistic and haunting image through his poetry.[19]

While Dunbar seeks to humiliate Kennedy through his horrifying portrait, Kennedy uses imagery of death in the context of Dunbar's execution for his traitorous offenses, one of which being terrible poetic skill. Kennedy begins by commanding Dunbar to "hald Kenydy the king" (326) and then uses this kingly status to convict Dunbar of (poetic) heresy (329-36):

Pas to my commissare and be confest,
Cour before him on kneis and cum in will,
And syne ger Stobo for thy lyf protest.
Renounce thy rymis, bath ban and birn thy bill,
Heve to the heuyn thy handis, ande hald the still.
Do thou not thus, bogane, thou salbe brynt,
With pik, fire, ter, gun puldre and lynt,
On Arthuris Sete or on ane hyar hyll.

(Go to my deputy and be confessed,
Come willingly and cower before him on your knees,
And then go to Stobo to protest for your life.
Renounce your rhymes, both ban and burn your bill,
If you don't do this, boil, you will be burned,
With pike, fire, tar, gun powder and flint,
On Arthur's Seat or on a higher hill)

This call to "ban and birn thy bill" was the standard "public recantation for heretics" (Bawcutt 1998b:441), and if Dunbar refuses to do this Kennedy claims that he will be burned as a heretic, with every possible accelerant thrown in for good measure (the fire, tar, gun powder, and flint described in line 335). His hyperbolic imagery—naming himself king, demanding homage, declaring Dunbar a heretic, and describing his subsequent execution—builds the apparent seriousness of the invective and heightens the status achieved by the winner (whoever wins will be held the king of flyting).

Emcees employ similarly hyperbolic images of death via rhyme. MC Shan released "Kill That Noise" as a second response during his feud with KRS-One. Much like Kennedy's command to Dunbar, MC Shan admonishes KRS-One (19-22):

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[19] Gray 1984:37 also discusses Dunbar's corpse imagery.

> We're respected by all, treated just like kings
> How could you have the nerve to say such things?
> If you knew at the time what you were saying
> You wouldn't be on your knees praying

This image distinctly parallels that described by Kennedy in his flyting: MC Shan imagines himself as a king receiving the prostrate, apologetic KRS-One. Following this MC Shan graphically describes KRS-One's death (45-48):

> I started with a smash, I'ma leave with a bang
> And to put it to you bluntly—emcees can't hang
> Your boys and your family will be grieving your death
> Weeping while they're sweeping up the pieces I left

The second couplet describes the scene of destruction left by MC Shan's devastating rhymes. Line 48 uses internal rhyme ("weeping"/"sweeping"), while at the same time playing on the assonance between "weeping"/"sweeping"/"pieces," which all land on line stresses. The end rhyme is somewhat of a slant rhyme, though in pronunciation there is nearly a true rhyme between "death"/"left." The colloquial contraction "I'ma" (45) performs important structural work in MC Shan's lyric line. The shortening of the multi-word (and multi-syllabic) sentiment, "I am going to," maintains the four stress line while indicating an informal and personal tone.

MC Shan, "Kill That Noise," from *Down by Law (Deluxe Edition)* 2007, Cold Chillin' Records, mp3. We direct your attention especially to 1:11-3:13. http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/29i/flynn_mitchell#myGallery-picture(1)

James VI notes the importance of using colloquial contractions in flyting, declaring that words ought to be "cuttit short" (James VI 1997 [1584]:466)—in modern terms, contracted. In his flyting against Polwarth, Montgomerie threatens: "I'se fell the lyk any fluik flat on [th]e fluir" (I.43: I shall fell you like a flounder on the floor). "I'se" is a contraction for "I shall" (Parkinson 2000b:129), and although Montgomerie does not have the same rhythmic constraints as are observed in rap battles, the shortening achieves the same informal sense. James VI describes this attention to tone, suggesting that one ought to write, "'I sall never cair,' gif your subject were of love or tragedies because in thame your words man be drawing lang," while in genres such as flyting this phrase should be cut short: "'Iis neir care' . . . quhilkis in flyting man be short" (1997 [1584]:466). Montgomerie's contraction appears in a line dominated by the alliteration of "f," so turning "I shall" into one word minimizes the impact of the "s"-/"sh"-sound, allowing the eye (and the ear) to skim over this consonant. The use of colloquial contractions in flytings and battle raps are integral to the poetic structure and highlight the informal language of the two genres of invective.

The reference to named deputies is another prevalent motif. In flyting this deputy is referred to as a "commissar" (Dunbar-Kennedy 34, 44, 131, 329). According to the *Dictionary of the Scots Language* (*DSL*) a *commissar* is a sheriff who has taken over judiciary duties in the absence of the judge. As the *DSL* definition suggests, Dunbar and Kennedy's *commissares* (Sir

John the Ross and Quintin, respectively) are often tasked with receiving homage from recalcitrant opponents on behalf of the flyter. Kennedy commands Dunbar: "Se sone thow mak my commissar amendis / And lat him lay sax leichis on thy lendis" (["So soon you will make amends with my deputy and let him lay six leeches on your loins"] 44-45). In most cases the *commissar* is invoked in his capacity to receive homage on behalf of the flyter, though in one case Dunbar informs Kennedy that, "thy commissar, Quintyne, biddis the cum kis his ers" (["Your deputy, Quintin, bids you to come kiss his ass"] 131). The reference to and use of a *commissar* is important for the development of poetic identity in flyting. The presence of a *commissar* strengthens the poet's high status in the court by suggesting that he has enough renown to acquire a retinue of followers and further secures this court position by distancing the poet from the class of lone, wandering bards (Dunbar calls Kennedy a "baird" eight times in his flyting).[20]

MC Shan, KRS-One, and Kool Moe Dee repeatedly laud their own crews, insult opposing crews, and name specific deputies. Scott La Rock performs much the same task as the flyting commissar by stepping in to perform a directive given by KRS-One, the "leader" of the Boogie Down Productions crew. In KRS-One's first invective, "South Bronx," he claims that Scott La Rock will have to show everyone that MC Shan and Juice Crew are "wack" (42) if they don't confess their ineptitude (41-46). In his second invective, "The Bridge is Over," he insults both MC Shan and his commissar, Marley Marl: "Because Shan and Marley Marl dem a-rhymin' like they gay / Picking up the mic, man, dem don't know what to say" (5-6). KRS-One demeans MC Shan and Marley Marl's performance as "gay" (5)—insulting both their ability to compose technically challenging rap and their masculinity in general. This parallels Dunbar's emasculating depiction of Quintin bidding Kennedy to "kis his ers" (131). Again, the poet seeks to strengthen his public persona through depicting himself as the leader of a devoted retinue, and, as KRS-One's insult demonstrates, the poet-deputy-retinue relationship is often rudely denigrated.

These poets often use cultural rivalries as a pretense for composing their invectives. The Dunbar-Kennedy flyting particularly provokes Lowland-Highland animosities through their continual references to the negative stereotypes of each region. Dunbar and Kennedy use the languages of the two regions, "Inglis" (["English"] 111) and "Erschry" (["Gaelic"] 107)[21] respectively, as indicators of courtliness and education (or the lack thereof). Kennedy actually hails from Carrick, found in present-day Ayrshire in the Southwest of Scotland, but at the time this was a rural and primarily Gaelic speaking region, which was enough to provoke Dunbar's disdain. He insults Kennedy's accent: "Thy trechour tung hes tane ane Heland strynd / Ane Lawland ers wald mak a bettir noyis" (["Your traitorous tongue has a taint of the Highland kind, a Lowland ass would make a better noise"] 55-6), and later, "I tak on me, ane pair of Lowthiane hippis / Sall fairer Inglis mak and mair parfyte / Than thow can blabbar with thy Carrik lippis" (["I undertake that a pair of Lothian hips shall make fairer and more perfect English than

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[20] Bawcutt 1998b:428 discusses the implications of the bard/baird insult further.

[21] According to the *DSL*, "Erisch" provides an "an alternate spelling, meaning 'the Irish or Scottish Gaelic Language.'"

you can blabber with your Carrick lips"] 110-112).[22] Kennedy strikes back against these insults (345-48):

> Thou lufis nane Irische, elf, I vnderstand,
> Bot it suld be all trew Scottis mennis lede.
> It was the gud langage of this land,
> And Scota it causit to multiply and sprede
>
> (You do not love Gaelic, elf, I understand,
> But it should be the language of all true Scottish men.
> It was the good language of this land,
> And it caused Scotland to multiply and spread)

He depicts Gaelic as the epitome of Scottish culture—a source of great pride for all *true* Scots. Dunbar's preference for the English language is used as evidence of greater English sympathies: "In Ingland, oule, suld be thyne habitacione. / Homage to Edward Langschankis maid thy kyn" (["England should be your home, owl. Your kin made homage to Edward Longshanks"[23]] 409-410). This battle between languages and national allegiances is crucial to crafting the poetic identities of both flyters. Each poet aims to win over the audience of the flyting by creating personas that perfectly balance courtier, nationalist, and scholar.

The rap battle between KRS-One and MC Shan specifically debates where Hip Hop culture originated: the South Bronx (Boogie Down Production's neighborhood) or Queensbridge (Juice Crew's neighborhood). The first release by MC Shan, "The Bridge," spends 43 of 72 total lines describing early Queensbridge (a housing project in Queens, New York) Hip Hop culture. This provoked KRS-One into composing his response, "South Bronx," where he aggressively contests the claims made in "The Bridge." KRS-One raps in the opening stanza: "So you think that Hip Hop had its start out in Queensbridge? / If you pop that junk up in the Bronx you might not live" (7-8). The next stanza goes on to detail the early development of Hip Hop culture and its epicenter, the South Bronx, and only says of Queensbridge, "as odd as it looked, as wild as it seemed / I didn't hear a peep from a place called Queens" (35-6). Much like flyting, the two crews use their cultural rivalries as a pretense for their battle.

Boogie Down Productions, "South Bronx," from *Criminal Minded (Elite Edition)* 2010, Traffic Entertainment, mp3. We direct your attention especially to 1:14-2:56. http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/29i/flynn_mitchell#myGallery-picture(2)

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[22] The Lothian area of Scotland is in the Lowlands, see Bawcutt 1992:6 for further discussion of Dunbar's personal history.

[23] Edward I of England, known as Edward Longshanks and the Hammer of the Scots.

"I'm a crowd motivator, emcee annihilator:" Performance and Purpose

In the section above we demonstrated the analogous rhetorical techniques used in flyting and rap battling. The following section seeks to demystify the lost performance and poetic purpose of flyting by examining the actual performance of rap battles and first-hand accounts from the emcees. We find that both forms are essentially positive in their motivations: each function as a venue for experimentation with mainstream styles for the purpose of gaining status in their respective communities and increasing their wealth. Furthermore, we argue that the rivals do not share hostile feelings towards one another; instead it is often the case that the competitors are friends, or at the least, amicable acquaintances.

The nature of live Hip Hop performance is especially useful for reconstructing lost flyting performance. Alim (2012) describes this live atmosphere with a concentration on interviews with emcees.[24] He asserts that the emcee views the cypher as a "linguistic training field . . . Several skillz are developed in the cipha—Rap delivery, reacting under pressure, verbal battling, or 'jousting from the mouth.' The cipha is like Hip Hop's classroom" (553). The pedagogical nature of this Hip Hop classroom is especially highlighted in the texts of the battles. KRS-One refers to himself as a "teacher" (11) in "South Bronx" and develops this image as a frame for explaining the origins of Hip Hop. MC Shan's response, "Kill That Noise," uses this motif as well (39-42, 67-68):

> School's in session, I'm about to teach
> Versatile with a style that you just can't reach
> Lesson number one: first strike aim
> You shouldn't do things to degrade my name
> . . .
> Shoulda stayed in school, learned comprehension
> Trying to state facts that I did not mention

MC Shan styles himself as a teacher giving instruction and juxtaposes this with a stinging insult of KRS-One's lack of education. Two feminine rhymes also occur here: "versatile"/"a style" (40) and "comprehension"/"mention" (67-68). MC Shan solidifies his pedantic image by employing this difficult technique while instructing KRS-One.

The Montgomerie-Polwarth flyting employs this teacher-student motif with particular relish: Montgomerie declares in his first invective, "to teach þe to think with they maister mel" (["To teach you to think twice about meddling with your master"] I. 50), and as already quoted above, "Thy scrowis obscuir ar borrowit fra sum buik. / Fra lyndsay þow tuik, þow art chawceris cuik" (I.44-45). Polwarth replies to the latter insult, "also I may be Chawceris man and ȝet thy maister not the les" (["Also, I am no less your master though I am Chaucer's man"] IV. 41-42). Polwarth nearly turns the original insult into a compliment by claiming that he is still superior to Montgomerie despite admiring Chaucer. The general tone of the invectives is influenced by this recurring motif. Despite the crude and degrading nature of the insults,

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[24] See also Lee 2009:307-10.

manuscripts describe flytings as "jocound and mirrie" (["joyous and merry"] Bawcutt 1992:222). The communal and academic atmosphere of these performances reflects the merry mood of flyting.

Live battle raps culminate in the audience meting out judgment for and against the two emcees. In a battle emcees are judged on clarity and lyrical complexity, flow and delivery, and cleverness and humor.[25] Based on these criteria the audience declares a winner through a communal outburst of support for the superior emcee (Lee 2009:313). Flyting performances may have also been judged in a similar fashion. In a manuscript containing the flyting of Dunbar and Kennedy, there is an annotation preceding Dunbar's second invective that reads: "Iuge in the nixt quha gat the war" ("judge in the next who gets the worst") and a colophon post-flyting asking the audience to "Iuge ȝe now heir quha gat the war" ("judge now who got the worst here"),[26] in other words, asking the audience to judge who got the worst of the flyting. In order to judge the flyting, there must have been some means of assessing the relative qualities of each participant's delivery. By using modern battle rap as a guide, it seems quite likely that the sixteenth-century performance would have culminated in a similar outcry of derision and/or support.

The discussion above highlights some elements important to live rap battles, which seem to reflect similar patterns in flyting. There are also clues to oral performance in the flytings themselves. The frequent recurrence of insults of language, dialect, and voice in the Dunbar-Kennedy flyting clearly highlights the aurality of their compositions. Kennedy creates a vision of his eloquent poetry versus Dunbar's horrendous verse (337-44):

> I perambalit of Pernaso the montayn
> Enspirit wyth Mercury fra his goldyn spere,
> And dulcely drank of eloquence the fontayne,
> Quhen it was purifit wyth frost and flowit clere;
> And thou come, fule, in Marche or Februere,
> Thare till a pule and drank the padok rod,
> That geris the ryme in to thy termes glod,
> And blaberis that noyis mennis eris to here
>
> (I walked Mount Parnassus
> Inspired by Mercury through his golden spear,
> And sweetly drank of eloquence the fountain,
> When it was purified with frost and flowed clear;
> And you came, fool, in March or February,
> To a pool there and drank the frogspawn,

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[25] This list has been compiled from Lee 2009:313 and Pihel 1996:253.

[26] Bawcutt refers to the nature of the poetry as a "ritualized collaborative game" as suggested by the heading, "jocound and mirrie," but also acknowledges the competitive atmosphere as seen in the colophon reading, "quha gat the war" 1998b:428.

> That now makes you rhyme in slimy [?] words,[27]
> And blabber in a way that annoys men's ears to hear)

Kennedy's description of his own verse is punctuated by graceful, melodic rhymes and multi-syllabic words—"peramblit," "enspirit," "dulcely," "purifit." In contrast, the lines depicting Dunbar's slimy and plodding verse mimic the very sounds they describe: "fule," "pule," "padok rod," "termes glod," and "blaberis." These words are short and rough, and when spoken aloud they starkly contrast the language Kennedy uses when referring to himself. The diction and meter of Kennedy's verse vividly mimics the sounds being described and punctuates the necessity of performing the flyting aloud.

Polwarth makes direct reference to performance in his battle with Montgomerie. Jack and Rozendaal (1997:472, n.25) state that the flyting was performed for the king, possibly for the position of poet laureate, but they do not detail any substantiating evidence. Within the actual flytings there are two moments that indicate the clear possibility of a performance. The first refers to Montgomerie's physical reaction to Polwarth's performance: "As þe last nicht did weill appeir / Quhill þow stuid fidging at the fyre / My flytting forcit þe so to flyre" (["As you last night did well appear, while you stood fidgeting by the fire, my flyting forced you to flee"] IV. 61-4). Polwarth's insistence that Montgomerie had to flee an earlier flyting constitutes much of the evidence that these invectives were performed for an audience, perhaps including King James VI as a spectator. In another comment Polwarth refers to the possible memorization of the flytings: "I neuir haid of that making ȝe mene, / Ane vers in wreit, in print or ȝit perquere" (["I never knew what you intended to make, a verse written, printed or memorized"] VIII. 21-2). The essential word here is "perquere," defined in the *DSL* as "by heart; (to learn, teach, know, etc.) thoroughly, perfectly." Polwarth's reference to the flytings being made "perquere" allows for the crucial possibility that they were memorized.

James VI's "Reulis and Cautelis" further supports the possibility of memorized flytings. He instructs, "as in flyting and invectives, your wordis to by cuttit short and hurland over heuch" (James VI 1997 [1584]:466); the flyting should sound as if it has been composed in spontaneity, each word increasingly jumping over the next, as if they have gone hurling over a cliff—"hurland over heuch" (1997 [1584]:472). Achieving this spontaneous affect in performance would be difficult as a result of the complicated alliteration and rhyme found in the flytings, but a memorized performance would embody the fullest realization of James VI's directive.

The 2003 documentary *Beef* details the development of rap battling in American Hip Hop culture from the earliest battles through the early-2000s. According to *Beef* the culture of rap battle from the early 1980s until the early 1990s was nearly exclusively interested in proving lyrical supremacy.[28] In this documentary Kool Moe Dee, Busy Bee Starski, KRS-One, and MC

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[27] The *DSL* defines "glod" as "*a.* (?)" and only records its use in Kennedy's flyting. The imagery of Dunbar drinking the pond water slimy with tadpoles has influenced our translation of this term as "viscous and slimy glob." Also refer to Bawcutt 1998b:441 for further discussion of Kennedy's imagery here.

[28] The 1990s saw rap battles turn violent with the rise of "Gangsta Rap" and West Coast versus East Coast animosity promoted in part through extensive media coverage (*Beef* 2003).

Shan all observe that their battles were not meant to be disrespectful—rather they were lyrical contests to establish the best emcee. Kool Moe Dee describes Busy Bee as a comedian and skilled rapper, and claims that the battle only started when a heckler in the crowd challenged him to battle Busy Bee. Busy Bee states that, "we were friends before that and never stopped being friends." MC Shan and KRS-One also claim mutual respect for one another. In two interviews the emcees appear to share a distinctly friendly rivalry. MC Shan refers to KRS-One as a "gladiator" and says that he would like to collaborate on a record with KRS-One (http://youtu.be/umhiog6Z-KE). KRS-One returns these sentiments and engages in friendly banter—laughingly rapping back lines of MC Shan's "Kill that Noise." This lively repartee is indicative of the positivity of early rap battles. These interviews show that battling emcees often held each other in high esteem and that the battle served as a venue for proving superior lyrical skill, not as a means for expressing real hostilities.

Dunbar and Kennedy deliver scalding and extremely defamatory insults, but it is evident that they too held each other in high esteem. In Dunbar's poem, "I that in heill wes and gladnes" also known as *Lament for the Makars* (Bawcutt 1998a), Dunbar mourns Kennedy's imminent death: "Gud maister Walter Kennedy / In poynt of dede lyis veraly. / Gret reuth it wer that so suld be" (["Good master Walter Kennedy truly lays at the point of death. It is tragic that this is so"] 89-91). Dunbar's poignant lament reveals his deep respect for the other poet and parallels the sense of camaraderie shared by the emcees.

By establishing that these flyters and emcees are actually friendly rivals among themselves, we are led to wonder what poets stand to gain from engaging in this invective competition. According to Pihel (1996), the winner of a battle rap gains respect in his community in the form of "props" (268). In order to earn this respect the emcee must prove his or her ability not only through rhetorical skills, but through his or her engagement with the cultural register. If the poet is unable to connect with the audience, his or her technical ability will not resonate. Cultural fluency in oral performance is the basis for Bauman's 1977 study (Foley 2002:85-94). Bauman's six keys to performance create a schematized order for identifying cultural codes and provide a framework for describing the "oral-poetic language" of any given oral performance (2002:85). Pihel's (1996) discussion of the freestyle, a rap composed spontaneously and under intense rhythmic constraints, succinctly reflects the nature of Hip Hop's oral-poetic language: "in a freestyle there is no time to fake or front. In order to keep the rap flowing, you must be practiced in freestyle skills and be able to capture spontaneously the spirit of the community at the moment of the performance" (266-67). The emcee's reward for capturing the spirit of the audience, or "props," is a means of acknowledging his or her ability to engage with Hip Hop's oral-poetic language.

The highly stylized language and structure of flyting also functions as an oral-poetic language. In many cases words found in flytings are extremely rare. Dunbar flytes, "Forflittin, countbittin, beschittin, barkit hyd" (239). Two words in this line—"forflittin" and "countbittin"—have little to no contextual resonance for modern readers. "Forflittin" (239) is defined by the *DSL* as "severely scolded," and is now only found in two texts, one of which is Dunbar's flyting. "Countbittin" meaning "poxed" (literally "cunt-bitten") is only recorded in Dunbar's flyting. The use of unusual words recalls Foley's (2002:86) description of Slavic *guslari* and their language code: "up-to-date urbanites describe [the language of the *guslar*] as

archaic and filled with curious words and forms from other regions, not to mention highly stylized." As suggested by the example of the *guslari*, the actual language of flyting may have even seemed strange to the contemporary audience, but it would have resonated as "a key, a way into the experience" (86). Foley goes on to observe, "it's well to remember that any language, no matter how powerful or subtle it may seem, requires fluent hearers as well as fluent speakers" (86). The ability of the flyter to navigate the oral-poetic language of flyting would have been a key factor determining the level of credibility and acclaim accorded to the poet by his or her audience.

Rap battles—and potentially flyting performance—also carry the potential for monetary gain. As suggested above, Montgomerie and Polwarth may have been competing for the position of poet laureate (Jack and Rozendaal 1997:472). This very real reward adds a deeper dimension to the competitive nature of performance. In regards to the Hip Hop tradition, the Busy Bee Starski and Kool Moe Dee battle took place at Harlem World, a large competition awarding trophies and cash rewards to the winners. KRS-One's battle became the anthem of the South Bronx and launched his career (*Beef* 2003). The purpose of flyting potentially reflects this sort of achievement of social notoriety and financial gain. Real rewards such as increased status at court (poet laureate position), and/or the acquisition of a benefactor (a subject Dunbar returns to repeatedly in his greater body of work) may have resulted from the flytings.[29]

Despite the cultural and historical distance between the genres, flyting and battle rap share thematic and stylistic elements: both play on preexisting cultural rivalries, call upon deputies, accuse an opponent of plagiarism, critique an opponent's poetic style, and gratuitously depict the death of an opponent. These similarities in form provide scholars of Older Scots literature with an opportunity to discover the motivations prompting some of the most eminent poets of the period to work within the flyting tradition. Flytings would have functioned as court entertainment, while simultaneously providing artists an opportunity to define their individuality and reputation as poets. This open venue may have prompted experimentation with form, as observed in the Montgomerie-Polwarth flytings, and created a less restrictive poetic outlet for poets such as Dunbar and Kennedy. Flytings also seem to become a more alluring mode with the additional possibility of financial rewards and fame in the form of benefices and higher positions in the court. Perhaps most importantly, this comparison may help gauge the tone of the Older Scots texts: the battling emcees' surprisingly friendly relationships suggest the possibility of a similar phenomenon in flyting.

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[29] Bawcutt 1998b:429 points out that Dunbar did not receive his benefice from the crown until 1510 and the flyting is estimated to have been composed sometime between 1490 and 1505—opening the question as to whether this flyting was one of Dunbar's attempts to win a benefactor.

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Seneca Storytelling: Effect of the Kinzua Dam on Interpretations of Supernatural Stories

Melissa Borgia

Supernatural tales among the Seneca and other Iroquois, or *Hodinöhŝyönih*,[1] nations have been a critical part of their culture before recorded history and are still enjoyed today. While the specific content and way of telling the stories may have changed over time, the popularity of supernatural themes remains, and many of the stories' characters still feature prominently in both text and storytelling in the community**.** The building of the Kinzua Dam on the Seneca Allegany Territory in the late 1960s and the subsequent upheaval in the community have deepened the tradition of stories about supernatural incidents. The upheaval has also served as a means through which old stories have gained strength and aided community members removed by the dam's construction in overcoming those tragic events.

A possible vehicle promoting interest in supernatural themes and Seneca storytelling traditions is the desire to bring together tellers and listeners to strengthen the community against outside threats. Numerous threats to the traditional way of life and landbase have plagued the Iroquois—including the Seneca—since pre-Revolutionary times. The Indigenous people of the region have faced centuries of outside pressures and banded together against them: from the 1797 Treaty of Big Tree that ceded Seneca lands and created reservations in New York, to boarding school enforcement, notably the Thomas Indian School in operation from 1855 until 1956, to New York Thruway incursions during the mid-twentieth century, to the building of dams including the Kinzua Dam, which was ostensibly built by the United States Army Corps of Engineers in 1963 for energy and to control flooding in Pittsburgh, hundreds of miles downstream on the Allegheny River. The location of the dam was especially devastating to the Seneca people since it flooded the gravesite of Cornplanter, warrior and diplomat during the Revolutionary War era, and the vision-site of spiritual leader, Handsome Lake. The dam's construction flooded one-third of the Allegany Territory, displaced hundreds of Seneca people, and caused the relocation of cemeteries and the longhouse, a place of worship. As people who enjoy an ancient oral history, the Seneca enjoin their community members to lift their spirits

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[1] The *Hodinöhŝyönih*, also spelled in alternate ways such as "Haudenosaunee," are a confederacy of related Nations that includes the Seneca, Tuscarora, Cayuga Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk, in what is now New York State and parts of Wisconsin, Ontario, and Quebec. Groups often were re-named by invading peoples; for instance, the Hodinöhŝyönih were named "Iroquois" by the French and are known as "Six Nations" in Canada. *Onödowa'ga* is the word that the Senecas use for themselves; it means "people of the hills." Senecas have three reservations or Territories: Allegany and Cattaraugus that are part of the Seneca Nation of Indians, and Tonawanda, of the Tonawanda band of Senecas.

during trying times and to maintain legends typifying themes such as winning battles, glorifying heroic figures, and overcoming supernatural beings. The resurgence in supernatural stories mirrors the resurgence of the community itself while the pressures have changed over time.

When asked about supernatural stories in the Kinzua Dam take area, many locals will share their own accounts. Allegany resident Tyler C. Heron shared his perspective of the storytelling traditions at Allegany, the personal twists on these old stories, and the effect of the dam on the telling of contemporary versions. His generation is a bridge between the elders featured in Alberta Austin's *That's What It Was Like* (1986), a collection of interviews with elders who were born in the early twentieth century and with today's youth. Heron explains the contemporary setting for storytelling, old and new purposes for stories, and the effect of English today. Throughout his account are references to the importance of family and community, as well as losses incurred by the Kinzua Dam.

Despite these changes to communities within the region affected by the dam, modern stories are still redolent of some themes of previous generations, while new themes have also emerged. The characterization and array of supernatural beings, for instance, has remained relatively consistent, but the context now includes modern settings that reflect the changes seen by the dam's construction. Through all these modern influences, and especially during Heron's lifetime, even the language the tellers use to tell the stories has shifted from the Native tongue to English; in 1892—even after assimilation measures affected the language spoken—an estimated 2,000 Senecas spoke no English (*Six Nations* 1995), while there are arguably fewer than 50 native speakers today (Chafe 2007). Yet as the language has shifted, the content and significance have remained relatively stable.

As it is with storytelling variations across cultures, the Native storytellers may add a personal twist that changes each time a new person tells an old story. But specifically for Native peoples, there is an ancestral or traditional theme that remains within nations. Because of personal influence, the narrator may alter details, characters, or other story elements, often relating the past to the present (Ballenger 1997:791-93). Often, stories center around specific events or occasions connected to specific points in time, but the stories are remembered by storytellers and shared for the benefit of future listeners (791). Each teller brings his or her own experience to the narration, as "memory is seen *through* an already existing story" (792; italics in original). Yet, both the narrator's influence and the collective memories themselves extend outward to others throughout generations. This pattern of narrative and memory is evidenced at Allegany, as seen in Austin's *That's What It Was Like* interviews and Heron's observations of current storytelling patterns in the community.

Scholars hold that Native storytellers of various backgrounds often reflect on the patterns of storytelling that are specific to their own local communities, the ways that stories are passed on through the generations in their localities and in their families, the significance of storytelling to themselves as tale tellers, and their own personal favorite stories that they still tell to others. These stories were passed down through the generations and held different interpretations and recitations; the stories reflect the time when they were told as well as the time of the teller and the teller's audience. They all contribute to a bigger cultural picture, yet each story stands alone (White 2007:5). These methods of maintaining stories hold true for Seneca. Wonderley notes that the Iroquois were and still are avid storytellers (2004:44); their tradition is apparent from

interviews conducted at community meetings, local schools, or by having coffee with an elder. Moreover, their storytelling tradition is archived in local government offices and the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum. During the interviews I conducted with Heron, he often inadvertently recounted similar stories that his late father and former Seneca Nation president during the era of Kinzua construction, George, was known to tell to listeners on different occasions. Many of these stories focused on the same location, such as a certain cemetery or segment of train tracks, or the same legendary spooky character that reappears in many tellers' tales but often in different guises. The Tribal Historic Preservation Office has archived several interviews with local community members, and some of these interviews contain the same such story settings and characters.

Several authors have also recorded Iroquois stories. Joseph Bruchac, a contemporary storyteller of Abenaki descent, compiled many volumes of Native stories including Iroquois favorites. He reflects on the importance of storytelling in his life, acknowledging "the power of the words that a good storyteller has been given, and a reminder of the responsibility involved in being one who carries those words" (1995:10-11). In his foreword to Arthur C. Parker's *Skunny Wundy* (1991), Bruchac expressed both the significance of Parker to Seneca storytelling and the impact of the Anglo invasion and the dominance of the English language. In his estimation, were it not for Parker's work, in part, "the vital heritage of the Seneca people might not have survived that difficult period of the first half of this century, when most native people were keeping a low profile to survive or were even turning away from their traditional cultures" (1991:ix-x).

This importance of the survival of culture is typified in stories about the supernatural that have endured among the Seneca. Parker has also commented extensively on the topics and themes of Seneca stories at the time, noting that "in particular we were blessed with an ample store of tales of vampire skeletons, of witches, and of folk-beasts" (1989:xix). Among his many "Basic Premises of Seneca Folk-Lore" are themes still active in today's storytelling: unseen spirits, conflict of good and evil spirits, magical power, transformation, ghosts, and dreams (3-4). Especially notable among these themes are the instances of *jogëö'*, or "little people," who are common in contemporary Seneca stories as well; witches and mysterious lights are also among perennial favorite themes. Parker commented that the "Will-o'-the-wisp, or *Gahai*, is known as the witch's torch. It is not a spirit of the first order but merely a flying light that directs sorcerers and witches to their victims. Sometimes it guides them to the spots where they may find their charms" (16). There is even a place near the current Seneca Allegany Territory in the Southern Tier of New York State that is known among locals as *Gahaineh*, or "shape-shifter."

Supernatural stories have been ubiquitous among the Seneca as well as their fellow Iroquois neighbors, as traced by several researchers and authors. These stories are included in local cultural materials for school children and are found in the archived interviews in the Historic Preservation office. For example, Hope Emily Allen, a contemporary of Parker's, noted in the late 1940s that the Iroquois "liked spooky things" (Wonderley 2004:183). Wonderley observes that there is something "distinctive" (87) about Iroquois storytelling of supernatural stories, where "there lurked a world of supernatural denizens autochthonous to the deep woods" (134) whose most beloved characters include "Little People, Flying Heads, Stone Giants, Vampire Corpses," (184) shape-shifters, and witches. That this tradition is evident among

Iroquois and their "widely separated" linguistic relatives sharing a "common ancestry" gives testimony that it may in fact be much older, and "may well date to the early 1600s" (105-06).

Bridging Past to Present

Understanding the antiquity of Iroquoian supernatural stories may help to understand their significance to the people who love to tell them. According to both Tyler, and George Heron, and to Austin's interviewees, the haunting by spooky characters, for instance, serves as a way to teach moral lessons to children, and the stories concerning the dam help listeners define a common unity in the face of an outside threat to it. Both listeners and tellers can identify with the ideals that they hold to be important at the time the stories are told. As is seen in the recursive nature of the supernatural characters and contexts of the most popular stories at Allegany, "[t]his set of belief structures characterizes the connectivity of the story and origins to a practice of continuity that bridges the Ancient past to future generations" (White 2007:35) and helps Seneca community members to "reimagine" themselves (248). The supernatural characters that haunt the Allegany area have been used before 1900 to scare children to stay in bed at night and not wander away from home; these same characters have been used since 1960 to keep people away from the dam area. Such stories "are expressed in language invoking the past and evoking the authority of the dead" (Wonderley, 2004:57). As seen in the examples concerning the haunting by traditional, old spirits of the dam and evacuation of the take area, these supernatural characters can help to make present issues "more meaningful and more palatable" (Wonderley, 2009:xxvii). Supernatural stories also call upon local events considered to be historically verifiable. All of these conditions—the recursive and continued enjoyment of supernatural beliefs and themes, the connection of past, popular characters unified in present versions of the stories, and the resulting present condition in which the community members are reimagining themselves through the sharing of these stories—reflect the tragic removal of the Seneca people from their ancestral home to make way for the building of the Kinzua Dam.

The current storytelling continues this old tradition and wisdom, yet it has changed with the times and the changing events in the community. Bruchac commented, "Even today, the old people continue the oral tradition, though they may now pass on the stories more frequently in English than in Seneca . . . The stories remain and are strong—vital threads that sew together the cloth of their culture" (1995:viii-ix). This transition period of survivors of the events of the early twentieth century has been documented by Seneca researchers such as Alberta Austin.

Austin (1986) compiled a collection of interviews with Iroquois elders that typifies the bridge between past and present stories and traces the use of stories to teach morality lessons and bring members closer together in troubled times. Although the elders spoke of other aspects of life on the reservations—such as education, farming, and family life—many elders reminisced about the storytelling traditions in their families. Most of the interviews took place with locals who lived in or near the territory during the early part of the twentieth century.

Calvin Kettle, born in 1924, commented on the language shift, remarking that the language chosen by the storyteller influences the nature of the story, specifically its force in making the listeners comply with the story's moral lessons. He explained: "My grandmother told

a lot of stories. The older people taught discipline by telling scary stories" (87). He also reflected upon the ways that English impacted Seneca storytelling, commenting (91-92):

> It used to be pleasant when everyone talked the Indian way completely. Now it is mixed with English. The stories told in Indian were more scary and they never ended. The next night it would be continued. If the Longhouse could talk it would have a lot of stories. I have a lot of stories.

Parts of Corbett Sundown's interview trace the use of stories to bond children together and to teach them moral behavior. Sundown was born 1909 and had been a Tonawanda Chief from 1939 until the time that Austin's manuscript was published. He said (205):

> Another favorite pastime was story telling [*sic*]. After the days chores [*sic*] were done, people would come to my house—either by horse and buggy or on foot by lantern light. The stories they told were old, old stories and were never told the same way twice. Every winter, it was the same thing. I think they told scary stories on purpose to keep the young children from wandering around at night.

He also commented on the theme of using frightening details to instruct children about dangers in the community. "One of the things they scared the kids with was the *Ga:nö'sha'*. The old people would say, 'If you go out, the *Ga:nö'sha'* will chase you'" (205).[2]

Virginia Logan was born 1899; her remarks typify the unifying power that the stories held within the community. She reminisced about her Aunt Martha, who told stories to children: "She'd make them sit down and then she'd turn down the lights before she started telling stories. She used to stop now and then, and at this point, the listeners were supposed to say, *Heh*, to show that they were listening. If no one responded, that was because the listeners were sleeping" (112).

Austin's interviews demonstrate the ways in which storytellers have adapted to the changing times, especially the dramatic changes during the turn of the twentieth century such as the boarding schools, landbase dispossession, and culture and language erosion. Despite these threats, the personal stories have remained a strong part of the local community. These stories may have seen a revival after Kinzua was constructed. The particulars may have changed, but the patterns and even some of the characters are still the same.

DuWayne Leslie Bowen of the Allegany Territory published a contemporary collection, *One More Story: Contemporary Seneca Tales of the Supernatural* (1991). His experience echoes that of Parker, Bruchac, Ha-yen-doh-nees, and many other Native storytellers. He explains (1991:xii):

> Growing up on an Indian reservation is an unique experience. Naturally there were differences in my upbringing than in the upbringing of any non-Indian. One of the things we had, [*sic*] was time with the old folks. My children will never know this valuable experience, what it was or what it meant.

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[2] The *Ga:nö'sha'* are headless creatures composed of lower extremities.

Yet, these stories do endure. The common themes that were popular centuries before still resonate with the modern community, though interpreted differently.

Mysterious lights are often the subject of contemporary Seneca tales. In his story "The Lights," Bowen writes (5):

> There are lots of people who have seen these lights at one time or another. You always see them at night. They're little round lights and they are usually yellow or blue and sometimes orange. You see them everywhere; sometimes down by the river; across the river on the tracks; in the woods; around somebody's house or even up in the trees. . . . Whenever the old folks saw these lights they would always say, ". . . look, there goes a witch . . ." or ". . . there's somebody watching you . . ."

"The Lights" is a story of a man who lived by himself; one night he was sleeping and felt somebody was watching him; he saw a light that disappeared. He thought nothing of it until it happened the next night; the following night he tried to stay awake so he could catch it. He saw a blue light that came to his door and disappeared. He tried to stay awake again the next night, but he fell asleep. A sharp pain in his back awoke him, and he saw a blue light flying away. He thinks the light "bit" him because he had said he didn't fear them (7). Bowen explains, "The subject of lights is a stable item in the realm of the supernatural. . . .The lights have been with us since the beginning of time and they will be with us until the end of time" (7). Some locals assert that visions like these became more prominent during and after the building of the Kinzua Dam.

"The Great Swamp" exemplifies some of the supernatural stories that—although they exhibit old themes that Parker had noted such as ghosts of evil spirits, and teaching youth moral behavior—display these themes in new ways (such as the context of power lines and dam construction) that reflect more current, personal events in the Territory. In "The Great Swamp," Bowen relates a story told to him by another storyteller; this story happened when the storyteller was young. He was at a dance, and people told him that he was too young to be out so late and that he should go straight home. On his way home, he saw a very tall figure wearing a high hat near the railroad tracks. He knew the person was not from the area, and he could not see the stranger's face. The figure growled at him, and the boy ran home. He told his parents, who scolded him for being out so late. Bowen writes (18):

> This particular swamp being has been described as being very tall, unafraid, never straying far from water, strong, a flesh eater. . . . During the 1960's [*sic*], the United States Government constructed the Kinzua Dam across the Alleghany [*sic*] River. This forced a great relocation project upon the Seneca people. A major power company was forced to relocate also. This company cut a new powerline [*sic*] through the hills and through this very swamp I have mentioned. During this clearing operation, sightings of a tall man off in the distance became common. The strangeness of the man was the fact that he wore a high hat. This apparition watched the workers constantly while they worked in the swamp area. The workers named this apparition "Abe Lincoln." During the spring of 1970, the last sighting of this apparition was made. It stood on a beaver dam at an outlet of the swamp.

Power lines are another common theme that has arisen since the dam's construction. Bowen's "The Power Line" is a story depicting events that happened when the power line was constructed. This is both Bowen's interpretation and his own story. In his book, which is told in the first person, he tells several short stories, adding his own remarks throughout: "The power line scared some people because they were afraid that the electricity could kill them. . . . Soon the men began to hunt along the line and then paths began to come and go from it" (39). One man used the path frequently. He had a wife and child, but he was an alcoholic who didn't provide for them. One night when he didn't come home, the wife took the child to a friend's home and went out to look for her husband. She found him with another woman. When she confronted him, he hit her and went off with the other woman. For days afterward he did not come home, and she sat and cried. She told people that she was going to the power line; she gave her ring to her daughter and was never seen again. People searched for her but only saw a piece of her coat on a step of an electrical tower. Assuming she killed herself, they looked for a body but could not find one. The husband finally stopped drinking. Bowen explains that a year after this incident the man was hunting with a friend near the power line. They heard a bird in a tree, and the friend climbed the tree to get a closer look at what they heard. He saw the skeleton and a piece of the coat of the missing woman. They went to get others, but when they returned, she was gone; only the cloth remained. A year later, the daughter disappeared. She had told another child that she was going to the power line—someone's voice was calling her. People went to look for her, and they found her skeleton wrapped in her mother's skeleton; the ring was on the mother's finger. "I hardly ever go to the power line anymore. I hear people tell of seeing figures off in the distance when it just begins to get dark" (42).

Similar events related to mysterious occurrences after the dam's construction are recorded elsewhere. The Seneca-Iroquois National Museum Pamphlet, "Along the Ohi:yo/ Jonegano:h: Cold Spring: A Look at Snow Street," details the notes of George S. Snyderman, an anthropologist who talked with people at Allegany after their forced removal (n.d.:12):

> Community members shared with him some details about moving their ancestors' remains to new cemeteries when the land was taken to accommodate the building of the Kinzua Dam. Some recalled that "there [were] mighty weird things happening around the Longhouse. Several Sunday nights there was a light seen floating near and around Wannie's [Francis Abrams] house. A lot of people saw the glow. It jumped around and floated away, and landed on the roof of Corny and Elsie Abrams' house. After that, all the clans got together and put up one big feast for the dead. The light hasn't been seen since."

Allegany is also mentioned in Mason Winfield's *Haunted Places of New York: A Supernatural Guide* (2003) and in another book by Winfield with Algonquin storyteller Michael Bastine (2011). Winfield and Bastine mention specifically that the impact of the dam's construction is attributed to contemporary sightings and resulting stories of "phantom horses . . . , bogies, and even the Great Snake . . . as if the unrest of the Seneca loosed the zoo of their psychic bogies" (2003:67; 2011:201). These works also mention high hat, lights, UFOs, and a story about creepy beings deep in the water who menaced United States Army Corps of Engineers officers as they worked to construct the dam.

Allegany themes such as the little people and the lights, along with personal twists on ancient motifs, still persist to this day in the oral tradition of the local people. When Tyler Heron was young, he heard stories from neighbors, his great-aunt, grandfather, and others, usually after dinner when friends and family gathered around to talk about the day's events. In those days, he recalls (2009), "for kids, they'd tell a story." Heron characterizes tales told in these settings as "family stories" and "little, personal stories." This type of setting for storytelling is changing since families, in his experience, no longer have supper together. He remarks that people still like to visit his father to hear him tell stories. Family stories of his youth replaced the older stories such as those collected in Parker's *Skunny Wundy* that "were other people's personal stories" that were told "by a person of influence." Contemporary stories are as variable as those of previous generations, Heron says, since storytellers "have their own experiences" and "old secrets" that are unique to the teller.

In Heron's youth, stories had a moral lesson whether the tellers and listeners were aware of it or not. Heron states they still serve as "life lessons" to warn people "about what isn't good." Some family stories told today reflect the importance of nature common to stories of centuries ago that were told by tellers who "discovered how Mother Earth helped us." Heron shared a contemporary story about someone in the community who used to dream about the best natural medicines to collect. Heron also related a story about someone who had gone to collect ginseng when the medicine collector felt a chill and suddenly froze. This medicine collector saw "a little demon or something." Heron explains that different people have seen this figure in the community. Yet another tale serves as a warning about the proper way to collect medicine. Heron explains, "the character of this story had neglected the protocols before he went to gather medicine; walking home he saw a white mist approaching, and it passed through him. When he got home his Mother asked him what happened because his hair had turned white." Some of the themes from Parker's day are still familiar to today's storytellers, and some new themes have also emerged. *Oiwatha'*—meaning something to the effect of "things work themselves out"—is a common theme that Heron mentioned frequently in his discussion and explained that many of the traditional and personal stories reflect the theme of *oiwatha'*. Also, there are still many stories told of the little people. Heron recalls:

> My great-uncle Bill was a section foreman for the Erie Railroad, and Aunt Jenny told of an incident a railroad steam locomotive engineer related to Uncle Bill. "The engineer couldn't believe his eyes when he looked out and saw a little person running along with the train at Meetinghouse Run. The train was traveling at least 60 mph."

Much like Parker and the generations before him, Heron had been told that the little people lived among the rocks scattered throughout the foothills of the Alleghenies that surround the Territory.

Heron also discussed the same Abe Lincoln-esque character that Bowen wrote about—*Hohigwe:is:*, or tall hat—explaining that it has been seen by people for generations. Also, *jis:gë:h* are witch-ghost figures that scratch on the walls when people are not behaving, he explained. Their actions may be explained differently today, but they are the same creatures with the same name as in Parker's accounts. Another theme Heron mentioned (also noted above) prevalent even in Parker's day is *Gahai*, or strange lights. *Gahaihneh* is an area near the old Red

House community and has been famous for sightings of unexplained beings. According to Heron, it is one of the places where people have been seeing strange lights. George Heron, Tyler's father, was also known to refer to *Gahaihneh* as "the place of the spooks" when he held storytelling sessions with community members. Stories about the area abound, including several sightings of motorists stranded along the interstate that straddles the edge of *Gahaihneh*. No matter the theme that the "little, personal stories" contain, these stories are still a part of the small community where the tale-tellers live.

The families at Allegany have been living in close-knit enclaves for centuries. Stories have been intertwined within the "context of the reservation." People in the community often mingled at socials, sporting events, and other activities. Kinship has been a strong factor that "at some point, personal stories became community stories," the younger Heron states. "Here, it's a close community, so when something happens, it gets around." This communal atmosphere has helped contribute to the popularity of both old and new stories.

Permeating Heron's accounts of storytelling in his community is an acute sense of loss. "Storytelling is kind of lost," he remarks, yet some families have maintained the traditions. Still, the forced removal that the United States government mandated for the Kinzua Dam has affected Heron and many others in the community, including effects on the quality and quantity of storytelling in the community. Heron reflects, "we left a lot behind after Kinzua;" the flooding of more than a third of the Territory "covered a lot of stuff left behind." Furthermore, cemeteries had to be relocated, and this relocation created enough concern for people that it became central to community stories. Heron shared an example that took place "during the Kinzua Removal. An elder was walking home and it was a little after dark. Along the route he had to pass the burial site of Blacksnake near the old Robinson Run School House." He related to Heron that "his feet became heavier and heavier until it was very difficult for him to walk, it was though a force was holding him back. The elder kept moving and the force weakened. The elder took the incident as a sign of displeasure from the spirit world maybe or even Blacksnake about the disturbance and removal of the Seneca cemeteries."

The trauma of the dam affected the lifestyles that the residents at Allegany enjoyed for centuries, and the lifestyle changes in turn affected storytelling at Allegany. Partly due to the long-established dominance of English, community members Dar and Sandy Dowdy established *Ganöhsesge:kha Hë:nödeyë:sta'*, or "The Faithkeepers School," a private Seneca culture and language revival school, where Tyler Heron sent his children. At the school, stories such as the Seneca Creation Story and other tales are told, many of them in Seneca. The school's importance to maintaining the traditions cannot be underestimated, and its timing could not be more significant, as Heron explains that "Kinzua changed communal living." After the forced removal, "elders began passing on;" as families spread out, the "forum for stories" changed. Heron also points out that many stories of his generation have gone with the places that were submerged or abandoned. Before the dam, there were countless stories "about old places . . . community centers . . . . If people went back there, the stories would probably come back again."

Recovering from Tragedy and Inspiring Hope

There may be a good reason why these stories will endure among the Seneca at Allegany. An allegory noted by Wonderley (2004) may help point to the reason why their popularity resurfaced during the early twentieth century, why they undergo revival periods to this day, and how this renewed interest in storytelling traditions may coincide with the recent revival of the language and culture: stories strengthen people's spirits in the community during times when they face new and changing threats. Wonderley posits that "a supernatural needs human help to overcome an enemy" (2004:224); the tellers and listeners may assist the supernatural characters in fending off future incursions into the territory. The dam may have been one of the most significant incursions in the area during the twentieth century. Winfield explains that "it's hard for non-Iroquois to appreciate the anguish this caused the Senecas" (2003:66).

Other stories, such as those historically told of wars fought, helped the people "think well of themselves and get through bad times" (Wonderley 2009:33). The stories also aid the people in asserting what is rightfully theirs: "A claim to possession that is historic and right is surely important to a dominated people" (32). Since people often need to "make sense of tragedies" (White 2007:31), storytelling, including stories about supernatural beings and events, may serve as a vehicle for the teller and the audience to overcome tragedies among people who "struggled to make symbolic sense of dispossession and reduction" (Wonderley 2004:xxiii). Tellers "tweaked" stories and were "quite possibly raising the issues they were facing at this point in time" often ending with messages inspiring hope (White 2007:464).

Heron is optimistic when reflecting on storytelling at Allegany. He tries to keep stories alive by telling them to his children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews:

> Is it possible to keep the stories going? Yes, if we take the time to tell them. . . . It has to be a family atmosphere. . . . I tell stories . . . kids like supernatural stories . . . Maybe 20 years from now, they'll tell the same stories. . . . Some places are too new for stories to happen . . . you need time for things of significance to happen. . . . There are many personal stories within us.

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Hesiod and *Hávamál*: Transitions and the Transmission of Wisdom

Lilah Grace Canevaro[1]

Study of Hesiod's *Works and Days* has long profited from comparative analyses.[2] Akkadian, Sumerian, Egyptian, and Hebrew wisdom literature has all been brought to bear on the archaic Greek poem. Many of the *Works and Days'* maxims find parallels in, for example, the Akkadian *Counsels of Wisdom*, or the Egyptian *Instruction* texts. Hesiod's myths about the creation of mankind recall stories such as the Babylonian *Enuma Eliš* and the first part of *Atrahasis*, or the Biblical narrative of Adam and Eve. Studies such as those of Penglase (1994), West (1997), and Haubold (2013) have tracked the influence of the Near East on Greek literature and culture, positing the fourteenth and the ninth centuries BCE as particular hot-beds of intercultural exchange. It is not too much of a stretch to posit that an archaic Greek poet would have been aware of Near Eastern poetry. However, this is not necessarily the case. Whether parallels between the *Works and Days* and extant Near Eastern wisdom literature indicate diachronic reception or synchronic cultural similarity is a bit of a grey area. For example, Hesiod is concerned throughout the *Works and Days* with ideas of measure and balance.[3] Egyptian wisdom texts have the same preoccupation: *The Instruction of Amen-em-Opet* chapter 16 reads "Do not lean on the scales nor falsify the weights, / Nor damage the fractions of the measure. . . ," and indeed they have the ape god Thoth guarding the balance ("Which god is as great as Thoth?"). Was Hesiod's interest piqued by the Egyptian wisdom tradition, or was due measure in all things simply a common cultural concern?[4] It is not only the possibility of direct influence that makes these comparative studies so compelling. They also give us a glimpse into another tradition: a tradition developing along similar lines and at a similar stage, being guided by poets with similar preoccupations, and being shaped for audiences with similar concerns.

[2] Studies of the *Theogony*, often compared with the Babylonian *Enuma Eliš*, have benefited from comparative analysis as well.

[3] See, for example, *Works and Days* 349-51, 370-72, 648, 694, 719-20.

[4] And one not restricted to wisdom literature: we might think of the reforms of weights and measures in archaic Greek law, enacted by Solon (Aristotle, *Athenian Constitution* 10) and the proto-tyrant Pheidon of Argos (Herodotus 6.127.3).

They show us that the handing down of wisdom is a cultural inevitability and that certain forms of its expression are constants.

In this article I too offer a comparative analysis. However, I step away from the Near East and away from any suggestion of a chain of transmission. I aim to offer fresh insights into Hesiod's *Works and Days* by comparing it to the Eddic *Hávamál*, a poem far removed in terms of geography and date, but compellingly close in subject matter, construction, and transmission. Those who have studied *Hávamál*, just like Hesiodic scholars, have tied themselves in knots trying to disentangle the strands of authorship and the narrative threads. *Hávamál* is, like the *Works and Days*, a wisdom poem with a composite structure. It is made up not only of precepts and maxims but also elaborate mythological sections. It is associated with catalogic elements which may be original or later accretions, just like Hesiod's Days, or the *Catalogue of Women*, or the *Ornithomanteia*. And most interestingly it is, like the *Works and Days*, a poem rooted in oral tradition, but poised at that crucial juncture: the advent of writing.

Hesiod's *Works and Days* is unique in archaic poetry. In particular, it is the balance between modes of reading which Hesiod maintains throughout the *Works and Days* that proves truly striking. Both wisdom texts and epic poems can be (and were) read in their entirety *and* excerpted. But the *Works and Days* is unique in inviting these two modes of reading in roughly equal measure. I have yet to find an archaic wisdom text from Greece or the Near East with such a strong narrative framework as the *Works and Days*—one with dynamic threads evolving over the course of the poem and with an addressee whose behaviour gradually changes or a focus which consistently and inexorably narrows.[5] Wisdom texts may be read from beginning to end, but they definitely lend themselves more readily to division and cherry-picking. They fall apart far more easily than they hang together. At the other end of the scale is heroic epic. Homer was, like Hesiod, quoted in lieu of evidence in the Athenian law-courts; in the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* Homeric excerpts were pitted against Hesiodic; elements of the Homeric epics could be rendered open, applicable, and ready for a new interpretation simply by being detached from their contexts. Take, for example, Penelope's dream in *Odyssey* 19; it is ambiguous enough to need Odysseus as interpreter. However, the sheer force of the epic narrative framework—both within a particular poem and in the wider context of the epic cycle with the weight of tradition behind it—makes the linear reading irresistibly the stronger. The *Works and Days* is worthy of note because of the balanced way in which the two modes of reading interact. The narrative threads are strong yet not binding, the individual elements cohesive yet not immobile. The readings are evenly matched. When such a unique poem finds its partner in crime, therefore, it is worth crossing the distance through time and space to bring the two together.

Hávamál is an Old Icelandic poem, part of the Poetic Edda preserved in the thirteenth-century CE *Codex Regius*.[6] It consists of various sections, distinguished and separated out to varying degrees by different scholars: they are known as the Gnomic Poem (a series of precepts and maxims), Óđinn's examples (two stories of the god's love affairs), *Loddfáfnismál* (advice

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[5] On these threads see espec. Clay 2003 and 2009.

[6] For a discussion of and an overview of scholarship on the manuscript see, for example, Vésteinn Ólason 2010:227-52. In this article I use the terms Old Norse and Old Icelandic interchangeably. Old Icelandic and Old Norwegian make up the Old West Norse dialect of Old Norse.

given to one Loddfáfnir by Óđinn), *Rúnatal* (rune lore and ritual), and *Ljóđatal* (a list of spells). These sections cover the full range of precepts and admonitions, a hearty dose of myth and intrigue, and a hefty catalogic element—essentially a very Hesiodic structure. With the Gnomic Poem we might compare the series of precepts at *Works and Days* 286-382, or that at 695-764. The mythological element finds its correlate at *Works and Days* 42-201 with the myths surrounding the creation of mankind: indeed, just as Hesiod offers two myths (Prometheus and Pandora, 42-105; the Myth of the Races, 106-201), so Óđinn relates two stories of his exploits (Billing's daughter, 97-102; Gunnlǫđ and the mead of poetry, 105-10). *Hávamál* concludes with a list of spells, much as the *Works and Days* ends with a list of good and bad days. In both cases it seems at first glance as though "Enumeration gives superficial unity to a sequence of disparate material" (Larrington 1993:62); however, in both poems the material is in fact not all that disparate. Larrington has shown that in *Ljóđatal* at least seven of the spells evoke concerns from earlier in the poem and others consider characteristics of Óđinn (1993:63), while Lardinois (1998) shows convincingly that Hesiod's Days section (765-828) too has thematic ties with the rest of the poem.[7] At *Hávamál* 81 the meter changes. Here the poet launches into a calendar that gives the right times and the right seasons to engage in various activities (*Hávamál* 81-83[8]):

> At kveldi skal dag leyfa,
> kono er brend er,
> mæki er reyndr er,
> mey er gefin er,
> ís er yfir kømr,
> ǫl er drukkit er.
>
> Í vindi skal við hǫggva,
> veðri á sió róa,
> myrkri við man spialla—
> mǫrg ero dags augo.
> Á skip skal skriðar orka,
> en á skiǫld til hlífar,
> mæki hǫggs,
> en mey til kossa.
>
> Við eld skal ǫl drekka,
> en á ísi skríða,
> magran mar kaupa,
> en mæki saurgan—
> heima hest feita,
> en hund á búi.

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[7] Canevaro 2013 traces Hesiod's attitude to women as one of these ties.

[8] All *Hávamál* text and translation is taken from Dronke 2011.

> At evening one shall praise a day,
> a wife when she's burnt,
> a blade when it's tried,
> a maid when she's married,
> ice when it's crossed,
> ale when it has been drunk.
>
> In wind one shall hew wood,
> in good weather row out to sea,
> gossip with a girl in the dark—
> day's eyes are many.
> From a ship one must get gliding,
> from a shield protection,
> from a sword a stroke,
> and from a girl kisses.
>
> Beside the fire one shall drink ale,
> but on ice one shall skate,
> buy a nag skinny,
> and a sword unscoured—
> fatten the horse at home,
> but your hound at a neighbour's.

Hesiod too marks out his agricultural calendar (383-617) as something a little different from the earlier part of the poem (*Works and Days* 383-84[9]):

> Πληιάδων Ἀτλαγενέων ἐπιτελλομενάων
> ἄρχεσθ᾽ ἀμήτου, ἀρότοιο δὲ δυσομενάων·
>
> When the Pleiades, daughters of Atlas, rise,
> begin reaping: begin ploughing when they set.

The section is clearly marked out from the preceding lines by the first seasonal indicators, the Pleiades. Line 383 is striking in form, being an unusual three-word hexameter line. Line 384, "ἄρχεσθ᾽" ("begin"), then marks out a new start, a poetological reference that provides a link with the *Theogony* proem and the *Homeric Hymns*, as Tsagalis (2009:128) has observed: "The poetological function of ἄρχομαι is guaranteed by its traditional referentiality, i.e. its metonymic use in epic poetry." In some manuscripts the Calendar was even signified by a rubricated letter or the title "βίβλος δεύτερος" ("second book").

In both poems the relationships between narrator and addressee are complex. The *Works and Days* is held together by the voice of a single narrator, but the addressee changes. Hesiod

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[9]All *Works and Days* text is taken from West 1978. Translations are my own.

addresses Perses and the kings explicitly, yet at times he speaks of the kings in the third person and for a long tract of the poem ignores Perses entirely (397-611); he offers advice to a wider audience yet does not specify who they are or how his teachings might be relevant to them; he focuses on a male audience ("βροτοὶ ἄνδρες" 3) yet at 538 tells them to weave. The fable of the hawk and the nightingale (202-12) is intended for the kings ("νῦν δ᾽ αἶνον βασιλεῦσ᾽ ἐρέω" 202), yet its moral is directed to Perses ("ὦ Πέρση, σὺ δ᾽ ἄκουε Δίκης" 213). Similarly, *Hávamál*'s Gnomic Poem proper is targeted at a general audience, but *Loddfáfnismál* (marked out by a large capital initial) is directed to Loddfáfnir. Furthermore, there is the added complication that in *Hávamál* narrator and addressee overlap.[10] The refrain of *Loddfáfnismál* (first at stanza 112) runs:

> Ráðomk þér, Loddfáfnir,
> at þú ráð nemir,
> nióta mundo ef þú nemr,
> þér muno góð ef þú getr:

> I advise you, Loddfáfnir,
> to accept advice—
> you'll do well if you do—
> it will be good for you if you get it:

However, at this point the narrator may well be the very same Loddfáfnir (Stray-Singer).[11] He is a wandering bard ("*Mál er at þylia / þular stóli á*" ["It is time to chant on the chanter's throne"] 111), relating the advice given to him by others. At other points, the narrator seems to be Óðinn himself; stanzas 97-102, for example, tell the story of Óðinn's unsuccessful love affair with Billing's daughter—a story told as by its protagonist ("*Billings mey / ek fann beðiom á*" ["The daughter of Billingr I found in bed"] 97).[12] At still other points, the first person narration persists but with seemingly no particular identity. As Evans (1986:6) notes, "it is simply the man of experience speaking in his own person." In switching between addressees, both poems engage with multiple audiences simultaneously. They widen the scope of their appeal and the applicability of their teachings, thus increasing their didactic value. Hesiod's fable of the hawk and the nightingale, for example, is most effective in that it cannot be mapped directly onto any one character in the *Works and Days* but rather combines elements relevant to multiple addressees, explicit or implied. Though *Hávamál*'s narrator does not remain constant, the level of didactic authority assumed remains as consistent as in the *Works and Days*. Whether the teacher is Loddfáfnir, Óðinn, or some unspecified sonorous voice, the audience is inclined to take note.

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[10] See Clunies Ross 1990.

[11] See Evans 1986:26 and 125 for discussion of the name Loddfáfnir.

[12] The first person pronoun *ek* appears for the first time in stanza 13, where the reference to Gunnlǫð shows that the speaker must be Óðinn.

The narrators in both poems are characterized by their knowledge and experience. Loddfáfnir's words are lent authority by their divine provenance and Hesiod's teachings are ratified by the Muses (658-62); Óðinn can advise on women because of his own love affairs, and Hesiod can teach about seafaring because he made a voyage himself—however short it may have been (650-51). In neither case is the narrator reticent about making his qualifications clear: in *Hávamál*, each stanza of *Ljóðatal* is introduced with "I know how to. . ." ("*kann ek*"); in the *Works and Days*, Hesiod claims that he will tell the Myth of the Races "well and skillfully" ("εὖ καὶ ἐπισταμένως" 107). Both Hesiod and Óðinn give autobiographical narratives of their poetic initiation: Hesiod tells how he dedicated a tripod to the Muses in the place where they set him on the path of song (658-59), and Óðinn relates how he came by the mead of poetry (105-10).

In both poems the narrators keep the didactic upper hand through the use of riddling language. In the *Works and Days* Hesiod criticizes the kings for their ignorance (40-41):

> νήπιοι, οὐδὲ ἴσασιν ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ παντός,
> οὐδ᾽ ὅσον ἐν μαλάχῃ τε καὶ ἀσφοδέλῳ μέγ᾽ ὄνειαρ.

> Fools, they do not know how much more the half is than the whole,
> nor how much value there is in mallow and asphodel.

These lines are made up of oxymoronic formulations ("ὅσῳ πλέον ἥμισυ παντός"), and Hesiod never actually tells us what the great advantage of these plants might be. He highlights the gap in knowledge between himself, in touch with the working man, and the kings, who foolishly scorn honest poor fare in their pursuit of wealth gained through corruption. Similarly, *Hávamál* 14 presents the paradox of the drunk with his wits about him:

> ǫlr ek varð,
> varð ofrǫlvi,
> at ins fróða Fialars.
> Því er ǫldr bazt,
> at aptr uf heimtir
> hverr sitt geð gumi.

> Ale-drunk I was,
> excessively drunk,
> within wise Fialarr's walls.
> The best thing about ale
> is that every man
> gets his wits back again.

The paradoxical language highlights the gap between narrator, who can drink with impunity, and addressees, who are not so privileged (*Hávamál* 12):

> Era svá gott,

> sem gott kveða,
> ǫl alda sonom,
> þvíat færa veit,
> er fleira drekkr,
> síns til geðs gumi.

> It is not so good
> as they say it is good,
> ale for the sons of men,
> for a man knows less
> the more he drinks
> the sense of what he is saying.

Further, I suggest that both poems use metaphorical language to describe different phases in a man's life. In neither instance is the meaning entirely clear, but a comparison between the two highlights the possibility in each case. In the *Works and Days* one of Hesiod's practical recommendations has metaphorical potential (368-69):

> ἀρχομένου δὲ πίθου καὶ λήγοντος κορέσασθαι,
> μεσσόθι φείδεσθαι· δειλὴ δ᾽ ἐν πυθμένι φειδώ.

> When the jar is just opened or nearly empty, take your fill;
> be sparing in the middle. Sparing at the dregs is useless.

Some critics are concerned primarily with what was *in* the jar, the *communis opinio* being wine.[13] However, this precept is less about how best to use wine, and more about when to be cautious and frugal. The scholia suggest it may refer to one's time of life: enjoy yourself in childhood and old age, but work in between them.[14] In *Hávamál* 134 the slang use of *belgr* ("skin bag") for the human body lends a similar metaphorical—even satirical (Dronke 2011:46)—resonance to this passage:

> at három þul
> hlæðu aldregi;
> opt er gott þat er gamlir kveða;
> opt ór skǫrpom belg
> skilin orð koma,
> þeim er hangir með hám

---

[13] Already at Σ*Op.*(Pertusi)369a ὁ γὰρ μεταξὺ οἶνος ἰσχυρότερος ἅμα καὶ ἐπίμονος ("for the wine in the middle is both stronger and long-lasting").

[14] Σ*Op.*(Pertusi)368b τινὲς δὲ ἀλληγορικῶς τὸν λόγον εἶναι τῆς ἡλικίας ὥστε ἀρχόμενον αὐτὸν καὶ γηρῶντα ἀπολαύειν, κατὰ δὲ τὴν μέσην ἡλικίαν ἐργάζεσθαι. Similarly, a Mesopotamian proverb reads "Very soon he will be dead; (so he says), "Let me eat up (all I have)!" Soon he will be well; (so he says), "Let me economize!" (*A. K* 4347.57).

ok skollir með skrám
ok váfir með vílmǫgom.

at a grey-haired chanter
you must never guffaw
—often it is excellent, what old men say
—often from a shriveled skin bag
shrewd words come—
from one who hangs among the hides,
vacillates among the vellums
and sidles to and fro among the house servants.

Dronke (2011:45) notes that in this stanza "interpretation is particularly difficult." She suggests that the wrinkled leather bag is what the old chanter has become through his "long and learned life," and that the image developed is of "him as a dried-up skin hanging (or hanging about) with others of his own kind, taking a shaky look into vellum manuscripts." She concludes: "This may well not be the solution of these lines, but I suspect that they are intended as a conundrum." Both poems use riddles to hide meaning, and in linking such opaque forms with ideas of age they reflect on different stages in life in both practical and intellectual terms.

In both poems the narrator also marks a divide between what the teacher knows and what the audience can learn. As Quinn notes (2010:197), it is "an interpretive crux in the reading of *Hávamál* to distinguish what is transferable knowledge to a human audience and what is Odinic display." Hesiod more than once follows up a phrase such as "παῦροι δέ τ᾽ ἴσασιν" ("few know") with evidence that he is in fact one of the lucky few.[15] These are didactic strategies that place expectations on an audience. In the first instance, taunting one's audience with information just out of their reach encourages them to rise to the challenge. Hesiod provokes the kings, advertising his superior knowledge and inviting them to meet his intellectual standards. *Hávamál* likewise gives a tantalizing glimpse into divine knowledge, making mortals yearn for more. Secondly, such strategies mean that the audience are not simply being spoon-fed facts, but are being forced to work for their lesson. Quinn (2010:216) comments on *Hávamál*: "Often the tone of the advice is cryptic . . . and the focus of advice shifts unpredictably. The importance of being able to assess the right degree of caution—or of anything—underlines the fact that there is more to learning from advice than simply remembering the formulation of it."[16] The poem concludes with a wish that the audience put its teachings into practice: "Let him profit who learned! Fortune to those who listened!" ("*Nióti sá er nam! / Heilir þeirs hlýddo!*" 165). The intellectual gap between narrator and addressee thus creates a didactic hierarchy (the narrator has the upper

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[15] 814 παῦροι δ᾽ αὖτε ἴσασι, 824 παῦροι δέ τ᾽ ἴσασιν, and also 818 παῦροι δέ τ᾽ ἀληθέα κικλήσκουσιν ("few call things truthfully").

[16] Assessing the right degree of caution refers to *Hávamál*, "I beg you to be wary, but not over-wary" (131).

hand), a positive paradigm to emulate (the narrator is the intellectual model), and a method of teaching based on intellectual self-sufficiency: thinking for oneself.[17]

The parallels between the two poems persist not just in the methods of teaching, but in what is being taught. As mentioned above, Hesiod in the *Works and Days* is concerned with balance and measure, whether it be knowing the measure of the sea ("μέτρα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης" 648), or knowing the measure of every conceivable part of a plough (414-47). He also advises measure in speech (*Works and Days* 719-21):

> γλώσσης τοι θησαυρὸς ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν ἄριστος
> φειδωλῆς, πλείστη δὲ χάρις κατὰ μέτρον ἰούσης·
> εἰ δὲ κακὸν εἴπῃς, τάχα κ᾽ αὐτὸς μεῖζον ἀκούσαις.

> A sparing tongue is the best treasure among men,
> the greatest grace one which comes in measure.
> If you speak evil, quickly you will hear it more yourself.

In this passage Hesiod is concerned with the reciprocity of words (also at 709-11). Similarly the poet of *Hávamál* advises (42):

> Vin sínom
> skal maðr vinr vera
> ok gialda giǫf við giǫf.
> Hlátr við hlátri
> skyli hǫlðar taka,
> en lausung við lygi.

> To his friend
> a man must be a friend,
> and pay back gift with gift.
> Good men should take laughter
> with a laugh,
> but lying with a lie.

Hávamál too is concerned with measure, not only in drinking (19) and wisdom (56), but also in exchanges with others (145):

> Betra er óbeðit
> en sé ofblótit—
> ey sér til gildis giǫf.
> Betra er ósent

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[17] For self-sufficiency as a practical ideal in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, see below. For further discussion of Hesiod's didactic methods and his concern with intellectual self-sufficiency, see Canevaro forthcoming 2015.

en sé ofsóit.

Better to have asked for nothing
than sacrificed excessively—
always a gift expects to be paid for.
Better no souls escorted
than too many lives smothered.

In both traditions relationships with others are conceived as reciprocal, whether in gift-giving or in speech. The kind of reciprocity Hesiod advocates is sometimes unequal, designed to tip the balance in one's own favor (*Works and Days* 349-51):

εὖ μὲν μετρεῖσθαι παρὰ γείτονος, εὖ δ᾽ ἀποδοῦναι,
αὐτῷ τῷ μέτρῳ, καὶ λώιον, αἴ κε δύνηαι,
ὡς ἂν χρηίζων καὶ ἐς ὕστερον ἄρκιον εὕρης.

Measure out well from your neighbor, but give back well too,
in the same measure, or even more, if you are able,
so that being in need later you might find something to rely on.

Hesiod advocates giving a little extra, not for altruistic reasons, but so that in the next transaction the principle of reciprocity will give one the upper hand. Like much of Hesiod's teachings, the principle of reciprocity operates on a long-term basis. The one who gives the least in an exchange will be indebted to the one who gives the most and will be expected to reciprocate at some point. According to Hesiod, therefore, it is better to give more, so that rather than being in someone else's debt, someone else will be in yours. *Hávamál* also takes a long-term view, as "always a gift expects to be paid for" (145)—however, here the predominant strategy is frugality, rather than calculated largesse.

Friendship too is depicted as a delicate balance, one that you should not be the first to disrupt. *Hávamál* advises similar caution: "with your friend never be first to cut the flow of good feeling" ("*vin þínom / ver þú aldregi / fyrri at flaumslitom*" 121). If a friend should cause a disruption, however, there is little turning of the other cheek, and Hesiod in fact advises two eyes for an eye (*Works and Days* 707-11):

μηδὲ κασιγνήτῳ ἶσον ποιεῖσθαι ἑταῖρον·
εἰ δέ κε ποιήσῃ, μή μιν πρότερος κακὸν ἔρξεις,
μηδὲ ψεύδεσθαι γλώσσης χάριν· εἰ δὲ σέ γ᾽ ἄρχῃ
ἤ τι ἔπος εἰπὼν ἀποθύμιον ἠὲ καὶ ἔρξας,
δὶς τόσα τείνυσθαι μεμνημένος·

Do not make a friend equal to a brother:
but if you should do so, do not wrong him first,
nor lie by the grace of your tongue. But if he should wrong

you first, either by word or deed,
be mindful to pay him back two-fold.

As Millet (1984:101) notes, good relations are to be of such a kind "that you are the equal or superior of your neighbour, and do not end up in a position of dependence." In other words, you should keep the upper hand whenever possible. In this way reciprocity goes hand-in-hand with Hesiod's Iron-Age ideal: self-sufficiency.

I have already mentioned above the way in which the intellectual gap between narrator and addressee encourages intellectual self-sufficiency. I will now consider self-sufficiency as a prevailing theme in rather more concrete senses. Hesiod's ideal farmer should be resourceful, weaving (538), sewing (544), and creating all his farming accouterments seemingly single-handedly (423-36). He should focus on his own *oikos* as his first priority ("οἶκον μὲν πρώτιστα" 405) and distrust the outside world ("οἴκοι βέλτερον εἶναι, ἐπεὶ βλαβερὸν τὸ θύρηφιν" 365). If help must be called for, it should be in the form of a 40-year-old farmhand who will concentrate on his task rather than being distracted by companions (443). Women are regarded with suspicion, especially as they pose a threat to production (373-75).[18] The ideal family model is tight-knit; one should choose for a wife a girl who lives nearby (700), and there should be only one heir so that the *oikos* will not be diminished by division (376).[19] Hesiod's brand of reciprocity does not undermine self-sufficiency because it does not involve *reliance* on others but is concerned with establishing good relations with neighboring *oikoi* in order that your own *oikos* is not put at risk. Indeed, dependence on others is disparaged throughout the *Works and Days*. Hesiod's brother Perses, the negative paradigm—the example not to follow—has to be warned off begging (394-404 and 453-54). Idle men are stingless drones who feast on the labor of the bees (304-06). The goal of the self-sufficient farmer should be to have enough *bios* stored up to meet the needs of his own *oikos*—to be not the beggar, but the one others come to beg from (*Works and Days* 477-78):

εὐοχθέων δ᾽ ἵξεαι πολιὸν ἔαρ, οὐδὲ πρὸς ἄλλους
αὐγάσεαι, σέο δ᾽ ἄλλος ἀνὴρ κεχρημένος ἔσται.

You will come to grey spring well provided, so that you will not look to
others, but another man will be in need of you.

These ideas of the self-sufficiency of the *oikos* and the disgrace of begging are discussed also in *Hávamál* (36-37):

Bú er betra,
þótt [ber]t sé:
halr er heima hverr.
Þótt tvær geitr eigi

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[18] On Hesiod's attitude to women as governed by his concern for self-sufficiency see Canevaro 2013.

[19] Lines 379-80 give an alternative scenario.

ok taugreptan sal,
þat er þó betra en bœn.

Bú er betra,
þótt [ber]t sé:
halr er heima hverr.
Blóðugt er hiarta
þeim er biðia skal
sér í mál hvert matar.

A homestead is better,
even though it may be bare:
every man is his own man at home.
Though his assets are two goats
and a tow-roofed room,
that is still better than begging.

A homestead is better,
even though it may be bare:
every man is his own man at home.
Bleeding is the heart
of one who must beg
a morsel for himself every mealtime.

The poet of *Hávamál* argues that home is better (compare *Works and Days,* "οἴκοι βέλτερον εἶναι, ἐπεὶ βλαβερὸν τὸ θύρηφιν" 365), that one should start with a house and livestock (compare *Works and Days,* "οἶκον μὲν πρώτιστα γυναῖκά τε βοῦν τ' ἀροτῆρα" 405), and that begging is a mark of failure. The delicate Hesiodic balance between maintaining reciprocal relationships and establishing one's own self-sufficiency rings true also in this passage from *Hávamál*. As Larrington (1993:31) comments on these stanzas: "The emphasis hitherto on receiving the hospitality of others is counterbalanced by a paradigm of independence." Evans (1986:18) summarizes: "The dominant image in the Gnomic Poem, the implied recipient of the advice proferred, is that of the solitary." Being self-sufficient in one's home is preferable to begging from others, even if that home be a humble hut—*Hávamál* does not go after riches, but values frugality if it means independence. Similarly at *Works and Days* 40-41 given above, Hesiod champions frugal but honest living over unjust gain by the gift-swallowing kings.[20]

In the Hesiodic passage 477-78 given above, the upper hand of reciprocity is suggested by not begging, but having others beg from you. This raises another important *Works and Days* issue: that of reputation. The precept combines self-sufficient ideals with the importance of reputation: you must be well-prepared, and *known* to be so. A few lines later, it is made explicit that one of the problems with poverty is that few will admire you: "παῦροι δέ σε θηήσονται"

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[20] For frugality see also 368-69, 723.

482. At line 721, also quoted above, Hesiod is concerned with the reciprocity of words (εἰ δὲ κακὸν εἴπῃς, τάχα κ᾽ αὐτὸς μεῖζον ἀκούσαις, "If you speak evil, quickly you will hear it more yourself"): this is reputation in a nutshell. The importance of and mechanism behind reputation is worked out most fully at *Works and Days* 761-64:

> φήμη γάρ τε κακὴ πέλεται, κούφη μὲν ἀεῖραι
> ῥεῖα μάλ᾽, ἀργαλέη δὲ φέρειν, χαλεπὴ δ᾽ ἀποθέσθαι.
> φήμη δ᾽ οὔ τις πάμπαν ἀπόλλυται, ἥντινα πολλοί
> λαοὶ φημίξουσι· θεός νύ τίς ἐστι καὶ αὐτή.

> For rumor is evil, light and easy to pick up,
> but difficult to bear, and hard to get rid of.
> That rumor is never entirely destroyed, which many
> people rumor. She too is herself some goddess.

The poet of *Hávamál*, too, is concerned with reputation (76-77):

> Deyr fé,
> deyia frændr,
> deyr siálfr it sama,
> en orztírr
> deyr aldregi
> hveim er sér góðan getr.

> Deyr fé,
> deyia frændr,
> deyr siálfr it sama;
> ek veit einn
> at aldri deyr:
> dómr um dauðan hvern.

> Cattle die,
> kinsmen die,
> one dies oneself just the same,
> but the fame of renown
> never dies
> for any who earns himself that excellence.

> Cattle die,
> kinsmen die,
> one dies oneself just the same.
> *Óðinn* I know one thing

that never dies:

judgement on every man dead.

In both traditions, rumor or reputation is something that outlives us all. *Hávamál*'s "fame of renown" is like *kleos*, the Homeric heroic ideal: "κλέος οὔ ποτ᾽ ὀλεῖται" ("fame which never dies," *Iliad* 2.325, 7.91; *Odyssey* 24.196), "κλέος ἄφθιτον" ("imperishable fame"). Hesiod's *pheme* ("rumor"), however, is more the anti-*kleos* (Bakker 2002:140-42; Hardie 2012:50-58). Whilst *kleos* is to be heard about in positive terms, *pheme* is to be talked about negatively. That Hesiod is more concerned with *pheme* than with *kleos* marks his poem as firmly set in the Iron Age: he is composing in and about a post-heroic world. The analysis of *pheme* at *Works and Days* 760-64 takes us back to and makes us reassess the earlier line: "ὄν τε διὰ βροτοὶ ἄνδρες ὁμῶς ἄφατοί τε φατοί τε" (3), as noted by Clay (2003:148). There Zeus made men spoken of or not; here *pheme* is generated not by the gods but by "πολλοί λαοί" ("many people"). After the Calendar and countless precepts about daily life, we are now firmly entrenched in the Iron Age with its focus on mankind. In the earlier passage it was left unclear which was the positive, "ἄφατοί" or "φατοί;" now it is clear that to be "φατοί," "spoken of," is not something to wish for. The contrast with the heroic epic age could not be starker.

Not only rumor outlives us; we also leave behind our children to perpetuate our memory. As Svenbro (1993:65) summarizes, "The Greeks believed humans could achieve immortality in two ways: through 'generation' (*genesis*) or through 'renown' (*kléos*)." Hesiod wishes (*Works and Days* 376-78):

μουνογενὴς δὲ πάις εἴη πατρώιον οἶκον

φερβέμεν· ὣς γὰρ πλοῦτος ἀέξεται ἐν μεγάροισιν·

γηραιὸς δὲ θάνοις ἕτερον παῖδ᾽ ἐγκαταλείπων.

Let there be a single-born child to nourish his father's household:

for thus wealth increases in the halls.

May you die old, leaving behind another child.

Old Norse wisdom literature, too, is concerned with generation (*Hávamál* 72):

Sonr er betri,

þótt sé síđ of alinn

eptir genginn guma.

Sialdan bautarsteinar

standa brauto nær,

nema reisi niđr at niđ.

A son is better,

even though he may be born late,

after the father has died.

Seldom do gravestones

> stand by the road,
> unless kin erects them for kin.

Both passages focus on the benefits of having children. For Hesiod, an only child will increase the estate's fortunes; for the poet of *Hávamál*, a son can set up a memorial stone to his father. Both, too, are concerned with the age of the father. In the *Works and Days*, the wish that you may die old can be interpreted in various ways. It could be a negative reflection on the scenario in which you have "another child"[21]: if you have two children, you must ensure that you live long enough to keep an eye on them (after all, Hesiod's own relationship with his brother Perses is certainly strained). It could be quite the opposite: you will make it to old age if you have a child (or even two) to look after you. It could mark a distinction between what is necessary at different times in one's life: as an adult, having one child is best; in one's old age, safety in numbers is even better. In *Hávamál* a son is indisputably good—even if his father does not live to see him.

In the *Works and Days* the issue of reputation resurfaces in various guises. At 700-01 it even plays a role in choosing a wife:

> τὴν δὲ μάλιστα γαμεῖν, ἥτις σέθεν ἐγγύθι ναίει,
> πάντα μάλ᾽ ἀμφὶς ἰδών, μὴ γείτοσι χάρματα γήμῃς.

> In particular marry a woman who lives near you, having looked
> all around, so that you will not be a source of laughter for your neighbors.

A woman of the village is a known quantity, so less likely to end up a cause of humiliation. Furthermore, a bride living nearby fits with Hesiod's self-sufficient ideals. As a farmer would hope to have all the means of production within the *oikos*, so too he should not have to go far for a wife. Indeed the question of marriage and of women's worth in general is, for Hesiod, inextricably linked with the self-sufficiency of the *oikos*. Hesiod's suspicion of women is based on the fact that they consume resources and increase the need for livelihood.[22] Hesiod's anxiety about women is part of what Brown (1997:26) terms the "male dilemma": sexual desire versus economic stability; family continuity versus problems of property and inheritance (Clay 2003:120). This tension is made nowhere more clear than at *Works and Days* 373-75:

> μηδὲ γυνή σε νόον πυγοστόλος ἐξαπατάτω
> αἱμύλα κωτίλλουσα, τεὴν διφῶσα καλιήν·
> ὃς δὲ γυναικὶ πέποιθε, πέποιθ᾽ ὅ γε φιλήτῃσιν.

> Don't let a woman with a tarted-up arse deceive your mind
> with cajoling words, while she rifles around in your granary.

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[21] This "other child" is also debated. Some commentators explain it away by interpreting "ἕτερον παῖδ᾽" either as the first and only son (Moschopoulos explains "ἕτερον" as "ἄλλον ἀντὶ σοῦ"; Verdenius 1985 "another, namely your son"), or the only child of the second generation, a grandson (West 1978).

[22] See Canevaro 2013.

He who trusts a woman, trusts a cheat.

This passage bears a striking resemblance to *Hávamál* 84:

> Meyiar orðom
> skyli manngi trúa,
> né því er kveðr kona,
> þvíat á hverfanda hvéli
> vóru þeim hiǫrto skǫpuð,
> brigð í brióst um lagið.

> A maiden's words
> must no man trust,
> nor what a woman says,
> for on a whirling wheel
> were hearts fashioned for them
> and fickleness fixed in their breast.

Evans (1986:23) suggests that this suspicion of women "is alien to the pagan Nordic tradition and reflects the misogynist attitudes of medieval Christianity," however the parallel with the *Works and Days* shows that such wariness is not out of place in an agrarian society in which so much depends on productivity and providing for one's household. In neither the Nordic nor the Greek tradition is a woman's word to be trusted. In fact, the poet of *Hávamál* lumps together women and ships under the heading of "unpredictable phenomena" (90)[23] and Hesiod is as suspicious of seafaring as he is of women. In *Hávamál*, this fickle female condition is presented as innate, as something evident from the moment of woman's creation: women were made to be untrustworthy. Similarly, in the *Works and Days* the main threats Hesiod describes—the woman's appearance and her words—can both be linked back to Pandora, the first woman, the "καλὸν κακόν" (*Theogony* 585) whose beautiful appearance stood in contrast to her deceitful nature. When Pandora was created Hermes gave her "αἱμυλίους τε λόγους" ("wily words" 78), just as the woman at 374 speaks "αἱμύλα."

In choosing a wife, Hesiod recommends she who lives nearby ("ἐγγύθι ναίει" 700). Though this is in the interests of self-sufficiency, it is not without its risks. In the proverb of the two roads, someone else lives nearby ("ἐγγύθι ναίει"): "κακότης," or misfortune (*Works and Days* 287-92):

> τὴν μέν τοι κακότητα καὶ ἰλαδόν ἐστιν ἑλέσθαι
> ῥηιδίως· λείη μὲν ὁδός, μάλα δ᾽ ἐγγύθι ναίει·
> τῆς δ᾽ ἀρετῆς ἱδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν
> ἀθάνατοι· μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐς αὐτήν

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[23] Compare the Greek proverb attributed to Menander (*Monosticha* 231): "θάλασσα καί πῦρ, καί γυνὴ τρίτον κακόν" ("sea and fire, and woman the third evil").

καὶ τρηχὺς τὸ πρῶτον· ἐπὴν δ᾽ εἰς ἄκρον ἵκηται,
ῥηιδίη δἤπειτα πέλει, χαλεπή περ ἐοῦσα.

Misfortune can be achieved in abundance and
easily, for the way is smooth and she lives very nearby.
But in front of excellence the immortal gods have put
sweat. And the path to her is long and steep
and difficult at first. But when you come to the top,
then it is easy, although difficult.

This passage was the most quoted of the *Works and Days* in antiquity (Koning 2010). It is detachable, applicable, catchy, mnemonic—it has all the ingredients of a pearl of wisdom. However, it is not exactly straightforward, as the final lines are paradoxical: the road is easy, although difficult. It is difficult to achieve "ἀρετή," and once achieved, it is difficult to maintain, but given its positive effects it is easy to bear. *Hávamál* features a very similar proverb, and that too is somewhat convoluted (34):

Afhvarf mikit
er til illz vinar,
þótt á brauto búi,
en til góðs vinar
liggia gagnvegir,
þótt hann sé firr farinn.

It is a big detour
to a bad friend's home,
though he lives in your lane;
but to a good friend's home
the roads go straight,
though he may be a longer way away.

An enemy lives nearby, just like "κακότης," and a friend is further away. However, it is worth making the longer journey; in spite of appearances, ultimately the friend will be easier to reach.

This brief summary of the similarities in structure and content between the *Works and Days* and *Hávamál* shows that there is substantial overlap in terms of narrative forms, themes, tropes, and concerns. Before attempting to offer some explanations and conclusions, I would like now to address one further area of overlap: the trajectory of scholarship on the two poems. At the beginning of this article I divided *Hávamál* into sections. Scholars by and large agree that these sections were not originally composed together, but are rather separate oral poems which later coalesced. As to process and purpose, scholars have not reached a *communis opinio*, but they identify an approximate trend. Karl Müllenhoff (1891) began by suggesting that *Hávamál* was an anthology of Odinic poems. Klaus von See (1972) went a step further and posited that traditional material did not come together by chance and a shared subject matter, but was put together by

one "Redaktor." Carolyne Larrington (1993:60) sees in that Redaktor a guiding purpose: "the revelation of the many forms which wisdom takes." John McKinnell (2007) refines the model, suggesting that the text went through three stages of development: a grouping together of Odinic poems, followed by the interpolation of scraps of practical verse, and finally "editorial" additions designed to impose unity.

Such an intellectual trajectory will be familiar to scholars of the *Works and Days*. In the nineteenth century with the development of textual criticism as a discipline and the production of critical editions of the Hesiodic corpus, questions of authorship (what was and was not "Hesiodic") were foremost.[24] In the twentieth century, however, it was agreed that the *Works and Days* is largely comprised of traditional material which at some point coalesced, and so scholars stopped thinking in terms of the "original author." West's 1978 commentary made great strides in the understanding of the poem as traditional, with its compiled Near Eastern parallels.[25] Subsequent analyses then put the "author" back in, though now in a role akin to that of von See's Redaktor. Scholars then began to focus on narrative threads, and like Larrington tried to pinpoint a guiding purpose.[26] The extent of Hesiod's editorial role remains undetermined,[27] but the current state of scholarship bears a close resemblance to that regarding *Hávamál*. These are poems rooted in an oral tradition of wisdom, comprised of previously circulating elements combined in a way which gives them a structure and a purpose.[28]

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[24] Goettling (1843) regarded the poem as a compilation of material produced by different hands. His view was quickly contested by Colonel Mure in his *History of Greek Literature*, who took up the opposing position that the *Works and Days* was composed by a single author, and the subsequent editor van Lennep (1847) often contested Goettling's editorial decisions by arguing for the authenticity of the vulgate text. Paley in his 1861 edition adopted a more middle-of-the-road stance, taking great pains to investigate what was 'genuine' and what was not and concluding: "The pure metal of the true epic age may still exist, though it has suffered alloy in passing through many crucibles in the hands of many different workmen."

[25] See also Walcot 1966.

[26] For example, Lardinois 1998 traces through the *Works and Days* the theme of the Iron-Age man having to live day-to-day, with the aim of rescuing the Days from brutal editing. Clay 2003 pinpoints a gradual spatial and temporal narrowing of focus, and follows the education of Perses as a narrative thread, and Clay 2009:71-90 traces a double ascent-descent pattern. Beye 1972, for instance, picks out inexorability as the poem's focus, while Jones 1984 posits ὡραῖος and μέτρον as words that encapsulate the poem's themes. Hamilton 1989 argues that the poem is defined by the two Erides; Nelson 1998 the dispensation of Zeus.

[27] For example Ercolani in his 2010 commentary attributes as much as possible to tradition, whereas in my own monograph on the *Works and Days* I am more interested in what Hesiod as Redaktor *did* with the traditional material, shaping it to fit his own didactic purpose.

[28] One reader of this article suggested a common Indo-European background to the two poems. Whilst such a possibility cannot be entirely discarded (see West 2007:71-72 for a comparison between Hesiod's "I am going to tell you . . . Put it in your heart" and *Hávamál*'s "I counsel thee, Loddfáfnir, and take thou my counsel"), the themes and structures I trace here are broad, I believe too broad to be taken away from the authorial/editorial figure towards which current scholarship in both fields inclines. Even at the micro-level, Indo-European attribution is dubious: to take up West's example, what are we to make of non-Indo-European parallels such as Proverbs 22.17-18 "Incline thine ear, and hear the words of the wise, and apply thine heart to my doctrine," or the Egyptian *Instruction of Amenemope* chapter one, "Give thine ear, and hear what I say, and apply thine heart to apprehend"? In the case of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, the possibility of Near Eastern influence complicates the matter. In general, I believe that the widespread nature of wisdom tropes and formulations has more to do with comparable cultural and social norms than with a shared linguistic and poetic inheritance.

This overview of the two analogous scholarly trajectories serves to introduce the final issue I would like to address in this article, one which I believe holds the key to explaining many of the similarities traced so far: the move from orality to literacy. Scholars of both poems have, on the one hand, isolated traditional elements perpetuated by a long process of oral transmission. On the other hand, they have also recognized a large degree of organization of material and coherency of purpose, which points to a guiding hand, and a high level of fixity, which ultimately results from a role played by writing. Neither poem is purely oral or pure literature: we can trace in both dual compositional forces. I argue here that such interactions between tradition and innovation can explain many of the shared structural idiosyncrasies, and can justify our bringing together two poems separated by more than a millennium and by two and a half thousand miles.

Hávamál is preserved in the thirteenth-century CE collection *Codex Regius*[29] but presumably was composed much earlier. Indeed the compiler of the Codex describes the poems several times as "*inn forni*," "the ancient," or as "*fornar sögur*," "old stories," coming from "*forneskja*," "antiquity," and included a few notes to help the thirteenth-century reader understand the wider mythological context of the poems. Much of the gnomic and mythological material comprising *Hávamál* can be attributed to the long-standing oral culture which preceded the advent of writing in Iceland with the arrival of Christianity.[30] Icelandic culture had been primarily oral (with the exception of runes), with oral story-telling, oral genealogies, and oral law codes (Quinn 2000:30-60). Christianity then brought with it the Latin alphabet, which was gradually adapted to the Icelandic native tongue. However, the advent of a script did not mark the abrupt end of an oral culture and the start of a literate one. Literacy was at first something reserved for the elite, for clerics and scribes—not everyone could read and write, and so oral performances and recitations continued. As Mundal (2010:163) writes, "The oral culture continued to exist side by side with the new written culture which gradually gained ground."[31] How quickly writing gained ground is uncertain: "At what point oral storytelling gave way to text-dependent recitations in Iceland is not clear" (Quinn 2000:46). In terms of poetic performance, there may have been a mid-point in which written versions of a poem were circulating but were used by the performer accustomed to the oral tradition as little more than a prompt. Similarly, the gnomic and mythological elements of Hesiod's *Works and Days* are part of an oral tradition predating writing, and the poem was originally experienced in performance.

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[29] So called because from the seventeenth century to the twentieth it was kept in the Royal Library in Copenhagen.

[30] See, for example, Kellogg 1990. There are some similarities in the possible performance contexts of both poems, for example Dronke 2011:36 notes of *Hávamál* that "Many stanzas read as if they were the product of a party game: as if one of the company has to propose a thought or theme, and another is to complete it." Similarly, excerpts from Hesiod's *Works and Days* may have aired at symposia: the poem addresses themes relevant to such a context (715-23 and 742-5 advise on sympotic *mores*, and the summer festival scene 582-96 is almost a symposiarch's handbook), the use of kennings and vivid descriptions such as the βασιλῆας δωροφάγους could be residual echoes of a sympotic game of *eikasmoi* or likenesses, and the introduction of new stories with e.g. νῦν δ᾽ (202) may serve to place pieces in a sequence of performances by the party-goers, following on one from the other.

[31] See also Kellogg 1990:189, 195: "even literate poets, such as might have recorded versions of eddic poetry, continue to compose in the old way until they lose the competence or until their audiences have been educated to tolerate new forms."

Even if it was written down at an early stage, Hesiod's society was still primarily oral and so a written version, although perhaps again used as an *aide-mémoire* for the rhapsode, would have had little or no circulation among the audience.[32]

In both cultures we are talking about a continuum—a gradual shift from orality to literacy—with both *Hávamál* and the *Works and Days* caught up in the transition.[33] Both made it into the written tradition, but neither was born in its entirety with the advent of writing. We know *Hávamál* and the *Works and Days* from their written forms as they have come to us, unlike whatever versions had come before.[34] In the case of the *Works and Days*, however, this was not the only form circulating in antiquity. Our first clue that the *Works and Days* was performed comes already in the proem (1-10). Versions of the poem without its proem were known in antiquity: Pausanias (9.31.4-5) claimed that the Boeotians "remove the proem to the Muses, saying that it begins with the lines about the Strifes." As Scodel (2012:112) points out, this optional nature of the proem "confirms [the poem's] life as a performance script." The most likely explanation for the omission is that Pausanias' version represents a stage in performance in which the poem was prefaced by a context-specific prelude, and so the proem as we know it was elided. Indeed the *Homeric Hymns* are often thought to have been used as prefaces to epic recitations, hymning the god relevant to the performance context (Faulkner 2011a:17-19).[35] The proem as it has been preserved to us is characterized most strikingly not by its relevance to a particular context, but by its programmatic nature, dictating as it does the division of labor between Hesiod, Zeus, and the Muses which will work itself out over the course of the poem. Similarly the extant proems of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are also programmatic, unlike some of their predecessors.[36] The survival of programmatic proems is due to the fact that the versions we have are a "fixing by writing" (Ford 1992:1), the end product of a shift from an oral to a literate culture, and thus bound to have closer links with the main body of the poems than earlier versions would have had.

That writing creates fixity is fairly intuitive, but an example from Icelandic law might raise some further implications (Quinn 2000:32-40). Before the arrival of writing in Iceland, the law code was preserved orally, recited once a year at the *Althing* and memorized by, first and foremost, the lawspeaker. Interestingly, the oral law code had little in the way of mnemonic devices—the lawspeaker's task certainly was not easy, and the role was one of great skill and great learning (a fact which goes against equations of "oral" with "primitive"). The authority of the law was in its recitation, so the lawspeaker had the power to add to or change the law while

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[32] On the oral nature of Greek society even after the advent of writing see Thomas 1992.

[33] The MA dissertation of Carlos Osvaldo Rocha, University of Iceland 2012, discusses *Hávamál* in terms of this transition from orality to literacy.

[34] I should point out here that the Codex Regius version of *Hávamál* is not considered to be the poem's first written incarnation. See Lindblad 1954 for full argumentation and Evans 1986:2 for examples of scribal errors in the Codex caused by copying an earlier manuscript.

[35] See also Clay 2011.

[36] For different stages of a poem's development reflected in a proem, see the extant variants on the *Iliad* proem: 1) Μούσας ἀείδω καὶ Ἀπόλλωνα κλυτότοξον, 2) ἔσπετε νῦν μοι, μοῦσαι, Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι, / ὅππως δὴ μῆνίς τε χόλος θ' ἔλε Πηλείωνα / Λητοῦς τ' ἀγλαὸν υἱόν· ὁ γὰρ βασιλῆι χολωθεὶς . . .

reciting it.[37] When laws were written down, they became more difficult to change, as amending lawcodes which had been written on vellum would have been time consuming and expensive. The reverse side to such fixity, however, was the possibility of conflicting versions. Whereas in an oral culture all that mattered was the current performance (that is, the recitation at this year's *Althing*), the advent of writing created multiple law codes which had to be negotiated. The act of writing shifted the power from the learned lawspeaker and his group of orally trained lawmen to the bishop in Skálholt, who held what was rather arbitrarily considered the decisive volume (Sigurðsson 2005:292). This example serves to highlight key issues relating to the transition between orality and literacy, not only fixity but also the balance between change and continuity, and the renegotiation of authority.

To return to the poems—both the *Works and Days* and *Hávamál* are transitional products, caught between orality and literacy, using and used by both. As such, diverse elements (various narrative forms, changing narrative voices, mix-and-match addressees, even different meters in the case of *Hávamál*) are selected from the tradition because they suit the purpose of a Redaktor, a compiler, the person or persons leading us inexorably towards a greater degree of fixity. Traditional units coalesce because they make a coherent didactic point or theme: but not necessarily because they fit together seamlessly and uniformly. Gnomic maxims, proverbs, and precepts are by nature detachable; they can therefore be rearranged or treated selectively in performance, and so any recording of them may easily be accused of omission, interpolation, disjointing, and so on.[38] Neither the *Works and Days* nor *Hávamál* can lay claim to structural perfection—indeed much scholarship on both poems has been concerned with reordering lines or stanzas, or tweaking the syntax here and there to smooth it out.[39] However, the fact that a structure *can* be deduced—narrative threads followed, an overarching focus isolated, intratextual references spotted—suggests that these poems are products of more than anonymous tradition alone. I am not convinced that all we find in the *Works and Days*, for example, can be attributed to an impersonal oral tradition that developed over centuries. I do not think that models of circumstantial development, such as Lamberton's "string of beads" (1988:22) or West's idea that Hesiod's themes evolved during the course of a recitation can adequately account for the level of structural design. There is evidence for a certain level of conscious crafting—the hand of an organizer or compiler with a coherent didactic purpose—and it is this coherent product which became fixed by writing.

There are important differences between the Greek continuum and the Nordic: the role of festivals and the context of performance, the role of city-states, the existence of competing

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[37] In fact according to Ari's *Íslendingabók* it was the lawspeaker who made the decision to convert Iceland to Christianity at the *Althing* of 1000 CE.

[38] The *Works and Days* could conceivably be performed at a festival, having showpieces, such as the woodcutting section (414-47) to display the rhapsode's skill, and a worthy moral impetus. In such a setting, we might envisage that the more prescriptive sections were treated selectively: perhaps a rhapsode would judge the audience's attention span and edit accordingly.

[39] Poems can even be remodeled entirely. Lindquist 1956 posited that the "original" *Hávamál* was an account of an initiation into Odinic wisdom, which then fell into the hands of a Christian zealot who spitefully retaliated by jumbling up the verses. Lindquist un-jumbles them for us.

traditions (of which the *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* gives us a glimpse on the Greek side).[40] Here I would like to elaborate on two differences to give a sense of the complexity of the issue. First and foremost is the use of runes in the latter tradition (evident in the *Rúnatal* section of *Hávamál*). Runes were used for particular purposes, primarily memorializing, ownership, and magic (Quinn 2000:30). They appeared on rune stones which were set up to commemorate the dead, and as such perform a role very like that of Greek epigrams. However, unlike epigrams they *precede* their culture's primary transition from orality to literacy, representing a separate "rune literate" stage of development. Harris (2010) explores the effect this use of runes had on the Nordic oral tradition, arguing that Old Norse poetry, particularly author-ascribed skaldic poetry, displays "an element of literate mentality" (122). It is conceivable that such ground-work might have eased the poems' transition from oral to written form. Another difference is the way in which writing arrived in the respective cultures. As Kellogg (1990:194) notes, literacy "did not come as gently to the Germanic peoples as it did to the sixth-century Greeks. It came with the full force of Latin books, the Latin language, and Roman religion."[41] Perhaps then we should imagine a shorter continuum in Iceland than in Greece: one eased by rune literacy and swept along by Latin imports.

The transitional nature of both poems goes some way towards explaining their almost schizophrenic structures: on the one hand wildly diverse, on the other enticingly coherent. But what can it tell us about their content? Much of this study has been dedicated to showing that many themes, tropes, and concerns are shared by the two poems. Despite the striking similarities, however, I have refrained from any suggestion of a straight channel of reception. Not all scholars have been so cautious. Several attempts have been made to match up *Hávamál* with the Biblical Proverbs or Ecclesiastes. Additionally, Roland Köhne (1972) has posited Cicero's *De Amicitia* as a partial source; Rolf Pipping (1949) has suggested that some stanzas stem from Seneca; and, most notably, von See, in his analysis of *Hávamál* (1972b), has posited the *Disticha Catonis* as a direct source for the Icelandic poem. Such arguments have been widely recognized as unconvincing and even a little far-fetched.[42] If we are convinced by the traditional provenance of many elements of *Hávamál*—and I think we should be—then they are likely to predate the arrival of Christianity, writing, and Latin treatises. More valuable still, I suggest, is interpreting the similarities as a reflection of comparable societies, or at least societies at comparable points in their developments. The question of orality versus literacy is one such comparandum, with the poems representing the same point on their respective oral/literate continuum. Furthermore, concerns with reputation, with self-sufficiency and reciprocity, with balance and measure: all are of particular relevance to both societies. Archaic Greece and Viking Scandinavia might not be

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[40] Particularly useful on the specifics of the oral/literate continuum and the crystallization of the Hesiodic poems into a Panhellenic form is Nagy 1990.

[41] Kellogg's specification "sixth century" is to be taken with a pinch of salt.

[42] Larrington (1991:155) concludes "The purpose of this article has been to consider the findings of four scholars concerned with extra-Scandinavian material in *Hávamál*. None of the parallels proposed has been convincing."

exactly parallel cultures, but they evidently share certain cultural concerns.[43] As agrarian societies with strong family and household structures, polytheistic religions, and honor codes,[44] it is understandable that they would offer similar advice in similar formulations through similar didactic strategies.[45] Larrington (1991:141) summarizes one particular scholarly approach to *Hávamál*: "While similarities of content with, for example, Old English wisdom verse could be ascribed to a common Germanic stock of ideas and expressions, where *Hávamál* appeared to echo a text from beyond the Germanic corpus, a different explanation had to be sought." But must a common stock of ideas and expressions be so limited? It seems to me that even echoes which resound beyond the Germanic corpus ask not for a different explanation, but for an extension of the same: an understanding that stock ideas are common not to a particular cultural grouping, but to multiple, comparable cultures.

Walcot in his comparative study, *Greek Peasants, Ancient and Modern* (1970) defends comparative methodologies at the sociological level as being "able to penetrate beneath the surface of mere words and so come to grips with an attitude of mind which is likely to be totally baffling when surveyed from the comfort and security of an armchair" (10).[46] In this article I have shown that similarities between the two poems exist on the "surface of mere words." We might add even more specific verbal similarities, such as the use of kennings, a typical feature of wisdom literature (indeed the word "*Hávamál*" itself is a kenning, referring to Óđinn but meaning literally "Words of the High One").[47] But perhaps more importantly, I have shown that the poems express similar societal concerns—concerns from which, Walcot rightly points out, modern scholars are far removed. A comparative approach, then, takes us closer to understanding the "attitude of mind" of the Redaktors of both the *Works and Days* and *Hávamál*: an attitude which is made clearer by its recurrence. As Larrington (1993:65) argues, "Hávamál is a coherent poem. The problems which readers have experienced in making sense of it in the past lie not in the text itself, but in the readers' expectations of the genre." Readers of the *Works and Days* too set themselves up for disappointment: "Hesiod will undoubtedly remain some way short of flawless in most readers' eyes" (Morgan 2001:3). Perhaps this comparison can help us shift our expectations. Of course two poems do not a genre make—but the "unique" *Works and Days* now

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[43] They may in fact be closer than we think, as Hans van Wees' paper "Attic Vikings" suggests. Indeed this paper shows how comparisons with Norse culture can be useful to ancient historians too: "We are not well-informed about the details of Greek sea-raiding, but we can make some inferences which are supported by medieval Norse parallels."

[44] It is widely agreed that *Hávamál* is primarily pagan in content and was little influenced by Christianity.

[45] Postulating Indo-European roots of such formulae seems less useful than understanding the specific circumstances which encourage their use, particularly given the frequent parallels *outside* Indo-European languages (see note 28 for an example).

[46] We need not be derailed by Walcot's terminology in this book: "peasant" is not intended in any derogatory or pejorative sense but merely indicates someone for whom "agriculture is a livelihood and a way of life, not a business for profit." I agree that this is the case for Hesiod: throughout the *Works and Days* he portrays *kerdos*, profit, as something to treat with caution, he discredits seafaring (that is, travelling to trade), and he promotes self-sufficient livelihood (whether or not such self-sufficiency was a reality in Hesiod's world is a separate issue from his persona in the poem, which clearly advocates self-sufficiency as an ideal).

[47] On kennings in *Hávamál* see, for instance, Hallberg 1983:61.

is supported. The similarities may encourage us to think not in terms of problems, of texts that need emending or lines that need reshuffling, but in terms of the shared characteristics of transitional products. Moreover, if we exclude direct reception we are left with a cultural constant: the transmission of wisdom. And with recurring elements such as gnomic language, myth, and catalog, we are also left with constant expressions of that wisdom.

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The Oral Poetics of Professional Wrestling,
or Laying the Smackdown on Homer

William Duffy

Since its development in the first half of the twentieth century, Milman Parry and Albert Lord's theory of "composition in performance" has been central to the study of oral poetry (J. M. Foley 1998:ix-x). This theory and others based on it have been used in the analysis of poetic traditions like those of the West African *griots*, the Viking *skalds*, and, most famously, the ancient Greek epics.[1] However, scholars have rarely applied Parry-Lord theory to material other than oral poetry, with the notable exceptions of musical forms like jazz, African drumming, and freestyle rap.[2] Parry and Lord themselves, on the other hand, referred to the works they catalogued as *performances*, making it possible to use their ideas beyond poetry and music. The usefulness of Parry-Lord theory in studies of different poetic traditions tempted me to view other genres of performance from this perspective. In this paper I offer up one such genre for analysis —professional wrestling—and show that interpreting the tropes of wrestling through the lens of composition in performance provides information that, in return, can help with analysis of materials more commonly addressed by this theory.

Before beginning this effort, it will be useful to identify the qualities that a work must possess to be considered a "composition in performance," in order to see if professional wrestling qualifies. The first, and probably most important and straightforward, criterion is that, as Lord (1960:13) says, "the moment of composition is the performance." This disqualifies art forms like theater and ballet, works typically planned in advance and containing words and/or actions that must be performed at precise times and following a precise order. Second, while works composed in composition are created and performed at the same time, they are not invented extemporaneously. The subject and structure of works composed in performance are

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[1] I will be using the Ancient Greek epics as the primary point of comparison to other genres in this essay.

[2] For discussions of the links between Parry-Lord theory and jazz, see Foster 2004, Gillespie 1991, G. Smith 1983, and Potter 1990, among others. See Ong 1977 for an analysis of African drum traditions. Erik Pihel (1996) has also argued that freestyle rap is, in fact, a form of oral poetry, and that the application of Parry-Lord theory to the genre is not actually an exception to usual practice. Usher (2009) recently and successfully utilized the theory of composition in performance in his analysis of Cynic verbal performance, but like Pihel he largely does so to draw the Cynics into the realm of poetic performance, not to identify them as a separate art form following the same structure.

known in advance, unlike in pure improvisation, and certain key elements are fixed;[3] for example, no version of Hector's battle with Achilles can end with Hector as the victor. This distinguishes works composed in performance from purely improvised pieces.[4] Third, works composed in performance utilize an identifiable series of traditional techniques and stock elements to enable them to construct successfully their performance, most famously the formulae of oral poetry.[5] Parry-Lord theory is only applicable to genres which have all these qualities.

Now that we have the general qualities a work must have to be considered "composed in performance," we can turn to professional wrestling to see if it qualifies. However, for the sake of the (presumably many) scholars unfamiliar with professional wrestling, it may be helpful to provide a brief overview of the genre and its history.[6] The entertainment medium we now call professional wrestling or pro wrestling started out in the late nineteenth/early twentieth century as an honest-to-goodness athletic competition, or at least as honest as athletic competitions were when coming from the world of carnivals and traveling shows.[7] While outcomes were sometimes fixed (as was and sadly is also the case in boxing and other "legitimate" sports), the combatants were trained athletes, participating in a sport that combined elements of a wide variety of grappling forms from across Europe and North America.[8] That said, in both the true competitions of early twentieth-century arenas and the carnival attractions offering locals the chance to win

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[3] Lord (1960:26-28), provides a detailed account of the aspects of works composed in performance that are fixed. He also notes that the *guslari* he interviewed often believed that the entireties of their works were fixed, with any discrepancies being chalked up to errors on their part.

[4] Much interesting work on the distinction between improvisation and composition has been done in regard to music, including works like Foss (1962) that define the distinction, and those like Larson (2005) that problematize it. Notably, Larson does not connect jazz to composition in performance, although his analysis points out several qualities in the works he discusses that are closely connected to the kinds of works resulting from composition in performance; this is true even in his discussion (2005:255) of Gregory Smith. For a discussion of improvisation in a context involving words, see Salinsky and Frances-White 2008.

[5] J. M. Foley (1998:11-15) provides a somewhat more generalized description of this process that was particularly useful to this study.

[6] There are many books, both scholarly and mass-market, that discuss the history of professional wrestling. While there are obviously some variations from text to text, and (as we will see later) accounts of the wrestling industry almost always have an at-best shaky relationship with the truth, the general development of the genre depicted in this paper is generally agreed upon. This paper draws primarily on Shoemaker (2013), Morton and O'Brien (1985), and Beekman (2006), who have written arguably the most comprehensive and well-analyzed accounts of pro wrestling in America. Levi (2008) provides an invaluable source for scholars interested in Mexico's famed "Lucha Libre" style of wrestling, but the genre's storied history in other nations (most notably Japan) is still severely understudied.

[7] To this day, much, although certainly not all, of the "insider language" used by those participating in or in some other way wise to the machinations of professional wrestling is drawn directly from the language spoken by carnival workers in this period. See Kerrick (1980) for more on this topic.

[8] See Shoemaker 2013:9-11. Morton and O'Brien (1985:3-5) note that a form of grappling competition, real or fake, has existed since prehistoric times, making it arguably the oldest sport in human history, and it is unusual in existing in some form or another with virtually every culture in history. Ironically, the medium that currently competes most directly with professional wrestling is Mixed Martial Arts, whose blending of international fighting styles comes close to the approach taken in early wrestling matches, and even dealt with many of the same problems in becoming palatable to audiences, namely the length and lack of excitement generated in such a bout without restrictions placed on it (Downey 2007:223, n.10).

cash prizes by defeating these combatants, spectacle was central to professional wrestling's economic success.[9] At carnivals a planted grappler, dressed as a regular attendee, would often defeat or hold his own against the showcased wrestler in order to convince young men that they could do the same.[10] In true contests boasts about a given grappler's talents and accolades, and the nefarious or unworthy nature of his opponent, would inevitably be published before major bouts, whether or not such boasts were actually made.[11] Unfortunately, these efforts to excite audiences about wrestling spectacles were often undone by the fact that the sport itself was simply not exciting, with matches often going on for interminable hours. Wrestlers and promoters responded by increasingly fixing matches to help build to more profitable and exciting bouts, and transitioning from the use of effective but visually unstimulating techniques to more exciting moves that were by necessity artificial and choreographed. In remarkably little time professional wrestling transformed itself from a boring sport to an exciting performance. However, wrestling, at least publicly, continued to assert some connection to legitimacy.

Despite no longer being a sport in the typical sense of the word, professional wrestlers and promoters in the "fake" era of wrestling publicly treated their performance as a legitimate athletic endeavor for decades. This intentional obfuscation of the true nature of their endeavor to "outsiders" was referred to among wrestlers and in-the-know fans by the term "kayfabe," a term drawn, like many others connected to wrestling, from carnival slang.[12] While professional wrestling is certainly not the only art form to engage in this subterfuge,[13] it took this practice further than virtually any other modern form. Professional wrestling "faces" (heroes) and "heels" (villains) were prohibited from traveling together, and all wrestlers were expected to "protect the business" by fighting people who claimed that they were not truly as tough as their in-ring performances suggested or arguing with (and sometimes attacking) people who

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[9] Shoemaker (2013:12-14) describes this phenomenon, and notes that even two of the most famous "legitimate" wrestlers of the pre-World War I era, Frank Gotch and George Hackenschmidt, worked in entertainment; Gotch was an actor, Hackenschmidt a carnival strongman.

[10] See Beekman 2006:40. The carnival wrestlers also used similar tactics to ensure that they were rarely if ever legitimately defeated by one of these "marks," to use the carnival term.

[11] Shoemaker (2013:10-14) describes these activities in detail, particularly in regard to Hackenschmidt. It is also worth noting that other sporting events, contemporaneous with "real" wrestling and otherwise, employ similar tactics. The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are particularly notable for attempting to use boxers as representative of whole populations, particularly racial populations (Rodriguez 2002:210-12). Morton and O'Brien (1985:5-7) note that grappling has had a connection to issues of masculinity, warfare, and cultural identity since prehistory, and that these were only magnified when wrestling transitioned from sport to art form.

[12] Virtually every scholar to discuss professional wrestling mentions kayfabe, with McQuarrie (2006:227) providing a particularly clear definition of the term. The concept of kayfabe is typically used to refer to a wrestler or promoter's behavior outside of the confines of the ring, but it has been used to describe their in-ring performance (R. Smith 2008:162-64), or, in McQuarrie's case, the entire corporate history of World Wrestling Entertainment.

[13] Magicians come immediately to mind.

questioned wrestling's authenticity.[14] Professional wrestling even allowed itself to be regulated by state athletic commissions (despite the costs and occasional creative problems this caused) until 1989, nearly fifty years after ceasing to be a sport.[15] This was not an attempt to fool fans into believing that the sport is "real," but to create the immersive environment in which the fans can *behave as if* they believed. This is markedly similar to the ideal reactions to traditional art forms like Greek theater.[16] This practice created an environment where knowledge of the true nature of wrestling could give fans the feeling of community associated with having "insider" knowledge.

While brief, this overview of wrestling history highlights two essential elements of its nature as an art form: its unusual mix of truth and fiction, particularly in regards to its earlier history, and the refusal of its practitioners to divulge its nature to outsiders. Both of these have strong parallels with oral poetry. The Homeric epics that still stand as the most famous products of a tradition utilizing composition in performance have a complicated relationship with the historical past that fascinates writers, scholars, and the general public from antiquity to the modern day.[17] While the history connected to Homeric epic is obviously deeper and more complicated than that of pro wrestling, the incorporation of the "real" past into fantastic performance, and the blurry boundary point between where reality ends and the imaginary begins, are elements central to the performance and enjoyment of both art forms. The ways that the practitioners of wrestling and oral poetry treat outside questioners are also closely linked. The *guslari* interviewed by Parry and Lord consistently maintained that they were not composing their works in performance, as was clearly the case, but were in fact performing the piece exactly as they had learned it (often after just one hearing), and in the same way, word for word, as they

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[14] This drive led to several of the most infamous moments in wrestling history, including Dave Schultz's assault of journalist John Stossel (Hart 2008:171), Hulk Hogan choking Richard Belzer into unconsciousness (Shoemaker 2014), and Jerry "The King" Lawler severely injuring Andy Kaufman on live television. Lawler has since claimed that the injury to Kaufman was a "work," wrestling parlance for performance, but the event was believed to be legitimate for over twenty years. Wrestlers are today as likely to claim a real event as fake as they are to claim that a false one was real.

[15] As W. O. Johnson notes (1991:50), World Wrestling Federation (now World Wrestling Entertainment) owner Vince McMahon made this declaration in order to lower the taxes he had to pay on live events. Still, the fact that this practice changed does not diminish the fact that it continued for a tremendously long time.

[16] The potential for Greek tragedy to make audiences behave as if they were watching actual events play out onstage rather than a performance is famously illustrated by the tale of women having spontaneous miscarriages upon seeing the titular characters of the *Eumenides*. This tale is found in *Vita Aeschyli* 9, a collection of anonymous fragments concerning Aeschylus (cf. Calder 1998).

[17] The literature on the relationship between the Homeric epics and the historical world is truly vast, but the very few examples below may help in providing a basic overview of the topic. Leaf (1915) arguably helped start the twentieth and twenty-first century conversation on the topic. Rauflaab 1998 provides a good introduction to the recent history of this discussion in scholarship and popular thought from the 1930s onwards. Vermeule (1986) provides an invaluable analysis of the relationship between the Homeric epics and our knowledge of Bronze Age Mediterranean history, as well as the implications of this relationship for approaching both topics. Kim (2010) and Higbie (1997) provide vital analyses about how the Homeric epics were associated with the past during the Roman imperial and classical Greek periods.

did previously (Lord 1960:27).[18] Parry and Lord read the statements of the *guslari* as an honest unawareness of the nature of their performance (Lord 1960:28), in contrast to the wrestlers' intentional practice of kayfabe, but the effect is essentially the same—obfuscating the true nature of an art from people who are not involved in its creation.

Now that we have established the history of professional wrestling as a mode of performance and seen how that history may make it analogous to oral poetic traditions, it is possible to investigate whether its storytelling structure can be described as being truly "composed in performance." Testimony from practitioners of the art form, commonly known as wrestlers or "sports entertainers" suggest that this is the case.[19] Our first piece of evidence comes from an interview that Chris Jericho and Triple H, two of the most successful wrestlers in the modern era, gave to Larry King in 2008:

> JERICHO: It's like being a jazz musician or an improv comedian. You have a certain mindset of what you want to do. But you go out there and follow each other, like a good jazz band will do. A good drummer will follow a good bass player. When you have professionals at this level, everybody works together. But we follow each other and listen to what the crowd says and just kind of go with it.
> TRIPLE H: That's basically it. I'm like the flute guy and Chris is . . .
> KING: OK, Triple H., tonight it will take about 20 minutes and you will defeat him.
> TRIPLE H: Yes. And . . .
> KING: That's all you know?
> JERICHO: That's usually the way it goes.

Jericho's and Triple H's description of a professional wrestling match corresponds markedly to two of the qualities of works composed in performance. Like the oral poems more typically analyzed through Parry-Lord theory, certain elements of a wrestling match such as length and outcome are established beforehand, but there is no exact script or choreography to

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[18] This practice may not be limited only to wrestling and narrative oral poetry. Usher (2009:209-10) suggests that Diogenes' *chreia,* insults or jokes often built on quoted or altered lines of Homeric poetry, were carefully rehearsed but presented in a manner that was meant to seem spontaneous, much like the moves in a professional wrestling match. If, as Usher persuasively argues, Cynic insults utilized some of the elements of composition in performance, this may imply that obfuscation of the means of production is a central part to composition of performance.

[19] Professional wrestlers are notorious for being unreliable in their discussions of the history and nature of wrestling. They are, however, the people best able to describe their art, and the decline of kayfabe within the industry has limited, although certainly not eliminated, this unreliability. The proliferation of autobiographies, out of character interviews, and other such materials has also made it easier to confirm the claims made by wrestlers. Whenever possible, the quotes from wrestlers used in this essay were verified against other sources, and will largely be treated as being accurate, or at least accurate to the performer's recollection.

follow; instead, the wrestlers create their story while they perform it.[20] Jericho's comparison of professional wrestlers to jazz musicians is also instructive for us, as jazz is one of few genres outside of oral literature regularly analyzed with composition in performance in mind. Similar descriptions of the "composition" of wrestling matches by their performers can be found in the autobiographies of many wrestlers, including Mick Foley (1999), Bret Hart (2008), and Shawn Michaels (2005). The wrestlers who describe the process of creating a wrestling narrative most clearly are often those who are considered the best at "telling a story" in the ring.

In addition, just as oral poets use traditional formulae to help them compose their poems, wrestlers employ their own set of techniques and stock story elements to compose their piece—the wrestling match—while they perform it: their "move set" which is the distinctive and limited set of strikes, slams, and submissions a given wrestler uses over the course of a simulated battle. These maneuvers are obviously not the metrically and thematically restricted poetic phrases familiar to oral poetry, but the mentioned application of composition in performance to a form music makes clear that a formula need not be verbal to be a formula.[21] As Bauman (1986:3) notes, the performance of oral poetry, with all its inherent formulae, is part of a larger group of communicative performances, an umbrella description that would certainly include professional wrestling. Though the exact number of these moves can vary according to wrestler and promotion,[22] they virtually always contain a key element familiar to scholars of oral traditions: they must be repeatable in many different matches (Horuichi 2012:64-65). Indeed, professional wrestlers often showcase an understanding of the development of move sets as repeatable elements of performance (Hart 2008:53). Oral poets, on the other hand, typically claim complete stories from perfect memory, denying the central role formulae play in their work (Lord 1960:27).

Professional wrestlers' method of storytelling, formulaic move sets, and descriptions of their working process indicate that professional wrestling is indeed "composed in performance," making Parry-Lord theory potentially applicable to it. The next step is to discern whether or not applying the theory to wrestling improves our understanding of the performance type. Due to the current state of wrestling scholarship, this is a relatively easy bar to clear. While there have been some excellent individual studies on the subject, most famously by Barthes (1972), the genre as a whole remains woefully understudied, particularly given its continued international popularity.[23]

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[20] There is some amount of variability in the number of specific moments, or "spots," that are planned out in advance for a given match. Some wrestlers prefer to map about as much of their match as they can, while others prefer a more freewheeling approach. A good example of this interplay can be seen in Mick Foley's account of his famed "Hell in a Cell" match with Mark Calaway, otherwise known as the Undertaker (1999:651-55). While Foley had taken several weeks to convince the Undertaker to start the match on the top of the massive cage, virtually all of the action that took place after his unplanned fall through the cage was created as the match progressed, leading to what many consider one of the greatest matches in wrestling history.

[21] Ong (1977), for instance, uses the term "formula" or "formulaic" 37 times in his work on African drums.

[22] The word "promotion" here refers to the organizations, big and small, that put on wrestling shows.

[23] While one might suggest that wrestling is neglected in scholarship because it is not high culture, other media at a similar level are given considerably more attention. To cite a few examples, "gangsta" rap (430), television cartoons (3,385), and pornography (over 14,000) all pull up considerably more articles on JSTOR (www.jstor.org) than professional wrestling's 251.

Even when scholars do turn their attention to wrestling, their focus is virtually never on narrative structure. Typically, studies of wrestling are either general histories like those of Shoemaker (2013), Beekman (2006), and Morton (1985), meditations on the semiotic or anthropological implications of the form found in Barthes 1972, Mazer 1998, and Ball 1990, or analyses of the wrestling audience like that of Toepher (2011). Independent of the dearth of studies of wrestling narrative, Parry-Lord theory has a unique ability to explain some otherwise perplexing elements of the genre.

The first issue that oral poetic theory may help to explain is professional wrestling's surprisingly complicated narrative structure. The performance pieces (wrestling matches) are themselves discrete narratives with clearly defined beginning, middle, and end.[24] However, these matches are embedded in, and gain their meaning from, an overarching and often contradictory tradition of stories that spans decades and continents. These two aspects of the professional wrestling narrative, though fundamentally different structurally, are mutually dependent. Wrestling's overarching storyline is aimless and uninteresting without considering its relationship to prior and future matches, and audiences without knowledge of the match's backstory will not know how to react to events in the match or may not even be able to identify that there is something to react to at all.[25]

It is difficult to describe the relationship between a wrestling match and the long-form stories connected to wrestlers and wrestling promotions. Most scholarly approaches to narrative apply to either discrete or serial narratives, not a mixed narrative structure like pro wrestling. Traditional narrative theory, as defined by authors like Bal (1997), Gennette (1980), and Schmid (2010), focuses primarily on discrete narratives. Indeed, these scholars tend not to consider the kinds of serial narrative structure that create continuing storylines as we find in professional wrestling; relatively few scholars attempt to apply traditional narratology to serial works.[26] The interpretive models for analyzing serial narrative structure developed by scholars like Mittell (2007) and Hayward (1997) have not yet proven helpful in the analysis of discrete narratives,

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[24] The beginning and end of wrestling matches are even signposted by theme music, much like television shows and movies.

[25] The wrestling columnist David Shoemaker, otherwise known as the (perpetually unmasked) "masked man," recently illustrated this point by providing a verbatim account of the announcers' call of the famed 1984 wrestling match between Hulk Hogan and the Iron Sheik, except reversing the names of the combatants (2012). Much of the "good guy" Hulk Hogan's behavior during the bout was essentially identical to what a dastardly heel typically does. The audience's acceptance and approval of his behavior was therefore predicated not on his actions, but on their prior knowledge of his and the Sheik's characters based on the overarching World Wrestling Federation narrative.

[26] Traditional narratology's difficulties in dealing with serial structures are most obvious in the rare efforts to apply it to serial or once serial fiction, such as Stewart's (2008) attempt to apply it to Charles Dickens. While Stewart notes that Dickens' works were originally serialized, his attempts to apply narratology force him to treat them like traditional novels. Discussion of Victorian serials like that of Leighton and Surridge (2008) and Keymer (2000) come closer to success in this regard, but maintain their focus on discrete works more than open ended ones. Narratology has been successfully utilized on the Homeric epics by several noted scholars, including De Jong (2001 and elsewhere) and the authors in Greithlein's and Rengakos' edited volume on the topic (2009). However, much of this success has come from treating the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as texts, with the exception of Bakker (2009) in the aforementioned volume. A wrestling match, in contrast, like an actual oral poetic performance, cannot be treated this way.

although that may change as study develops. Professional wrestling, being neither wholly discrete nor wholly serialized, is therefore difficult to analyze using either mode of interpretation. The theory of composition in performance, on the other hand, is not only capable of analyzing performances using this sort of mixed narrative structure, but indeed specializes in doing so.

Oral traditions regularly exhibit the same interplay between discrete tale and overarching storyline that we see in professional wrestling. When describing oral poetry, Lord notes that "in a very real sense, every performance is an original song; for every performance is unique . . ." (1960:4). This description of a single oral poem as a discrete, distinctive work also applies to individual wrestling matches, particularly since wrestlers often face each other multiple times over the course of their careers, just as an oral poet will perform the same poem multiple times. In both cases, while the structure and outcome of the performances are often the same, each individual performance is a unique event.[27] At the same time, the Serbian poems analyzed by Parry and Lord, and most of the oral poetic traditions that have been analyzed using their methodology, are couched in larger mythical traditions that, as it were, exert control over these works while providing them with invaluable context and meaning. Moreover, as Burgess (2003:4) notes in his discussion of the Trojan War saga, the mythic tradition associated with poems composed in performance does not develop solely out of the poems themselves, but from a wide variety of sources. This is also true in professional wrestling narratives, which are driven by interviews, video montages, and backstage encounters just as much as in-ring action. A look at just two of many professional wrestling analogs for this phenomenon reveals that the theory of composition in performance, unlike the more delineated structural models of narrative, is also effective for defining this genre.

When Shawn Michaels (né Michael Shawn Hickenbottom) "turned heel," moving from hero to villain, his method was predicated on the mixed narrative model wrestling shares with oral poetry and other genres of narrative composed in performance. During a series of matches Michaels and his tag team partner Marty Jannetty had miscommunications, sometimes leading to losses. None of the narratives in the individual matches were strong enough to actually force Michaels' character to change in that instant, but, when "read" within the WWF's overarching narrative, those matches set the stage for Michaels' move to the dark side, while still retaining the element of surprise for when the turn actually occurred. Notably, Michaels' actual "heel turn" (change from good guy to bad guy) took place not during a wrestling match but during an interview segment meant to advance the general narrative, as did the introduction of a supporting character, the manager Sensational Sherri, to solidify his new identity.[28] The decision to develop Michaels' character from sources outside of wrestling matches ultimately became vital to its success; Jannetty's personal problems prevented a climactic battle between the two from coming to fruition, but Michaels' in-ring character evolved to match the persona he developed in his interviews and wardrobe choices. Indeed, his new "Heartbreak Kid" persona became so iconic

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[27] Bret Hart's 2009 memoir *Hitman* provides multiple accounts of series of matches with the same opponent that recall Lord's accounts of the Serbian *guslari* performing the ostensibly same poem over and over, as do several other wrestler autobiographies.

[28] A general account of Michaels' heel turn can be found in his autobiography (2005:157-67). Notably, Michaels claims that he was on another continent when Sherri conducted her interview and was unaware of it until after the fact.

and popular that audience reactions eventually drove him to become a "face" (good guy) again, and he ultimately became one of the most popular and successful characters in wrestling history.[29] The way a wrestler's character evolves is fundamentally different from the means of changing characters in serial or contained narratives, but is markedly similar to how Burgess (2003) describes the evolution of the Trojan War myth.

Video 1: Shawn Michaels and Marty Jannetty, wrestling together as The Rockers. Note the identical outfits and move lists, which formulaically links them together as a unit. Video from YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ls0gp9f4Jdg
eCompanion: http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/29i/duffy#myGallery-picture(1)

Video 2: Shawn Michaels' "Heel turn" on Marty Jannetty. Note the repeated references to past events, and to the dramatic change in Michaels' clothing, showing the break with the previous character and its formulae. Video from YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hsvUNQyWFhw
eCompanion: http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/29i/duffy#myGallery-picture(2)

As Burgess notes, the development of the Trojan War myth was not the result of a single performance, or even single mode of performance, but of the intermingling of multiple traditions: epic poetry, non-epic verses, prose folktales, and even artwork could and did influence the motifs and storylines that ultimately made up the Trojan War tradition (2003:4). Similarly, Shawn Michaels' persona was created through a mix of his behavior during professional wrestling matches, syndicated interviews, and a change in attire utilized in staged "real life" moments, entering and leaving wrestling arenas. Notably, in both Michaels' heel turn and Burgess' model of the Trojan War myth (2003:5-6), the most famous elements of the wider narrative did not have a larger impact on the evolution of the story than the less famous ones did. Just as minor poems and artistic conventions transformed the Trojan War tradition as much as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, Shawn Michaels' behavior in staged "backstage" vignettes and magazine interviews ultimately did more to push his storyline forward than anything that happened during the then WWF's flagship *WrestleMania* and *Royal Rumble* Pay-Per-Views.[30]   Indeed, the

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[29] The changed role of a character and performer in the wrestling storyline in response to audience reaction is a key component in keeping often decades-long narratives compelling; it shares this trait with oral poetry. As Ong (2012:158) notes, a performer can change a poem's length, style, and characterization of key figures in midstream to match the desires of its audience. In that regard, it may be worth noting that Shawn Michaels was arguably most beloved after his last WWE Heavyweight Championship reign ended and least appreciated when he actually held the title; reactions to him were and are seemingly predicated not on his place in the wrestling narrative, but the regard in which he is held as a performer and person.

[30] The World Wrestling Federation eventually changed its name to World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE), after it was sued by the World Wildlife Fund over the WWF abbreviation.

wardrobe changes that were key to heralding Shawn Michaels' heel turn were largely absent from his matches. Both processes are fundamentally different from the way that narratives are altered in purely serial or discrete narratives, in which changes to a character or world happen exclusively within the story itself. It is also worth noting that many of Shawn Michaels' matches and interviews during his turn occurred during untelevised "house shows." In these shows Michaels would wrestle the same opponent and give interviews on the same topic over and over again, but each audience would see a unique performance that would further its understanding of the professional wrestling narrative. This activity is markedly similar to Nagy's description of oral poetic performance (1996:7-38).

Shawn Michaels' (probably) unwitting use of an approach to narrative development parallel with one found in oral traditions, along with his innate talent and charisma, resulted in the creation of one of the most successful characters in wrestling history. This example shows that professional wrestling is most successful when it follows the structure of oral epic and other works composed in performance: creating a symbiotic link between an individual work composed in performance and a larger narrative tradition. Every Shawn Michaels' performance, even local shows viewed by only the crowds present that day, was enhanced because knowledge of the overarching storyline affected both his performance and his audience's reaction to it: the long-term storyline was enhanced and stabilized by specific individual performances, including, but not limited to, wrestling matches.[31] Participants in the wrestling narrative who focus on one part of it to the detriment of others risk damaging both their performance and weakening the tradition. Mick Foley describes one example of this in his autobiography *Have a Nice Day* (1999:268-69):

> The next morning, we woke up and fumbled through the television stations on the remote control. "Let's keep it there," I requested when the sterile ambiance of WCW Worldwide flickered onto the screen. My match with Vader was on. Boom, boom, boom—I was really nailing big Leon. I was nervous with anticipation as Vader threw back the mat. They hadn't made reference to the injury [that Foley had suffered at Vader's hands under identical circumstances] of exactly one year ago yet, but now the story would surely unfold. Vader picked me up for the powerbomb and sent me crashing down to the concrete. Splat. To tell you the truth, this one actually looked more devastating than the one in '93. I listened for the brilliant call—sometimes the right words can really cement an image in the fans' minds. Here it comes. Bobby Heenan was the first to comment on this historic, career-turning moment. "That'll give you Excedrin headache number nine," said the braid, with about as much raw, naked emotion as Al Gore on sedatives. "Indeed it will," added Schiovanne. Then—nothing . . . That was the final nail. I thought about it for two days, and made my decision to quit World Championship Wrestling.

From the perspective of composition in performance, the failure described by Mick Foley stemmed not from the tale told in his in-ring performance with Vader, but in the failure of the announcers to connect the performance with the larger wrestling tradition. Foley included

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[31] Notably, much of the enhancement and stabilization discussed here comes from the behavior of the audience, not just the performer. See Toepfer 2011 for a discussion of the importance of the wrestling audience on genre generally.

elements in his match meant to allude to his history with Vader, but Bobby Heenan's description stripped it of all significance. This phenomenon links to the observation of John Miles Foley (1995:28) that the power of a work composed in performance comes from the interrelatedness of the performance and overarching tradition. Any work composed in performance that fails to link these two components, be it an epic poem or a steel cage match, is destined to fail—in the sense that it will be less meaningful or meaningless. Mick Foley's impassioned description of how his performance was treated draws the implications of this kind of failure in performance to the foreground. Perhaps Bobby Heenan would not have been so careless if he had spent some time with the *guslari.*

The concept of "thrift" in composition in performance can also be valuable to the study of wrestling's narrative structure.[32] Thrift refers to a phenomenon that provides one, and ideally only one, way of describing individual characters, concepts, and actions per compositional space.[33] This distinguishes such works from those created primarily through writing, even if they are of the same genre; epic poetry provides a particularly well known example (Parry 1987:xxvii). Thriftiness is why Diomedes can never be described as "swift footed" in Homeric poetry, nor Achilles as "good at the war cry," even though both are fast and good yellers. Scholars typically use the concepts of formula and utility in discussing poetry and metrics, but the concept need not be limited to them. Professional wrestling is obviously not "metrical" in the sense that a poem is, but each wrestler *does* have signature moves that are keyed to specific matches or parts of a match, just as poetic phrases in oral poetry are restricted to certain characters, scenes, and locations in a verse. Thinking of a wrestler's move set as a collection of formulae proves helpful for interpreting a problematic aspect of the professional wrestling match: the finishing move, each wrestler's signature technique for securing victory.

Considered from standard perspectives of storytelling, professional wrestling finishers are problematic at best and nonsensical at worst. When a wrestler ends nearly all of his fights in the same manner, it makes them considerably less realistic. In combat sports, virtually no fighter has only one means of achieving victory. To cite two examples, mixed martial artist Mirko "Cro Cop" Filipovic, famed for his left high kick, "finishes" less than a third of his matches with that maneuver, and Muhammad Ali knocked out opponents with at least four different types of

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[32] As Adam Parry notes (1987:xxvii, n.2), Milman Parry used the terms "economy" and "thrift" interchangeably to describe this phenomenon.

[33] J. M. Foley (1988:23-28) provides a valuable explanation of Milman Parry's original 1928 theory, using some of Parry's examples.

punches.[34] If the goal of professional wrestling matches is to simulate a real fight as convincingly as possible, the finishing move would be counterproductive. However, if we look at wrestling as composition in performance, the "finishing move" becomes not only acceptable but vital.

If a wrestling match is understood as composition in performance, its "formulae" (wrestling moves) should be subject to the same rules of thrift as formulae in oral poetry. Just as a *guslar* selects his specific epithets, stock scenes, and extended metaphors to match the needs of specific points in his poem, a wrestler chooses moves from his repertoire to correspond with where he is in the narrative of any given match, not according to any consideration of what would be the tactically best choice. In the instance of the "finishing move," wrestlers sacrifice the verisimilitude of ending their fights in a variety of ways for the ability to send a clear signal to the audience that the climax of the narrative is at hand.[35] The ability to use one, and only one, maneuver at the end of a match is therefore as valuable to the professional wrestler as the oral poet's ability to refer to Athena as "gray eyed."

Indeed, rather than detracting from the experience, as it might if the simulated battle were seeking verisimilitude, wrestling's finishing moves help fans understand and immerse themselves in the story of the match, just like any good narrative device, or any good formula.[36] A good example of this is Hulk Hogan's famed leg drop. The technique is actually a common one, used by other performers at various points throughout a match, but because Hogan uses it exclusively at the end of his matches, it has become arguably the most famous move in wrestling history. This is not due to its technical brilliance, or its ability to imitate something that would actually be done in real-life hand to hand combat. Instead, Hogan's Leg Drop succeeds, to borrow Bauman's terms (1986:3-4), as a communicative act: the audience can immediately

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[34] Information about the means of victory for these fights comes from their publicly available professional combat record. Mirko Filipovic's record can be found, among many other places, at mixed martial arts website sherdog.com (http://www.sherdog.com/fighter/Mirko-Filipovic-2326). There is no single location that identifies every punch used by Muhammad Ali to win a fight, but a cursory look at his most famous bouts includes knockouts via left hook (The "Rumble in the Jungle" with George Foreman), body blows (victory over Archie Moore), right straights and uppercuts (both numerous), and the famed "anchor punch" that sent Sonny Liston to the mat in their second bout. Recently, female mixed martial artist Ronda Rousey has proven an exception to this rule, winning all of her bouts by first round armbar, a common submission hold based on hyperextending the opponent's elbow joint. However, this seems to be a function of lacking opponents that are legitimate challengers, making her use of a "finishing move" more akin to the narrative tool of professional wrestlers than a necessity in a combat sport. Indeed, as her opponents have improved, her methods of victory have varied somewhat, although she remains undefeated.

[35] Except in the case of false finishes, the resolution of the narrative takes place immediately after the finishing maneuver with the "pin fall," when one wrestler holds the other's shoulders down to the mat for the official count to three.

[36] The first finishing move to gain wide fame, the "Airplane Spin," was visually distinctive but completely impossible to do without the putative opponent's active assistance (Shoemaker 2013:23-24), which supports the argument that the finishing move was more about narrative than reality from the very beginning.

recognize it as symbolizing the end of a match and the victory of a character (usually)[37] identified as their champion, and react accordingly.[38]
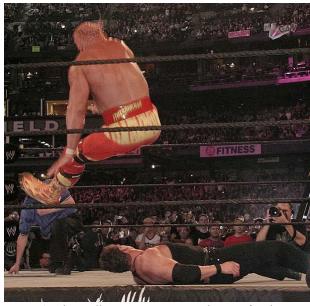

Image 1: The Hulk Hogan Leg Drop, known for the past thirty years as a devastating finisher. Image from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leg_drop#mediaviewer/File:Hoganlegdrop.jpg. eCompanion: http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/29i/duffy#myGallery-picture(3)

Image 2: This maneuver is a transitional move in a match, *not* a finisher. Image from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leg_drop#mediaviewer/File:Chief_Ade_leg_drop.jpg. eCompanion: http://journal.oraltradition.org/issues/29i/duffy#myGallery-picture(4)

These examples only scratch the surface of what Parry-Lord theory can offer the study of professional wrestling narratives. The question then becomes whether the reverse is true: can studying professional wrestling further our understanding of oral poetry? A close look at professional wrestling reveals that it can.

First and foremost, scholars researching professional wrestling have access to one of the largest preserved data sets for any art form. The World Wrestling Entertainment Vault alone had 130,000 hours of material as of 2013 (http://www.wwe.com/classics/inside-video-vault-26125073/page-4), and has added thousands of hours since. Even this collection is but a fraction of recorded wrestling matches, and does not include the thousands of live wrestling

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[37] Hulk Hogan has spent most of his career as a fan favorite, although his "heel turn" and subsequent time as the villainous leader of World Championship Wrestling's "New World Order" is the single most successful storyline in professional wrestling history.

[38] The ability of wrestling fans to recognize that a Hulk Hogan Leg Drop is somehow fundamentally different from that of another 6'6", 300-pound man and react accordingly suggests that they have a contextual knowledge of certain wrestling *formulae*. This naturally leads one to wonder if audiences of oral poetry would possess the same knowledge, and what the implications of that would be.

events that occur in the (at least) 170 nations that showcase the performance form.[39] The sum total of this material is very likely more than all of our other collections of narrative art composed in performance combined.[40] Professional wrestling has been a major part of television programming since the invention of the medium (Beekman 2006:73-94), and the top three weekly scripted series in terms of number of episodes are wrestling programs.[41] Also, on any given weekend, dozens of non-televised wrestling events are put on in the United States, and hundreds worldwide. By comparison, the number of performances of extant oral poetic traditions has significantly dwindled, particularly those that engage in long-term narrative construction as oral epic did and professional wrestling does.[42] Even extant narrative oral traditions have limitations regarding both their current state and our access to them, which may make comparative analysis with more robust performance traditions useful.

The first potential problem with extant oral narratives is that our methods of preserving them can affect their form. In Lord's and Parry's fieldwork dictated versions of oral poems were considerably more normalized than audio recordings of the same poem, as well as considerably longer than sung texts that Lord transcribed (1953:126-27). Lord noticed that both the poet and the stenographer edited the dictated texts after they were written. Such editorial interventions add a layer of artificiality, though they do not diminish the value of the work. This also gives us some pause regarding recorded texts, since poets who changed their work in response to written recording could also be expected to do so in response to other forms of recording. The second

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[39] The WWE Vault contains materials from a half dozen to a dozen major wrestling organizations, all based in the United States or Canada. However, it does not include the dozens of unfilmed "house shows" the WWE puts on every year, which are sometimes recorded by other parties. It also does not contain materials from the competing Total Nonstop Action (TNA) promotion, which has produced 12 years of televised and non-televised material, the hundreds of lower tier "independent" promotions that exist or have existed over the course of the medium's existence, or the large and small organizations that put on events in other nations. WWE broadcasts reach markets in 170 nations according to their company overview (http://corporate.wwe.com/company/overview), and it is likely that at least that many countries house at least one wrestling promotion. Several of these countries, notably Mexico, Japan, and Germany, have professional wrestling traditions and promotions that go back almost to the beginnings of the art, with large portions of it recorded on videotape. The WWE Vault is however unique in being available to any individual who pays the $9.99 fee for the WWE network, making it not only larger but easier to access than the vast majority of oral literature databases.

[40] "Narrative art composed in performance" refers to oral poetry, other forms of oral literature, and theatrical and film performances of this type. However, it leaves out musical forms like jazz and rap, which probably have more total hours of material than wrestling does.

[41] This is a limited definition, not counting news, talk shows, or daily serial formats. It should also be noted that the number of episodes of the longest weekly scripted shows combined does not equal that of the long lasting daily soap operas, the most fully serialized art form on film *Monday Night Raw* has put on over 1,100 episodes (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WWE_Raw), *WWE Superstars* over 925 (http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0261495/), and *WWE Smackdown* will soon pass episode 800 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WWE_SmackDown). *Gunsmoke*'s 635 episodes is the record for a non-wrestling scripted series (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gunsmoke). While the numbers listed above are mostly drawn from Wikipedia and IMDb, they can all be confirmed through a number of other websites.

[42] The most robust extant oral tradition, judged by both the popularity of its performances and the increasing number and skill of its performers, is probably the Basque *bertsolaritza*, the subject of 2007 *Oral Tradition* special volume, with the contributions of J. M. Foley (2007) and Garzia (2007) being particularly useful for those unfamiliar with the tradition. However, this tradition, focused on short performances on generic topics, does not participate in the sort of large scale mythmaking associated with older oral epic traditions.

issue is that, with the possible exception of the Basque *bertsolaritza* (which is not primarily engaged in extended mythic narratives), almost all extant oral traditions are many generations old, which creates some limitations for study. Albert Lord (1960:129-31) famously stated that the *guslar* tradition central to his and Parry's study of composition in performance was in essentially its last generation when he and Parry studied it;[43] while similar traditions may have outlasted the Serbo-Croatian poets, virtually all are at or near their nadir in terms of the number and quality of practitioners. This limits our ability to draw conclusions about their composition in performance generally. While professional wrestling is not oral poetry, it may be able to address a couple of these issues.

Professional wrestling immensely popular;[44] millions of the people in the United States alone watch professional wrestling in person or on television, and over 100 countries put on wrestling events. Many of the best performers in the genre's history are still practicing or recently retired, and virtually all of their matches can be studied through existing recordings. It may therefore be possible to observe in professional wrestling elements of composition in performance that exist only in traditions that are at their height, and cannot be seen in most currently extant oral traditions. Given the ubiquity of wrestling performances, both new and archived, it is possible to study them without worrying about any of the complications Lord and others have found when they personally recorded their materials. These qualities may allow the comparanda of wrestling to supplement research into oral poetry on certain important topics connected to composition in performance. One such topic, although not by any means the only one, is the creation of formulae.

As professional wrestlers develop their move sets, certain maneuvers enter and leave their repertoire, while others remain for decades. This process is similar to the presumed process of the accrual of an oral poet's formulae (Jahandarie 1999:7-8). Based on traditions that are either very old or no longer extant, studies of oral poetry to date have not been able to explain *why* one specific formula emerges and endures while another disappears.[45] Professional wrestling, on the other hand, provides some footing to tackle this issue directly.

Looking at the development of professional wrestling move sets, the first thing that becomes clear is that, with notable exceptions, a particular move's entrance into a wrestler's

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[43] Edwards and Sienkewicz (1991:7-8) noted that Lord's claim was slightly exaggerated, and that some *guslari* did perform in a largely literate Yugoslavia. Still, the lack of dynamism that Lord describes is entirely accurate and consistent with other oral traditions.

[44] It may be notable that wrestling's decline in popularity has coincided both with a decline in the practice of kayfabe and in an increase in the "scripting" of matches, with more specific moments in a contest being planned out beforehand, both indicative that composition in performance is playing a somewhat smaller role in the current product.

[45] Drout (2011) provides an interesting theory about the process by which formulae and multiforms generally increase and decrease in popularity, and his specific comments about *Caedmon's Hymn* (450-56) provide some insight into how this process functions for a given word or phrase. However, since Drout can only observe the results of the evolution he describes in the hymn, and not the process (which finished centuries ago), he cannot say, to use his examples, why the *scop eorðan* pair is the most common version of line five, only that one of the four examples would have to gain prominence over the other three. Professional wrestling, on the other hand, makes it possible to see the phenomena in real time; if Drout's evolutionary model of multiformity is correct, professional wrestling archives will allow us to see the moments of selection. A study of this type has not been done yet, but absolutely has promise.

permanent repertoire is based neither on its inherent impressiveness nor the apparent harm it does to opponents, nor even the audience's reaction to the maneuver itself. Instead, whether or not a maneuver becomes entrenched in the wrestling tradition is determined by the *wrestler's* popularity at the time he experiments with it. For instance, wrestler Dwayne Johnson, who originally competed under the moniker "Rocky Maivia," typically ended his victories with a "shoulder breaker," lifting up opponents and driving their shoulder into his knee. However, his "Rocky Maivia" character ultimately failed, and Johnson was later repackaged more successfully as "The Rock."[46] In this guise Johnson utilized a new finishing move, the "Rock Bottom," which involved lifting an opponent and then slamming him onto his back. As Johnson's new character became more popular, the "Rock Bottom" became a staple not only of his matches, but also of the matches of a variety of wrestlers from the local to national level who wished to link their performance(s) to his. The "shoulder breaker," on the other hand, disappeared completely from the Rock's repertoire and is no longer used as a finishing maneuver.[47] This suggests that, independent of the inherent qualities of the techniques themselves, a formulaic move gains widespread acceptance based on how popular the originating wrestler is when he performs the move. It may also be valuable to note that, even though wrestling moves seem to enter into permanent rotation based on factors other than their inherent quality, once entrenched, those moves, like oral poetic formulae, remain a part of a performer's toolset for the entirety of his or her career.

As mentioned earlier, the age of most oral poetic traditions makes it difficult to tell how the formulae and epithets they use came into existence. In Homeric terms it is not clear why Achilles is "swift footed" instead of "good at the war cry." If epics follow the model of composition in performance found in professional wrestling, the development of specific formulae would not be due to anything particularly appropriate or expressive in the words (other than, of course, that they fulfilled the necessary metrical requirements), but due to the popularity of the singers and songs in which the formulae appear. We know from the *guslari* interviewed by Parry and Lord that oral poets regularly borrow narratives from other poets, and that this is a central part of their training (1960:13-29): it stands to reason that they could also appropriate turns of phrase made known by particularly famous colleagues. Just like the "Rock Bottom," the epithets used by the more popular poets would be repeated throughout oral traditions until they became permanent fixtures, not because they were objectively better epithets but because they were once sung by a poet thought to be worth imitating.

In closing, the purpose of this paper—beyond offering a means of understanding an important aspect of professional wrestling—has been to invite further conversation regarding the applicability of Parry-Lord theory to genres outside of oral poetry. The insights about how Parry-Lord theory illuminates the professional wrestling genre and how analysis of wrestling can inform our study of other works composed in performance, could be developed further. Study

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[46] Johnson, along with his ghost writer Joe Layden, describes the failure and transformation of the Rocky Maivia character at length in his 2000 autobiography (D. Johnson and Layden).

[47] Some wrestlers very occasionally use a "shoulder breaker" during a performance, but even they are largely limited to those like the WWE's Antonio Cesaro who use an intentionally dated move set as part of their gimmick.

into how wrestling's audience affects its narrative tradition might prove invaluable to the study of older oral epic traditions, like Greek epic, whose audiences are unreachable. Similarly, further application of Parry-Lord theory to professional wrestling may yield many more insights into the nature and character of this form of performance. The study of oral poetic "type scenes" holds particular promise for the analysis of key types of, and elements in, wrestling matches. At the same time, there are certain distinctions between wrestling and oral poetry that need to be accounted for. In particular, the fact that wrestlers both create and are part of their narratives is non trivial. And it is also true that, just as in the case of Greek epic and other types of works composed in performance, other theoretical approaches can increase our understanding of wrestling as type of performance. In conclusion, connecting professional wrestling to Parry-Lord theory affords clear benefits for understanding wrestling itself and other genres traditionally connected to the theory. If the concept of "composition in performance" can be usefully applied to something so far afield from the typical theorist's interest as professional wrestling, it is very likely that this concept may be profitably applied to a host of other types of performance. After all, a good theory, like a carefully placed steel chair, begs to be used.[48]

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Hades' Famous Foals and the Prehistory
of Homeric Horse Formulas

Ryan Platte

The adjective κλυτόπωλος (of famous foals) appears five times in early Greek poetry, thrice in the *Iliad* as an epithet of Hades, once in the fragmentary Hesiodic *Catalogue* in reference to the hero Ion, and later in a very brief fragment from Pindar where it refers to Poseidon.[1] The Iliadic corpus, however, provides us the best forum for understanding the word's usage in oral poetry and opens a special window into the generation of Homeric horse formulas generally.[2] In what follows I will show that κλυτόπωλος and a wide array of Homeric expressions used to describe horses should be viewed as part of a unified network of historically and linguistically connected oral formulas. All of the formulas in this network will be shown to relate to ὠκέες ἵπποι (swift horses), one of the oldest and best attested formulas preserved in Greek from Indo-European poetry's ancient past. I will argue that the origin of κλυτόπωλος is linked to a wide range of formulas that all convey the idea of "good horses" and that recognizing the position of κλυτόπωλος within this formulaic network helps us to chart the diachronic evolution of this network as a whole. This analysis will, I hope, prove especially useful since existing scholarship does not approach the epithet from the perspective of oral verse mechanics or consider its relationship to other Homeric formulas, but instead focuses exclusively on the mythological and religious significance of the term's application to Hades, which is difficult to

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[1] There are also examples of the term from later literature, but I have omitted them from this discussion because their late date removes them from the world of oral poetry. Triphiodorus uses it to describe the Achaeans, Ἅλωσις Ἰλίου (*The Sack of Troy*) 92; Maximus Astrol. uses it to describe Selene, Περὶ Καταρχῶν (*On Inceptions*) 5.75, 6.151, 6.261. It also appears once in the *Papyri Magicae Graecae* 2.88 to describe Helios.

[2] Exactly what constitutes an oral formula in Homer is a complicated subject and a universally accepted definition of the term would be very hard to articulate since there are still debates about such issues as how frequently an expression must occur, how much such an expression may vary, and so forth. These debates are not new and an excellent overview of them can still be found in Hainsworth 1968 (espec. 33-45), whose work outlines a wide array of the techniques through which Homeric formulas are adapted. A more recent study in a similar vein is Bakker's treatment (2005, espec. 1-37) of peripheral and nuclear semantics in a range of related formulas dealing with spears. For the current discussion, however, the definition proposed by Milman Parry (1928:16) is still quite suitable: "Dans la diction des poèmes aédiques la formule peut être définie comme une expression qui est régulièrement employée, dans les mêmes conditions métriques, pour exprimer une certaine idée essentielle" ("Within the diction of oral poetry the formula may be defined as an expression which is regularly employed in the same metrical conditions to express a certain essential idea").

discern.[3] Since I will argue that the Hadean epithet is an extension of a broad formula network, I will ultimately need to address the concerns of such scholarship and explain why such an extension to Hades makes sense, but my first and primary task is to investigate this and related terms' function within the mechanics of oral verse.

An exposition and analysis of this network must begin with the most basic of Homer's equine formulas, the aforementioned ὠκέες ἵπποι (swift horses), the unique features of which provide a key to identifying related expressions. This formula itself is applied to horses quite frequently in the *Iliad*, but does not, of course, occur in only one shape, but rather in a range of grammatical forms. The following chart tallies the occurrences of the formula in its various forms in the *Iliad* (the phrase very rarely occurs outside of this text):

Formula	*Il.*
ὠκέες ἵπποι /	10
ὠκέες . . . ἵπποι /	1
ὠκέας ἵππους /	18
ἵππους / ὠκέας	2
ἵππων ὠκειάων /	2
ἵππων . . . ὠκειάων /	1

At first glance this formula is relatively ordinary. Its declensional distribution, for example, is the most common: the accusative is most prolific, followed by the nominative, and then the genitive.[4] In this case the dative and vocative are unknown.[5] It also happens to be of very common shape and position. The two most common inflections of ὠκέες ἵπποι happen to be of the shape – ᴜ ᴜ – – and occur always at verse end, a very common formulaic shape and position. This formula does not occur outside of the plural.

This is the most common and important equine formula in Homer, but there are several others that serve much the same semantic function even if they differ in precise diction. Through comparison of some of these formulas to ὠκέες ἵπποι we are able to identify a common underlying phonetic structure. Observe the following two formulas that are semantically related to the ὠκέες ἵπποι formula but that occur grammatically in the dual number rather than in the more common plural:[6]

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[3] The works to which I refer are those of Thieme 1968 and Nilsson 1941, who are the only scholars, to my knowledge, who have attempted to explain the origin of this term. Both of their approaches will be explained and evaluated shortly.

[4] On the regularity of this distribution see Hainsworth (1968:48).

[5] The horses that are addressed in the epics are those that are called by name, such as those of Hector and of Achilles (*Il.*8.185; *Il.*19.400).

[6] Although generally only two horses were attached to each chariot, Homeric horse pairs are usually expressed grammatically with plural forms rather than dual. This is not surprising given the inconsistent usage of the dual throughout the Homeric corpus.

Formula	*Il.*
ταχέ' ἵππω	2
χαλκόποδ' ἵππω	2

The formula, ταχέ' ἵππω (fast horses), is essentially synonymous with ὠκέες ἵπποι, and χαλκόποδ' ἵππω (bronze-footed horses), although not technically synonymous, does describe the horses' feet.[7] Their feet are the instrument of their speed, so there is a semantic overlap at the metonymic level. The most interesting element of these substitutions for the current argument is their phonic similarity to each other as well as the ὠκέες ἵπποι formula. In their first word, all the expressions contain an unvoiced velar stop, either of the unaspirated kappa variety, of ὠκύς, or that of its aspirated counterpart, khi, as in ταχέ'. The word χαλκόποδε even exhibits two unvoiced velars, one in echo of the other. Although ὠκέες ἵπποι itself does not appear in the dual, these alternative dual formulas bear a resemblance to it on a phonological level, which, I believe, provides a clue to an even wider range of related formulas.

There are several further equine formulas that do not fully accord with ὠκέες ἵπποι semantically, but, like the dual formulas, nevertheless reflect it on a phonological level. These are μώνυχες ἵπποι (single-hoofed horses), καλλίτριχες ἵπποι (beautiful-haired horses), and χρυσάμπυκες ἵπποι (horses with golden frontlet):

Formula	*Il.*
μώνυχες ἵπποι /	8
μώνυχας ἵππους /	24
καλλίτριχες ἵπποι /	3
καλλίτριχας ἵππους /	8
καλλίτριχε . . . ἵππω /	1
χρυσάμπυκας ἵππους /	1
χρυσάμπυκας . . . ἵππους /	3

These formulas, combined with ὠκέες ἵπποι, ταχέ' ἵππω, and χαλκόποδ' ἵππω comprise a list of most of the common formulas involving horses in Homer, and every one of them displays an unvoiced velar, either of the kappa or khi variety, in the word preceding ἵπποι. Indeed, they often precede that velar with another at the beginning of the word, just as the dual formula χαλκόποδ' ἵππω does. Admittedly, the formula χαλκόποδ' ἵππω does not exhibit the final velar in the same position as the other formulas, but, given the weight of the other evidence, it does contribute to an overall sense of phonetic similarity among these expressions, at the level of a basic k . . . p consonantal sequence. The semantic similarity is even easier to spot, as these expressions

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[7]This grouping of formulas must call to mind the Achillean formula, πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς, "swift-footed Achilles," and although it exceeds the limits of the current article, there is, I think, good reason to believe that there is a relationship between certain equine formulas and those of Achilles, rooted in the commonality of the equating of martial and equine excellence in the epics.

function quasi-synonymously, each having the core semantic value of "good horses."[8] Most describe the horses' quality by focusing on their speed, either directly, such as ὠκέες ἵπποι and ταχέ᾽ ἵπποι, or through metonymy, such as χαλκόποδ᾽ ἵπποι and μώνυχες ἵπποι. καλλίτριχες ἵπποι and χρυσάμπυκες ἵπποι describe the horses' quality through their beauty. Rarely are these differences particularly narratologically significant. Despite the particular honorific attributes highlighted by any one expression, they all fundamentally indicate "good horses."

The consistency of the semantic, phonetic, as well as metrical quality exhibited by these expressions is striking and should not be dismissed as sheer coincidence. I suggest, in fact, that these formulas constitute an especially rich example of a formulaic network composed of genetically related expressions, similar to those studied by Nagler (1974:1-26).[9] In such a network new formulas can be generated as something like varied allomorphic realizations of a stable underlying nexus of metrical, semantic, and phonetic characteristics. That is to say in the process of oral performance, phonetically similar expressions may cluster around a unique theme, especially in common metrical positions. In this case I mean that as a poet reached line end, the position where each of these formulas is most common, if the poet planned to express the idea of "good horses," then a variety of different formulas may have been employed, either by generation or recollection, with the aid of a persistent underlying phonetic structure.

The word κλυτόπωλος differs from these expressions because it is not an adjective-noun sequence but instead a singular *bahuvrīhi* type compound adjective, that is, it identifies a possessor of good horses rather than the horses themselves. It still exists in the same basic semantic sphere as an expression that conveys the semantic notion of "good horses."[10] It also resembles these formulas at the phonetic level. In this case πῶλος (foals) appears rather than ἵππος, and κλυτός (famous) appears rather than one of the various adjectives already described, but a similar structure, anchored by corresponding k . . . p sounds is still evident. Finally, in hexametric verse this word occurs only at line end, the most frequent position for the other "good horses" expressions. κλυτόπωλος then resembles the "good horses" formulas at the semantic level, at the phonetic level, and at the metrical level, so it should satisfy the criteria for inclusion in this network. If, in the course of a performance, a poet reached line end and wished to express the core semantic idea of "good horses" in a way that describes an individual who has good horses rather than describing the good horses themselves, he could have generated or employed

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[8] On the commonality of speed as a basic approbative value of horses in Indo-European cultures see Matasovic (1996:73-74).

[9] It should be noted that Nagler referred to these groups as "families" of formulas while I have opted simply to call them networks.

[10] Cf. Apion's definition: "ἵππους ἀγαθοὺς <ἔχων>" (having good horses) from his Γλῶσσαι Ὁμήρικαι (*Homeric Glosses*) fr.51.1 (Neitzel 1977).

such a formula by drawing on the same phonetic structure on which his stock of "good horses" formulas generally was built.[11]

It should be noted that the word's appearance in the fragmentary Hesiodic *Catalogue* perfectly reflects its treatment in Homer, occurring in the same position as in the Homeric text (frag. 10a23-4; Merkelbach and West 1983:115b):

ἥ οἱ Ἀ]χαιὸν ἐγ[είνατ' Ἰάονά τε **κλυ]τόπωλ[ο]ν**
μιχθ]εῖσ' ἐγ [φιλότητι καὶ εὐε]ιδέα Διομήδην

who bore to him Akhaios, and Ion **of famous foals**,
and glorious Diomedes, having mingled in love

The only other early usage occurs in a fragment from Pindar, and that is the only one that deviates from this pattern (frag. 243; Maehler 1989:156):

Ζηνὸς υἱοὶ καὶ **κλυτοπώλου** Ποσειδάωνος

the sons of Zeus and Poseidon **of famous foals**

This is, however, a metrical outlier, occurring in non-hexametric verse, and Pindaric poetry was presumably composed with the aid of writing, so this particular example does not need to have an origin in oral verse mechanics. It is not uncommon, however, for Pindar's compositions to employ ancient phraseologies or to display vestiges of older technique.[12] In any case the Pindaric usage does nothing to obscure the character of this term or related terms in earlier verse.[13]

To understand the full significance of this term's relationship to other horse formulas, a look at other uses of the word πῶλος (foal) in the epics is instructive. The word is used relatively seldom, at least in comparison to ἵπποι (horses), and it usually occurs in compounds. The very few examples of πῶλος occurring in uncompounded form occur in the immediate vicinity of the

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[11] Finkelberg (2004:238-41) offers a warning about analysis of Homeric formulas through Nagler's generative model. She warns that, although such readings are useful, they can lead to a privileging of phonetic over semantic character in the construction of theories of Homeric verse-making technique. I hope that I have avoided this pitfall, since I do not suggest that the phonetic relationship between these formulas outweighs their semantic relationship but instead that metrical and phonetic patterns helped the poet in the generation and memorization of these semantically related expressions.

[12] Pindar may, in fact, showcase other members of this network not attested in Homer. λεύκιπποι, and λευκόπωλοι, the bright horses, for example, are both absent from Homer but display the same underlying phonetic structure as the Homeric "good horses" formulas.

[13] One more term, πλήξιππος (lasher of horses), may also be added to the list of related expressions in Homer, since it features the same phonetic structure and in three of its four appearance in the *Iliad* it appears at verse end (2.104, 4.327, 11.93). Admittedly, it does not agree with the others semantically in quite as neat a fashion, but it does indicate one's status as horseman and so could function in the same broad nexus of expressions. Moreover, the word is slightly unusual because compounds that feature ἵππος as their final element are fairly rare. Indeed, the fact that this compound positions its verbal element before its nominal makes it a so-called "pickpocket" compound, named after a prominent English example thereof, and the entire class is rare. The network proposed here may provide some justification for this unusual form.

word ἵππος and may be employed there to avoid repetition. In its more common compound forms it usually occurs at verse end, often in the formula Δαναῶν ταχυπώλων (of the Danaans of swift foals). This appears ten times in the epics and it too exhibits the same phonetic character as the broader network under discussion. πῶλος also appears twice in the name Ἐχέπωλος (the possessor of foals), which is applied to two different figures in the epic. One, the son of Thalusios, is a minor character killed in the fourth book, and the other, a son of Ankhises, did not actually come to Troy at all but is mentioned as the original owner of the horses that Agamemnon drives in the funeral games for Patroklos in the twenty-third book of the *Iliad*. In each case the word occurs at line end and also demonstrates the same phonetic character seen elsewhere in these expressions.

> Πρῶτος δ' Ἀντίλοχος Τρώων ἕλεν ἄνδρα κορυστὴν
> ἐσθλὸν ἐνὶ προμάχοισι Θαλυσιάδην **Ἐχέπωλον·**

> Antilokhos first slew one of the helmeted Trojans
> among the forefighters, noble **Ekhepolos**, son of Thalusios.

(*Il*. 4.457-58)

> τὴν Ἀγαμέμνονι δῶκ' Ἀγχισιάδης **Ἐχέπωλος**

> [the horse] that Ekhepolos, son of Ankhises, gave to Agamemnon.

(*Il*. 23.297-98)

Ἴλιον εἰς εὔπωλον (toward Ilium of the good foals), is, in fact, the only common usage not accounted for by these phonetic and metrical conditions.

The recognition of πῶλος within this network is especially exciting because it helps us to chart the development of the network with unusual precision by allowing us to identify an early and a late phase. This is partially true because ὠκέες ἵπποι has good claims to be an especially ancient expression and thus allows us to determine the earliest characteristics of this network. Some of the reasons for believing ὠκέες ἵπποι to be unusually ancient have been known since Rudiger Schmitt (1967:238) demonstrated that it has cognates in Vedic and Gathic Avestan poetry. Greek ὠκέες ἵπποι, Sanskrit *āśávas áśvās*, and Avestan *āsauuō aspåŋhō* all translate as "swift horses" and all are perfect cognates descending directly from the reconstructable phrase, *$\ast h_1\bar{o}k\widetilde{e}\ut{u}\text{-}es\ h_1\acute{e}k\widehat{u}\text{-}\bar{o}s$*.[14] This phrase must then have occurred in the poetry of the speakers of Proto-Indo-European, the parent language of Greek, Sanskrit, and Avestan, as well as of many others. Further poetic features of the phrase, originally unnoted by Schmitt, further strengthen the belief that these three cognate phrases testify to a piece of genuine Proto-Indo-European (PIE) poetic vocabulary (and not just a coincidence). Research into the poetic devices favored by the PIE poets suggests that alliteration was prominent in their repertoire and this phrase demonstrates alliteration of all four of its consonantal components, that is, the initial first

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[14] Work by A. Kloekhorst (2008:237-39) and by Michiel de Vaan (2009) suggests, however, that the Proto-Indo-European antecedent of Greek ἵππος may, in fact, have been a u-stem noun rather than an o/e stem as has generally been speculated and is assumed here.

laryngeal consonant (h₁), the palatal-velar *k̑*, the semi-vowel *u̯*, and the final consonant. The last of these would have altered depending on the expression's grammatical form but should generally have remained identical in both words and thus preserved this corresponsion. This evidence, taken together with the phrase's appearance in our three later Indo-European (IE) poetic sources, supports the hypothesis that the later IE formulas descend from a genuinely PIE poetic phrasing.

There is also another, less obvious, poetic figure represented here, which makes this conclusion even more compelling. The two words involved in **h₁ōk̑éu̯-es h₁ék̑u̯-ōs* derive from the PIE **h₁ék̑u-* (horse) and **h₁ōk̑u-* (swift), the similarities of which are immediately striking. They seem to be a noun and adjective pair deriving from a common root **√h₁ék̑*, and sharing the same base meaning, "swift." These words would, therefore, form a *figura etymologica*, something akin to the well know cluster of Greek, ἔπος εἰπεῖν, Vedic *ávocāma vácaḥ*, and Avestan *uxðā vacå*, all descending from the PIE **u̯eku̯os u̯eku̯*, meaning "to speak a speech."[15] Unlike those *figurae etymologicae* the "swift horses" formula does not maintain its transparently etymological quality in the later traditions, but in the PIE phase of the language the phrase would have exhibited this pronouncedly enough to have been readily recognized by its hearers. The exhibition of this highly specialized poetic feature along with the demonstrated artfulness of phonetic arrangement makes it highly likely that this phrase is the ancestor of Homeric ὠκέες ἵπποι.

The significance of all of this for the current discussion is that this formula, to put it very simply, is remarkably ancient. It surely proliferated in Greek verbal art in a period before our texts document and, most importantly, before several important phonetic developments spread through the Greek language. The most important of these, for this issue, is the conversion of Greek labiovelars, the "ku̯" sounds, to "p" in many contexts, including when they were followed by an "o" as happened here.[16] In the period just before that which our texts document, this formula was certainly in use, but did not sound like ὠκέες ἵπποι, but instead like ὠκέϝες ἵκϝοι, with two unvoiced velar sounds. The organizing phonetic structure then was not, in fact, the k...p sequence that the Homeric formula network documents. The original underlying phonetic structure seems instead to have been an alliterative k . . . k.

This presents a problem, however, for the two halves of this formula network, the expressions anchored to a final ἵππος unit, and those anchored to a final πῶλος unit, like κλυτόπωλος. The etymology of πῶλος is the subject of speculation, but it must descend from something like **pōlH-*. Thieme (1968:143-48) has suggested that this comes from the verbal root √*ku̯el,* meaning "to roam," but its cognition with such words as German *Fohlen* and Gothic *fula* makes that impossible. The unvoiced labiovelar "ku̯" sound could indeed become a labial "p" in Greek but would not have become a fricative "f" in the Germanic languages. A "p," as in **pōlH-*,

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[15] This is also pointed out by Katz (2010:361). On *figurae etymologicae* in Greek and Indo-Iranian poetics see Schmitt (1967:264-5).

[16] I must make clear here that the word ἵππος may never have contained an actual labio-velar, but instead a velar followed by a labial; that is to say that a syllabic break occurred between the two sounds, that is ἵκ-ϝος rather than ἵ-κϝος. I am assuming here that the conversion of this consonantal group occurred at roughly the same time as that of the labiovelars. This should be a safe assumption since the two developments proceeded in much the same way.

gives us precisely what we see in the Greek and the Germanic cognates.[17] This means that πῶλος always began with a "p" sound and that the underlying phonetic structure for the πῶλος formulas was always k . . . p, rather than the k . . . k of the ἵππος formulas. The best explanation for the relationship of these two groups must lie in a diachronic evolution of the stable phonetic schema of which all these formulas are a realization. This is an evolution that would have occurred in tandem with the changing phonetic character of the Greek language. The ἵππος formulas, or more historically, the ἵκϝος formulas, must represent an earlier phase in the generation of "good horses" expressions. In early oral composition "good horses" expressions must have employed an alliterative k . . . k pattern, perhaps rooted in the *figura etymologica* of the "swift swifties" phenomenon. As the phonetic evolution of the Greek language altered the ἵκϝος formulas to ἵππος formulas, the schema upon which all of these expressions were founded altered as well, developing from a k . . . k structure to a k . . . p one. After phonetic change resulted in this k . . . p sequence this new scheme became generative itself and thenceforth formulas could be added to the network with a base in ἵππος or πῶλος. This does not mean, of course, that each unique ἵππος formula must antedate each unique πῶλος formula, but instead that the general practice of generating and employing ἵππος formulas must have a start date anterior to the start date of the incorporation of πῶλος formulas.

The Iliadic treatment of κλυτόπωλος, then, provides an excellent vantage point from which to observe and recognize the development and deployment of horse formulas generally in Greek oral poetry, not just of the one involving Hades in the *Iliad*. But what of this term's application to Hades? Although few scholars have looked into this word very closely, those who have focused entirely on explaining why Hades was known as a possessor of famous foals in the first place. Horses do not after all feature very frequently in his mythology. Although my own argument has not yet dealt with this issue, it has been implicit throughout my reasoning that there was indeed some special significance in the application of the term to Hades. My argument assumes, in fact, that the Greek oral poets deployed this term for one who possesses good horses on the model of other "good horses" formulas precisely because there was an immediate utility to such a term in their performances, and my argument must not conclude, I think, without attempting to identify what that was.

The first step in this process should be an examination of the three occurrences of the term themselves, each of which occurs in different battle scene and depicts one man threatening another:

Sarpedon speaking to Tlepolemus:

σοὶ δ' ἐγὼ ἐνθάδε φημὶ φόνον καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν
ἐξ ἐμέθεν τεύξεσθαι, ἐμῷ δ' ὑπὸ δουρὶ δαμέντα
εὖχος ἐμοὶ δώσειν, ψυχὴν δ' **Ἄϊδι κλυτοπώλῳ**.

I declare that slaughter and dark death will be fashioned for you, by my hands and that you, conquered by my spear, will give glory to me and your soul to **Hades of famous foals**

(*Il.* 5.652-54)

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[17] There are other cognates that support this as well. See Beekes 2010:1266 and Frisk 1960:634.

Odysseus speaking to Socus:

σοὶ δ' ἐγὼ ἐνθάδε φημὶ φόνον καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν
ἤματι τῷδ' ἔσσεσθαι, ἐμῷ δ' ὑπὸ δουρὶ δαμέντα
εὖχος ἐμοὶ δώσειν, ψυχὴν δ' **Ἄϊδι κλυτοπώλῳ**

I declare that there will be slaughter and dark death for you today, and that you, conquered by my spear, will give glory to me and your soul to **Hades of famous foals**.

(*Il*.11.443-45)

Meriones speaking to Aineas:

εἰ καὶ ἐγώ σε βάλοιμι τυχὼν μέσον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
αἶψά κε καὶ κρατερός περ ἐὼν καὶ χερσὶ πεποιθὼς
εὖχος ἐμοὶ δοίης, ψυχὴν δ' **Ἄϊδι κλυτοπώλῳ**.

If I should hurl (my spear) at you, and strike your middle with my sharp bronze, although you are strong and trust your hands, you would quickly give glory to me and your soul to **Hades of famous foals**.

(*Il*.16.623-25)

The first thing that one notices is that Ἄϊδι κλυτοπώλῳ is not the only common element among them, but that these lines echo each other generally, as if a traditional threat has been adapted three times. This looks then like an element of a type-scene, a narratological unit, larger than any single formula, in which elements tend to cluster in a given type of scene. We must still ask, however, why it is κλυτόπωλος that we find embedded in these important lines rather one of Hades' other, more common epithets.[18] Indeed, the fact that that κλυτόπωλος was not replaced in any of these adaptions suggests that it made at least some sense to the poets and their audiences. Since it is not this epithet alone that repeats but the threat's language generally, the question that we must ask is not just why would Hades have famous foals but why would his possession of them be significant in this particular type of scene, in which this language was apparently resonant enough to become traditional. The answer here must be related to the passages' striking similarity of context, that is, the fact that each occurrence is part of a threat that sudden death will soon befall the target of the speaker's aggression. What, then, does the epithet κλυτόπωλος have to do with such sudden death? It is with this question in mind that we should turn our attention to the two principal scholars who have studied this word before, Paul Thieme,

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[18] There are five other epithets used of Hades in the Homeric poems: ἴφθιμος (mighty), ἀδάμαντος (unconquerable), πελώριος (monstrous or huge), ἀμείλιχος (implacable), and πυλάρτης (gate fastener).

mentioned earlier, and Martin P. Nilsson.[19] Although neither approached the word in quite this light, each offers very useful suggestions about the application of κλυτόπωλος to Hades.

Thieme's explanation has roots in the Indo-European underworld and the etymology of the word Hades itself, which is difficult. He suggests that the word is comprised of the prefix sm̥ (with) and the verbal root √u̯id (to see). Thieme's etymology would roughly mean "seeing together," and would have a perfect cognate in the particularly loaded Sanskrit term, *samvedanam*, the act of reuniting with one's forefathers in the afterlife.[20] He suggests that the limited information that we have about the early IE afterlife suggests that it may have been imagined, at least in part, as a meadowland, and therefore may have contained horses.[21] If Thieme is correct then these lines and the word κλυτόπωλος within them serve to call to mind the place to which the threatened man may soon be going. This works very well in our passages since the epithet would not be incidental but specially suited to this narratological circumstance, making sense of its unique occurrence in minatory exchange. This could, in fact, be sufficient explanation for the expression but it does require that the term be a fossilization since the belief that there were horses in the underworld is absent in archaic Greece. This expression then would need to have been preserved by poetic habit after its original significance had been forgotten. Although this is quite possible, I think it is useful to explore the possibility that this phrase had synchronic significance as well, to ask if it meant something special to the archaic poet and audience, admitting that such a meaning does not need to be the meaning of its origin. This is, I think, an especially important line of inquiry considering the lack of scholarly consensus regarding Thieme's etymology.[22]

For this I turn to Nilsson (1941:i, 424), whose explanation is followed by most scholars. He suggests that the term adheres because of Hades' use of horses in the abduction of Persephone. This theory holds that Hades did not always await the arrival of new souls to the underworld, but instead that, on occasion, he came to the realm of the living to collect them. This particular element of Hades' behavior would be typified in the abduction of Persephone. Hades' horses then would feature in this epithet because they are the means by which he hunts down his victims, so they function metonymically, like the Grim Reaper's sickle. Contrary to Nilsson's

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[19] I omit here the argument of Verrall (1898) that the term had nothing to do with horses at all but rather with "ranging" and "haunting," as if connected to πωλέομαι. Pindar's application of the word to Poseidon, the horse god, makes his idea difficult to accept.

[20] Puhvel also points out that the Vedic Yama is the *saṃgámanam jánānām* "ingatherer of the people" (1987:109). The more traditional etymology traces the word to *n̥u̯id- (unseen), which not only corresponds with the basic notion that death is unforeseeable, but is particularly apt given Hades' possession of a cap that imbued its wearer with invisibility. See Apollodorus, *Bib*.1.2.2; *Aspis* 226-7; Pherekydes 3F11. See Frisk 1960:1.33.

[21] Although beyond the scope of this article, there are some other pieces of Indic evidence that could be added to bolster the connection between horses and the ruler of the dead. The name of the Indo-Iranian underworld god, Yama (Skt.)/Yima (Av.) does appear to have something to do with reining, and the Sanskrit noun *yama* when it does not appear as a name, can, in fact, indicate a rein. Yama is also said to have had particularly good horses, but that is true of the subjects of too many Vedic hymns to be useful: for example, *hiraṇyakaśyānsudhurān hiraṇākṣānayaśśaphān aśvānanaśyato*, ("horses with golden girdles, good under the yoke, golden eyed, and iron hoofed, immortal") (*TA*. 6.5.2.5-6). For other similarities between the Greek and Indic afterlife see Puhvel (1987:139, n.4). On the Yama analogues in Greek mythology more generally see Ehni (1890:196-209).

[22] On objections to Thieme's etymology see Beekes (2010:34).

suggestion, however, I do not believe that there is good evidence to show that Hades was often imagined carrying souls to the underworld via his chariot, but instead Persephone seems to be the only figure to whom this is said to have happened.[23] I suggest, however, that this is, in fact, the best starting point for this analysis. Although horses are not a frequent feature of Hades' mythology, his abduction of Persephone by chariot was an exceedingly important and prolific story, despite its singularity. Reference to Hades' horses then would not remind the archaic audience of the underworld generally but of the sudden and violent abduction of Persephone specifically. The import of this minatory usage may, in fact, be that the victim is about to go to the underworld suddenly, just as Persephone did. The epithet, then, need be neither incidental nor vestigial here but may have worked specifically to enhance the resonance of the language of this threat. Such a reading is, of course, difficult to verify conclusively but seems to me to provide the most promising hypothesis since it allows room for diachronic evolution of the phrase while still pointing the way to a synchronic utility that aided in the epithet's survival.

Although the epithet κλυτόπωλος appears only three times in the *Iliad* it allows us insights into the prehistory of Homeric horse formulas generally. Not only does its metrical deployment and phonetic structure reflect common metrical and phonetic characteristics among the formulas but the linguistic history of the epithet's final element πῶλος allows us a special glimpse into diachronic evolution within Homeric formulas. This is so because its "p" sound has always been a "p" sound, while the "p" sound of formulas anchored by ἵππος was originally a "k" sound. This allows us to identify two groups within this network of formulas, those that were always built on a k . . . p structure, like κλυτόπωλος, and those whose historic k . . . p structure reflects a prehistoric k . . . k structure, like ὠκέες ἵπποι (earlier ὠκέϝες ἵκϝοι). Given the ancient poetic qualities of the k . . . k formulas and the extreme age of their most prominent representative, ὠκέες ἵπποι, it must be the case that the production of ἵππος formulas predates the production of πῶλος formulas. κλυτόπωλος then provides a precious view into the deep history of these oral formulas as well as the practices of the poets who employed them. Although linguistic changes in a language must sometimes render poetic formulas obsolete, κλυτόπωλος provides a beautiful example of how oral formulas sometimes survive such changes, how traditional poetic expressions sometimes persist and even multiply, yielding new forms and new meanings over the millennia.

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[23] To my knowledge, the only evidence that could support the belief that Hades carried away other souls comes from epitaphs that occasionally describe Hades snatching (ἁρπάζω) the dead: for example, IG II^2 12629, SEG 25.298. Even then, however, this seems usually to indicate the death of a young woman and may then still be a reference to the Persephone myth.

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