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Oral Tradition seeks to provide a comparative and interdisciplinary focus for studies in oral literature and related fields by publishing research and scholarship on the creation, transmission, and interpretation of all forms of oral traditional expression. As well as essays treating certifiably oral traditions, *OT* presents investigations of the relationships between oral and written traditions, as well as brief accounts of important fieldwork, a Symposium section (in which scholars may reply at some length to prior essays), review articles, occasional transcriptions and translations of oral texts, a digest of work in progress, and a regular column for notices of conferences and other matters of interest. In addition, occasional issues will include an ongoing annotated bibliography of relevant research and the annual Albert Lord and Milman Parry Lectures on Oral Tradition. *OT* welcomes contributions on all oral literatures, on all literatures directly influenced by oral traditions, and on non-literary oral traditions. Submissions must follow the list-of reference format (style sheet available on request) and must be accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope for return or for mailing of proofs; all quotations of primary materials must be made in the original language(s) with following English translations. Authors should submit two copies of all manuscripts. Most contributions will be reviewed by at least one specialist reader and one member of the editorial board before a final decision is reached. Review essays, announcements, and contributions to the Symposium section will be evaluated by the editor in consultation with the board.

Oral Tradition will appear three times per year, in January, May, and October. Annual subscription charges are $20 for individuals and $35 for libraries and other institutions.

All manuscripts, books for review, items for the annual bibliography, and editorial correspondence should be directed to the editor, John Miles Foley, Department of English, University of Missouri, Columbia, MO 65211.

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Editor's Column

In this second issue of *Oral Tradition* we have some happy news to convey. As of July 1 of the present year, the University of Missouri at Columbia will be the home of a Center for Studies in Oral Tradition, a place and a modest facility which we hope will serve as a focus for studies in this emerging field.

The Center will, of course, assume responsibility for the editing of *Oral Tradition,* and in addition will serve as the editorial base for two other publishing ventures. One of these will be a monograph series on oral traditions, to be issued by Peter Lang of Berne and New York City; the series will include between one and four volumes each year and has been named in honor of Albert Bates Lord. The Center will also assume the editorship of *Southeastern Europe,* the only English-language periodical devoted exclusively to the Balkans. It is published by Charles Schlacks of Irvine, California and will appear twice annually.

The readership of *Oral Tradition* is cordially invited to submit manuscripts to all three serial publications. For further information, please write to John Foley at the editorial address given at the front of this issue.

In addition, the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition is in the process of creating an archive of primary and secondary materials, with special emphasis on fieldwork collections. We shall be pleased to serve as a deposit facility, so that scholars with taped and manuscript records can store a safety copy in our library. All such materials will be fully protected on an individual basis, with right of consultation given only by the owner(s). We shall be happy to discuss deposit arrangements at any time.

We continue to urge you to send *OT*, and now the Center, copies of publications for review and annotation in the Year's Work bibliography for the October issue. Since the bibliography will cover as many aspects of studies in oral tradition as possible (and since its compilers are only quite human), its inclusiveness is in

part dependent on your cooperation in making us aware of your own and others' contributions.

The first annual bibliography will appear in the next issue of *OT*, along with a wide selection of survey and analytical essays. Fittingly, Albert Lord has provided the lead article, a sequel to his "Comparative Perspectives" essay of 1974 that comments on recent work on oral traditions, for the very issue that houses the first annual Milman Parry Lectures on Oral Tradition, delivered in April 1985 by Joseph J. Duggan. In this same number Alexandra Olsen offers the first of two installments on oral studies and Anglo-Saxon poetry, Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys give a summary of relevant research in Byzantine Greek, Bruce Rosenberg continues his discussion of the American folk preacher and oral tradition, Ward Parks surveys scholarship on Middle English literature and its oral roots and ambience, and Eliza Miruna Ghil shares the results of her fieldwork with an oral singer, Vasile Tetin, in Romania. This issue will also contain the text and English translation of a narrative by Vasile Tetin, this primary oral material being an example of what we hope to make a regular feature in volumes to come.

In 1987 *OT* will publish a *Festschrift* for Walter J. Ong (January) and a special issue on Hispanic balladry, edited by Ruth House Webber (May), as well as the more usual potpourri of survey and analytical articles in the third number (October). Papers on Chinese storytelling, formulaic structure in Persian narrative, and South Indian oral tradition are also forthcoming, as are special issues devoted to Native American, Arabic, Yugoslav, and South Pacific traditions.

The present issue begins with the first of three essays on "Homer and Oral Tradition" by Mark Edwards; in this important series Edwards tracks the evolution of research on Homer as an oral poet from its inception with Milman Parry to the present. Margaret Clunies Ross of the University of Sydney follows with an account of relevant scholarship on the Australian Aboriginal oral culture, with special reference to her own fieldwork in the area. She has graciously provided us with samples of texts collected in the field in order to give a taste of the tradition itself. Centuries of medieval Irish storytelling and the implications of orality at its root are the major concerns of Joseph Falaky Nagy's contribution on the *fili* and his fellows. David Bynum begins his essay with an overview of collecting and collectors in the South Slavic area, and

then continues the study with a reinterpretation of the oldest recorded oral text from this region.

Ruth House Webber carries on our series of survey or "state-of-the-art" essays with a magisterial summary of scholarship on Hispanic oral traditions. Following her article is a discussion of Alexander Pope's translation of the *Iliad;* in this piece Elizabeth Hoffman contends that the great Augustan poet conceived of Homer as an oral bard and proceeded accordingly. This issue closes with Franz H. Bäuml's survey of the application of oral theory to the study of Middle High German poetry, with special attention to the *Nibelungenlied.*

Once more, we invite submissions for *Oral Tradition*, as well as for the new monograph series (the Albert Bates Lord Studies in Oral Tradition) and for *Southeastern Europe*. We also look forward to detailed and cogent responses to articles as they appear, to be published in the Symposium section of *OT* as soon as possible after they are received. In addition, notices of pertinent upcoming events and reports on conferences and symposia are always welcome.

John Miles Foley, Editor

Oral Tradition, 1/2 (1986): 171-230

Homer and Oral Tradition: The Formula, Part I

Mark W. Edwards

This survey of the formula in Homer is divided into ten sections; the first five follow, the remainder will appear in a later issue of *Oral Tradition*. The sections are arranged as follows:

§Bibliographies and surveys.
§The structure of the Homeric hexameter.
§The formula and the hexameter.
§The history of Homeric formulae: Homer, Hesiod, the *Homeric Hymns*, and later poetry.
§Enjambement.
§Studies of specific formulae.
§Formulae and meaning.
§Analyses of formulae and tests for orality.
§Homer and the criticism of oral poetry.
§Future directions.

Each of the first nine sections is followed by a list of references; a few items appear in more than one list. I have commented on most of the items, but for reasons of space a few are merely listed. Reviews are normally not included, and my knowledge of dissertations is usually limited to the synopses in *Dissertation Abstracts*. There must be omissions, for which I apologize; I will try to refer to them in later updates.[1]

§1: Bibliographies and Surveys

The fullest resource is the annual listing of articles, books, and reviews in Marouzeau, which began with 1924 and currently appears about three years after the year covered; the categories

Homer, Homerica, Homerici Hymni, and Hesiod are not further subdivided. For the years 1930-70 the Marouzeau listings appear in Packard and Meyers 1974, consolidated as an alphabetical listing of authors and provided with a subject index including entries under "Language," "Meter," "Poetics," and "Composition," an *index locorum*, and an index of Homeric words. This is a very valuable resource, which one hopes will be continued. The most recent full bibliography to appear is Foley 1985, which unfortunately only became available to me as I was completing the final version of my own survey. This work contains over 1,800 annotated listings of work on oral poetry and formulae in more than 90 language areas, preceded by a long Introduction which summarizes the research done in different language areas from 1928 to 1982 (in three chronological divisions) and indicates some important directions taken in recent work. Entries are alphabetized and coded to show the areas studied, and each is summarized in about 3-4 sentences; in a sampling of these annotations I found them to be accurate, perceptive, and reliable. An index divided by language areas lists alphabetically all authors who deal with (for example) Ancient Greek; there are no subdivisions.

Other surveys can best be mentioned in reverse chronological order. The latest is Heubeck 1982, which has no separate section on formulae. Foley 1981 briefly reviews M. Parry's work and gives a full and detailed survey of Lord's work on both Homer and South Slavic. Holoka 1979 covers the whole range of Homeric studies from 1971-77 (including reviews), with sections on "Composition," "Poetics, metrics," and "Language, formulas, word studies." The listing is useful, but the summaries are here only about a sentence in length. Latacz 1979 gives a fine summary of the history of the theory that Homer was an oral poet from the publication of Wolf's *Prolegomena* in 1795 to the present, reprinting some of the most important work and adding a 45-page bibliography, subdivided into "Bibliographies and surveys after 1945," "Selected publications before Milman Parry," and "Publications from Milman Parry onwards." Pasorek 1977 continues a long tradition of detailed surveys of all aspects of Homeric scholarship. Mette 1976, both a listing and a commentary, has sections on Metrics and Language. Heubeck 1974 covers the years 1940-70 and lists works alphabetically by author, following an introductory survey which includes sections on oral poetry, language, and style. There are indices of names and subjects,

modern authors mentioned in the survey, Homeric words, Homeric characters, and an *index locorum*. Holoka 1973 gives brief summaries of the work of Milman Parry, Lord (very uncritically: "Lord proves, yet again, that quantitative investigation of formulae can indeed enable us to differentiate the truly oral from the literary imitation. In the process he debunks the impressionistic assertion by G. S. Kirk, C. M. Bowra, and A. Parry that Homeric poetry is formulaic to an extent that Yugoslavian is not" [263]), and others. He also has sections on "Epithet," "Formula," and other topics. The listing is useful, the summaries should be used with discretion. Haymes 1973 is an alphabetic listing by author's name of work on oral poetry in all languages. Hainsworth 1969 is a short review on contemporary knowledge with sections on "Comparison," "Formula," "Verse," and "Art." Willcock 1967 is another good quick account of the position at that time. Dodds 1968 gives a very general overview of Parry's work, placing it in the framework of an excellent summary of twentieth-century Homeric scholarship. Lesky 1966 gives a fine survey of meter, language, and oral characteristics in a very few pages. Combellack 1955 covers the years 1939-55, giving "what is basically a discussion of trends in the main fields of Homeric activity" (18); he has a short section on oral poetry (51-53).

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§ 2: The Structure of the Homeric Hexameter

After a brief review of some recent theories of the origin of the Homeric hexameter, this section will deal with its structure and the ways in which words and word-groups fit within its framework; of course this is intimately connected with the characteristics of formulaic diction, which will be dealt with in section 3. I do not attempt to cover theories of the nature of caesura (for which see most recently Allen 1973:113-22) or of the nature of meter and rhythm (for which see Devine and Stephens 1984, mentioned below, which has superseded much previous work).

The question of the antiquity of Homeric formulae is very much interconnected with that of the origin of the Greek hexameter, which has often been discussed and is the subject of several significant recent studies. West 1973 considered that "dactylic verse was a South Mycenaean development dating probably from the second half of the [second] millennium, while the stereotyped stichic hexameter represents a further development in

the Ionian branch of the tradition, perhaps late Mycenaean, perhaps post-migration" (188); he claimed that the meter originated in a hemiepes (- u u - u u -) plus a paroemiac (u̲ - u u - u u - u̲). This view was strongly attacked by Hoekstra (1981:33-53), who pointed out the difficulties caused for this hypothesis by the juxtaposition of the alternative B1 and B2 caesurae (P and T in Hoekstra's terminology) after positions 5 and 5 1/2 (see below). West's indeterminate (*anceps*) syllable at the beginning of his paroemiac is inadequate to account for these alternative (and most important) breaks in the verse, and Hoekstra shows that there are a number of ancient-looking formulae which end or begin at each of these alternative positions; he can even provide (p. 45) a considerable list of alternative formulae of similar meaning to fit before or after either B1 or B2 caesurae. It thus seems that the old technique embraced the alternative positions. In addition, Hoekstra lists a number of ancient-looking expressions which bridge the B caesura (including *Priamoio païs* and similar forms), and points out that the idea that the hexameter resulted from a coalescence of two short verses can only be tenable if none of these expressions goes back to the earliest singers. Nagy 1974 put forward an alternative theory, that the hexameter arose from a pherecratean pattern (u̲ u̲ - u u - u̲) expanded by the insertion of three dactyls. Nagy is aware of the problem of accounting for the B1 and B2 caesurae (p. 57f.), and ingeniously argues that they arise from the junctions of formulae which were created for use in shorter verses, such as the unexpanded pherecratean. He backs up this view with a full listing of formulae which would fit into such verses, and alternative formulae which show dactylic expansion of the kind he postulates as the origin of the hexameter. His fundamental idea is that a traditional poetic language leads to the crystallization of metrical formulae, which in turn affect the meter and give rise to the caesurae and bridges, and he supports the old idea of a phraseological correspondence between the Homeric *kleos aphthiton* and a postulated Vedic *śráva(s) ákṣitam* (reconstructed from two other verbal combinations), both deriving from an Indo-European prototype **klewos n̥dhg^{w}hitom* (p. 1). These views are repeated, with additional arguments, in Nagy 1979. Hoekstra (1981:40, note 36) does not find Nagy's views convincing. Peabody (1975:21f.) examines the relationship of the Greek hexameter to the Iranian Avesta and Indian Vedas, and suggests that a common Indo-European base lay behind all three, and that the hexameter

is "a hybrid primary combination that resulted from the fusion of dimeter and trimeter verse forms" (p. 47); he finds parallels to the caesurae of the hexameter in the meters of the other languages. Gentili and Giannini 1977 and Gentili 1981 associate the origin of the hexameter with that of dactylo-epitrite. Miller (1982:48-56) gives an outline, based on West and Nagy "as far as they are compatible" (p. 49) and disagreeing with Peabody.

The most accessible brief statement of current opinions on the articulation of the Homeric hexameter is Kirk (1985:18-24); he lays much stress on the 3-part verse or "threefolder" (described below), gives a number of examples, and emphasizes the effects of the lengths of the verse-cola. The older, pre-Fränkel view can be found in Bowra 1962. The fundamental work is Fränkel 1926/1968. In its original form this article appeared in 1926; at the beginning of the later, heavily-revised version, Fränkel remarks that a reviewer of the first article proclaimed that it marked the beginning of a new era in the study of the rhythm of Greek verse, and adds wryly that in fact its influence has remained comparatively slight. This is no longer true, at least in the study of Homeric formulae. Fränkel's great contribution was to shift the focus away from the metrical feet, six dactyls (- u u: a heavy syllable followed by two light ones) or spondees (- -: two heavy syllables) of which the Homeric hexameter is formed, to the "cola," the words or word-groups which form the compositional units of the verse. These cola are separated by "sense-breaks," which may be strong, as at the beginning and end of a sentence or clause (marked in modern texts by punctuation) or weak, i.e., simply a word-boundary; or somewhere between these extremes. Fränkel insists that in every Homeric verse there are four cola divided by three strong or weak sense-breaks or "caesurae." For Fränkel, the first of these caesurae (A) has four possible positions, the others (B and C) two each, occurring as follows:

foot	1			2			3			4			5			6	
position	1	1 1/2	2	3	3 1/2	4	5	5 1/2	6	7	7 1/2	8	9	9 1/2	10	11	12
scheme	- |	u ⏑ u	|	- |	u ⏑ u		- |	u ⏑ u		- |	u ⏑ u	|	-	u ⏑ u		-	u
caesura	A1	A2	A3	A4			B1	B2		C1		C2						

A line like *alla soi, ô meg' anaides, ham' hespometh', ophra su chairêis* (*Iliad* 1.158) shows the three caesurae in their commonest positions and marked by punctuation. The four cola in the verse quoted are of different metrical shapes: - u u -; u u - u; u - u u; - u u - -; and this, as well as the various alternative positions of the caesurae, gives flexibility and variety to the verse. The meter of Longfellow's *Hiawatha* may be compared: if two of these verses are treated as one ("Should you ask me, / whence these stories? / Whence these legends / and traditions?"), the result is a line with about the same number of syllables as the Homeric hexameter but with four *identical* cola, three *rigidly-fixed* caesurae, and virtually no variety or flexibility.

Fränkel also states that any of the caesurae may be postponed if preceded by a "heavy word" or word-group of not less than six *morae* in length (a *mora* is equivalent to one short syllable). This postponement may go so far as to place an A caesura in the B1 position, or a B caesura in the C1 position, the normal alternative positions being bridged-over. This principle allows Fränkel to account for the significant number of verses which fall into three cola instead of four (see below). Fränkel is sensitive to the importance of his new approach for appreciation of the sense and rhythm of Homeric verse; he suggests, for instance, that sometimes the first colon may be characterized as lively and vigorous, the second as quiet and relaxed, the third as emotional or emphatic, the fourth as heavily-loaded. Even more important, he observes (1968:115) that Homeric formulae fit the length of the common cola, and thus serve as building-blocks of Homeric verse.

Significant work on the position and importance of sense-breaks in the Homeric verse, and the kinds of phrases which fit between them, had previously been done, especially by Bassett (1905, 1917, 1926) and Witte (1972), to some extent preparing the way for Fränkel. He may perhaps be criticized for overstressing the necessity for identifying four cola and three caesurae; he himself admitted that it was occasionally difficult to choose between alternative A caesurae, and in such cases it is probably useless to attempt to do so; and his doctrine of the "heavy word" is perhaps hardly necessary, since long words are sometimes unavoidable and because of their length must displace a caesura and be followed by one. But his identification of the fundamental importance of sense-breaks of various types, and his ability to see that not only words and word-groups but also formulae fall

between these sense-breaks and hence form the units of which the verse is composed, instead of the metrical units of dactyls and spondees, meant that no one aware of his work can read a hexameter in the same way afterwards. (See further the summary of his ideas in Fränkel 1962:29-34 and 1968:6-19).

Porter 1951 attempted to revise Fränkel's work by placing the alternative C caesura a syllable *after* the commoner C1, i.e., after position 9, instead of after the long syllable of the fourth foot (after position 7) as Fränkel had; he also accepted only two positions for the A caesura (after positions 2 and 3) instead of the four admitted by Fränkel. He can thus reduce the possibilities of variation of caesurae in a verse to eight. He is almost certainly wrong about the C caesura, for the figures he prints (23) for the positions of punctuation show that Fränkel's position for the alternative C (after position 7) is a much more important sense-break than Porter's, and the fact that so many noun-epithet formulae begin there (*podas ôkus Achilleus*, etc.) clinches the argument. On the A caesura, his arguments may again not be convincing, but he has the virtue of demonstrating that it is often a mistake to attempt to pinpoint this caesura. Besides reprinting figures on punctuation-points in Homer and Hesiod, Porter (using a different system of notation from Fränkel's) gives tables listing the occurrences of cola (according to his system), the lengths of each colon, the patterns of bridging-over of cola, and the metrical shape of words which end at each position of the verse (based on thousand-line samples of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the Hesiodic poems, the long Hymns, and Callimachus). There is much more of value in Porter's article, though its main conclusions have not been accepted.

Rossi 1965 took issue with Fränkel's theories of displacement and bridging of caesurae, and (using another new terminology) gives percentages for the position of caesurae in *Iliad* 1. He agrees with Porter that a colon is not a unit of meaning, though phrase divisions, when they occur, are often at caesural points, and criticizes Fränkel for calling caesurae "sense-breaks." Rossi sees many verses "che ricavano la loro virtù espressiva proprio da un sottile conflitto fra colizzazione 'regolare' e flusso sintattico obliterato dal ritmo" (246). For him, syntactic considerations can be decisive only in cases where the meter is indifferent and there is a possibility of rhythmical choice. He shows that Fränkel's "heavy word" is often not important to the sense, rejects Fränkel's

insistence that the A caesura can be postponed to positions 3 1/2 or 4 only if preceded by a heavy word, and allows the A caesura at those positions even if it is preceded not by a heavy word but by earlier word-ends. In reply to Porter's view that a colon of only two syllables, or even one, is meaningless, Rossi holds that a short word often gains emphasis by filling a colon itself (250-51). It was pointed out long ago that some important monosyllables (verb-forms such as *bê, stê, tlê*, etc.) are used mainly at the beginning of a verse or phrase, to give them weight; Fränkel refined this by pointing out that they occur at the start of a colon; Rossi goes further, claiming that such monosyllables are themselves a colon, either alone or with a weak particle which adds a short syllable. He gives a long list of examples, and lists the minimum and maximum lengths for each colon, with examples of their various combinations. This view seems to me acceptable. In an Appendix, Rossi discusses further the nature of other very short cola. (His views are summarized in Rossi 1978:102-7.)

Kirk 1966, like Porter, was concerned about the very short cola possible under Fränkel's system, and carefully examines the theories of both scholars. He refuses to accept Fränkel's A1 and A2 caesura positions because of the shortness of the first colon in these cases, and sees the weakness of Porter's alternative C caesura. Kirk raises the question of what a colon really is: is it a unit of meaning, as Fränkel said? But many verses do not have four sense-units. A rhythmical unit, as Porter thought? Kirk is more inclined to accept this latter proposition. Do the cola in fact correspond to the sense-divisions? Kirk marks the rhythmical cola on a 24-line passage (on Porter's system, but without his alternative C caesura after position 9) and compares them with the sense-cola, admitting that there is room for much difference of opinion here. He finds that only 12 of the 24 verses fall into four cola, and in only two do these correspond exactly to the sense-cola. Kirk therefore looks for factors other than sense-breaks or the four-colon theory to explain prevalence of word-end in certain positions and inhibitions on it in others, and after detailed arguments summarizes his views thus: "The B caesura is a structural division of the verse primarily designed to integrate it and prevent it from falling into two equal parts; the C caesura tends to introduce a distinct verse-end sequence; the tendency to caesura around the middle of the first "half" of the verse is due primarily to the average lengths of Greek words available in the

poetical vocabulary, with the preference for caesura at 3 due largely to the preference for internal caesura except before the verse-end sequence; the inhibitions on word-end at 3 1/2 and 7 1/2 are caused by the desire to avoid any strong possibility of three successive trochaic cuts, that on 4 being due to the desire to avoid a monosyllabic ending, especially after a heavy word, to a major part of the verse" (103). Euphony is thus a sufficient reason for the position of the word-boundaries, rather than a fixed colometric structure. The hexameter often falls into four parts, but sometimes the sense-division is not into 4 parts but into 3 or 2; the first and third cola often disappear or are unrealistically short. Kirk's views are very reasonable, and his theories are often confirmed by Devine and Stephens 1984.

Ingalls 1970 questions Kirk's views that some of Fränkel's cola are too short to be acceptable (he does not mention Rossi's support for Fränkel), and gives an alternative colon-analysis (on Fränkel's principles) of the passage analyzed by Kirk, finding that "every verse is divisible into four cola. Wherever the normal caesura is bridged, it is by means of either a heavy word or *Wortbild* . . . . Futhermore, only two verses, 444 and 449, do not fall into reasonable sense divisions" (11-12). Ingalls' analysis differs from Kirk's in 15 of the 24 verses, and though sometimes his divisions seem preferable to Kirk's he accepts such odd cola as *hoi d'* and *apo*. A comparison of the analyses strengthens one's feelings that it is unwise to be too categorical about marking the precise position of a caesura if there is no immediately obvious sense-break.

The metrical shape of words obviously affects their position within the verse. Here the basic study is that of O'Neill 1942, who declared: "What I have done is to classify statistically, according to metrical type and position in the line, 48,431 words contained in 7152 hexameters from seven different texts" (106). His sample consisted of 1,000 lines each of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the *Works and Days* and part of the *Shield* of Hesiod, Aratus' *Phaenomena*, and 1,000 hexameters each of Callimachus, Apollonius, and Theocritus. Words are categorized according to the metrical place they fill, i.e., syllables lengthened "by position" are counted as long and elided syllables are ignored. The final syllable of the verse is always counted as long in the statistics for word-distribution, but a table enables some adjustments to be made. Words are located according to the position of their final

syllables. O'Neill's results are set out in 38 tables of figures and percentages, which show that in most cases words of a given metrical shape occur predominantly in a very few of their possible positions, very often in only two positions. O'Neill calls this "localization." "The discovery that localization is practically universal in the hexameter is one of the chief contributions of the present paper to metrical knowledge" (114). The localization of the various metrical shapes does not change from poet to poet or over the centuries, though (as O'Neill shows in detail) its strictness varies slightly (Hesiod being closer to the *Iliad* than the *Odyssey* is).

O'Neill prints a detailed exegesis of the results of his tables. Tables 1-28 list positions, numbers, and percentages for all metrical word-shapes in the works studied. Table 29 gives statistics on long and short final syllables of the verse. Among the other tables, of special interest are Table 31, which shows at a glance in which positions in the verse each word-shape occurs, and Table 35, which gives relative frequencies of each word-type. A supplement usefully summarizes the history of metrical understanding of the hexameter from ancient times.

O'Neill's work remains valuable, though doubtless it will one day be replaced by computerized figures. So far the only similar published work known to me is Dyer 1967. Dyer was one of the pioneers of computerized work on Homer, and his long article deals with computerized grammatical analysis, scansion by computer program, and the hexameter meter. Starting from the work of O'Neill and McDonough, he outlines procedures for computerized identification and tabulation of the various metrical word-types, word-groups, or readily recognizable forms such as middle participles. He gives complete figures (for the *Iliad*) for the positions in which twenty word-types occur, and shows how each of these word-types has an established relationship with one or more of the cola of the hexameter. Of course the techniques of using computers have changed greatly since Dyer wrote, but his work is fundamental to investigation of the hexameter and so far as I know has not yet been followed up.

To return to the subject of cola, Beck 1972a (said to be a refinement of Beck 1972b, which I have not seen) takes up the problems of locating the A caesura, which in Fränkel's theory can fall anywhere between the beginning of the verse and the B caesura or be bridged entirely, pointing out the weaknesses in the

theories of both Fränkel and Porter. The inhibition on word-end after the second trochee or the second metron (after positions 3 1/2 and 4) vanishes if there is word-end at 2 or 3 (Meyer's Law). Beck argues against Kirk's explanations for the inhibition of word-end at these points, and suggests that a simple reason explains inhibition after both 3 1/2 and 4, i.e., "a previously undetected principle of composition which limits, directly and drastically, the words which may normally start at 3 1/2 and 4" (221). This principle "limits words starting at 3 1/2 or 4 to those which continue units which themselves started no earlier than the beginning of the line or which, if they did start earlier than the beginning of the line, will subsequently be complete at the [B] caesura" (222). This means that in almost all cases, even if a new word begins at 3 1/2 or 4, it is the continuation of a syntactic unit which either began just beforehand or will be completed immediately afterwards at the caesura, so that positions 3 1/2 and 4, though not bridged by a word, are bridged by a syntactic unit of two or more words (223).

Beck examines 297 verses of the *Iliad* and 312 of the *Odyssey*, finding only two exceptions to his principle. The principle has the natural side-effect of bringing about word-end at position 2 or 3 if there is word-end at 3 1/2 or 4, since this usually means that the syntactic unit began earlier in the verse, of course with a word-boundary; Meyer's Law is thus explained. The theory is interesting, but should now probably give place to the more comprehensive work of Devine and Stephens (see below).

Beekes 1972 sets out to show that O'Neill's localization results derive from a very few rules, which in turn determine the structure of the hexameter. He summarizes these as: "The Greek hexameter has a caesura, realized by a syntactical boundary, at [position] 5 or 5 1/2. Often the final cadence is marked off by a syntactical boundary at 8; as word end at 7 1/2 would give a 'false start' to such a final cadence, it is forbidden. To avoid verse end effect at the beginning, word end at 3 1/2 and long final syllable at 4 are avoided. Perhaps to avoid the suggestion of verse end long final syllable is avoided at 8 and 10. A monosyllable at the end of the verse is also avoided" (9). These rules are well known; Beekes gives no explanation for their origin, which can now be sought in Devine and Stephens 1984.

Peabody 1975, after discussing the relationship of the Greek hexameter to the meters of other Indo-European languages and the

nature of syllable length, devotes a chapter (pp. 66-117) to the system of cola and its interaction with formulae. He follows Porter in allowing only two positions for the A caesura (after positions 2 or 3) and Fränkel in placing the alternative C caesura after position 7. Peabody does not consider that a caesura should be considered a pause in sense, but "useful only for analytic purposes" (p. 67). He also thinks that the long fourth colon should often be divided into two parts. (The "law of increasing members," which states that the final colon of a sentence should be longer than the others [see Allen 1973:119], makes this unlikely). Peabody also discusses the ways in which words are adjusted to fit the cola, and the cola to each other, and identifies verses with three cola (pp. 88-91) and with five (the colon after the C caesura being divided into two: pp. 92-94). Further sections discuss the transfer of cola from one place in the verse to another, and the way formulae fit within the cola (see section 3). Minton 1975, a study of verse-structure and formulae, uses Hesiod's *Theogony* as illustration (see section 4), but should be mentioned here for its acute observations on three-part verses (33f.), which he says are more than twice as common in the *Theogony* as in Homer (34).

The proportion of dactyls and spondees in Homeric verse has continued to receive attention. Jones and Gray 1972 seem to have been the first to apply modern statistical discipline to the existing metrical data on the numbers and positions of dactyls and spondees in hexameter verse. Using the data published by J. La Roche (in *Wiener Studien* 20-22 [1898-1900]), the 32 possible patterns of dactyls and spondees (counting the last foot as a spondee) are tabulated for each book of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and for the poems as wholes (the latter results are printed), as well as for Hesiod, the Hymns, Aratus, Apollonius, Callimachus, and Nonnus. Tables are printed giving the order of frequency of the pattern in each work, the differences between the books of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and the works as wholes (only the *Catalogue of Ships* in the *Iliad* and Book 11 of the *Odyssey* show statistically significant differences). In frequency of patterns there is little difference between the Homeric poems, Hesiod, and the Hymns, but a good deal of difference between this group and the later authors. In the same year Rudberg 1972 announced that he had rechecked La Roche's figures (using Allen's Oxford Classical Text) and found a number of errors. Rudberg points out that contrary to the statement of La Roche, sequences of metrically identical verses are

not rare. Of verses with five dactyls, 35.8% in the *Iliad* and 36.2% in the *Odyssey* are preceded or followed by another of the same type; two other metrical types also occur in pairs more than 25% of the time. "Un vers homérique sur cinq est précédé ou suivi par un vers du même type métrique" (p. 12; I take this to mean that on average there are 2 successive identical verses in every 10). Runs of seven and six metrically identical verses occur once each, runs of five are found 11 times, runs of four 39 times, runs of three 297 times. Not surprisingly, in the *Catalogue of Ships* there are more spondees than usual. Rudberg also gives the percentage of verses with spondees in each of the metrical feet. Martínez Conesa 1971 offers statistics for the proportion of dactyls and spondees in *Iliad* 1 and discusses the length and number of words in the metrical cola, over-lengthening, the positioning of 5-syllable words, and verses with a spondee in the fifth foot.

Michaelson, Morton, and Wake 1978 examine sentence-length in the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, Hesiod's *Works and Days*, *Theogony*, and *Shield*, Aratus, and Apollonius, finding that sentences coterminous with the verse predominate in Homer and equal numbers of sentences occupy one and two lines (but *Odyssey* 19 has twice as many one-verse lines). In Apollonius and Aratus more sentences end (and of course begin) within the verse (55% compared with less than 40% for Homer). Hesiod lies midway between Homer and Apollonius in complexity of structure. The authors suggest that the preponderance of one- and two-line sentences, a tendency for multi-line sentences to end with the end of the line, and the use of short part-lines to complete broken lines are characteristic of oral composition.

Devine and Stephens 1976 use data on the combinations of phonemes used to implement long and short syllables in the first four feet of the hexameter (of various periods) to refute the theory that "there is a multiplicity of metrical elements in Greek corresponding to postulated differences in the phonetic duration of phonemes and syllables" (141); they support the correctness of the ancient view that "there are only two metrically relevant distinctive elements, *longum* and *breve*, which stand respectively in a one-to-one correspondence to linguistically heavy and light syllables" (141). In a highly technical monograph of far-ranging importance (1984) the authors study the whole question of constraints on word boundaries ("bridges") in Greek meter. They list the constraints on word-end in the hexameter, test the

explanations of earlier scholars, and examine in detail the circumstances of the resolution of a heavy syllable into two light ones and the relationship of this to word-boundaries. Both bridges and resolution, in the hexameter and in other meters, are accounted for by means of a phonological theory of matrices which explains both the synchronic phenomena and the diachronic changes in strictness of observance of the constraints. They reaffirm that word-boundaries must not falsely signal metrical boundaries (p. 130); that "many rhythmic bridges are evidently constraints against false line end or false caesura/diaeresis" (p. 130); that "iteration of word boundary coinciding with foot boundary in opposition to the basic podic structure is even more strongly avoided" (i.e., there is a constraint against repeated trochaic cuts: p. 131). This work, complex and expressed with great concision, is based upon rigorous argument and an immensely detailed knowledge both of Greek verse and of metrical usages in other languages; it supersedes most previous work on word-position in meter and must henceforth be taken into consideration in any study of the hexameter.

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§ 3: The Formula and the Hexameter

This section is particularly concerned with different aspects of the work of Milman Parry, and will deal with definitions of formula; "ornamental" and "particularized" epithets; overlapping or "equivalent" formulae and the law of economy; the adaptations and adjustments which formulaic expressions undergo when they are juxtaposed or must be modified in order to fit into a particular position in the verse; and the force of analogy in the formation of formulae, including "schematizations" or "structural formulae."

The history of the understanding of Homeric oral techniques can be read in Latacz (1979:25-44). He tells a depressing story of how in the years following Wolf's assertion on external evidence that Homer was illiterate (in his famous *Prolegomena* of 1795), the first steps were taken towards Milman Parry's analysis of oral techniques. In 1840 Gepper pointed out that epithets in Homer were so closely linked with their nouns that the poet had little freedom of choice, and in the same year Gottfried Hermann (in an article reprinted in Latacz 1979:47-59) showed by a number of arguments from internal evidence that the poems were intended to be heard, not read, that the sense is complete within a verse or part of a verse, that the epithets are useful for filling spaces in the verse-structure as well as for ornamentation, and that these characteristics made for easy extemporaneous composition. Other scholars were already working on the collections of folk-epic which had appeared, and connections between these and Homer were already being made. The way was clear for further studies of oral technique, but the focus of attention turned instead to Lachmann's theories of the aggregation of epics from shorter songs, and the

long duels between Analysts and Unitarians began. Work on the metrical shapes of words and phrases and their positioning in the hexameter verse was continued, especially by Ellendt, Mintzer, Seymour, Witte, Bassett, and Meillet, but the synthesis between this and the characteristics of oral poetry had to wait for Milman Parry. However, in 1875 appeared Prendergast's *Complete Concordance to the Iliad of Homer*, sixteen years in the making and intended to facilitate the composition of Homeric verse in English public schools. Five years later came Dunbar's *Complete Concordance to the Odyssey of Homer*, compiled "during hours snatched from the duties of an arduous profession" (that of a country doctor in Scotland), including an apology for errors due to the writing of 62,400 lines of Greek which had "somewhat weakened and impaired his eyesight." In 1885 followed Schmidt's *Parallel-Homer: oder Index aller homerischen Iterati in lexikalischer Anordnung*. These works (all recently reprinted) are of immense use in the study of formulae, a use of which their toiling authors never dreamed.

An excellent account of Milman Parry's work on Homer and of his collecting of oral songs in Yugoslavia is given in Adam Parry's introduction to his edition and translation of his father's collected works (Parry 1971). Milman Parry's work is remarkable not only for the range of his insights but for his thoroughness and his rigorous insistence on proof. It had already been accepted that Homeric diction was created by the verse, and that obsolete and dialectical forms were retained when they provided useful metrical alternatives. But even in his Master's thesis of 1923 Parry's new understanding of the whole system of formulae and the use of epithets can already be detected.

Definitions of the formula

A formula is, in Parry's famous definition, "an expression regularly used, under the same metrical conditions, to express an essential idea" (Parry 1971:13; repeated with insignificant changes at 1971:272). The existence of formulae in Homer was recognized in antiquity and is beyond any doubt; but are they traditional or the creation of one poetic genius? Parry held that they are proved to be traditional because "they constitute a system distinguished at once by great extension and great simplicity" (p. 16). "Extension"

he demonstrated by tabulating the number of personal name-epithet formulae for major characters fitting after the B2 and Cl caesurae (see section 2; Parry's charts are on pp. 10-16, 39). By "simplicity" he meant what is also called economy, the use of only one expression for one person in one metrical shape and position; he showed that of 40 different name-epithet formulae of one metrical shape in one grammatical case, only six were not used for one character alone, i.e., 34 were reserved each for one of 34 persons. Parry thought that no one poet would create such a specialized system and it must therefore be traditional (p. 37f.).

Hoekstra (1965:8-14) gives a detailed assessment and appreciation of Parry's work, and points out that not until his long article in 1930 does Parry say that Homeric poetry is wholly formulaic and orally composed. To do this Parry had both to extend his definition and to drop his criteria of "extension and simplicity" (p. 11). This is obvious in Parry's formulaic analysis of *Iliad* 1.1-25 and *Odyssey* 1.1-25 (1971:301-4), for many of the expressions here called formulae are not used regularly, and are not part of a system. So new criteria are needed for identifying a formula and the traditional character of a formula. Parry's "essential idea" is also vague semasiologically, and "regularly employed" does not apply to a few obviously very ancient expressions which happen to occur only once in extant epic. Hoekstra also holds that "formulaic" should not be applied to single words, nor to combinations of particles (as some scholars have done). Homeric poetry is thus not entirely formulaic.

Hainsworth 1968 also begins with a summary of Parry's results, with comments and elaborations. He points out that name-epithet formulae in the nominative case are convenient and doubtless traditional, but that there are many gaps in the system in the oblique cases. Name-epithet formulae in the nominative are fixed in position, located both by metrical convenience and by sentence-patterns at the verse-end, but with formulae in other grammatical cases mobility of position increases sharply. So Hainsworth makes out "a prima facie case for impeaching the uncritical analogical extension of the technique of use of nominative personal names to the whole diction of the epics" (p. 31). He also observes that name-epithet formulae in the nominative are often altered in shape, and gives a useful list of examples (p. 30, note 3); this vitiates Parry's "under the same metrical conditions." Parry's definition applies to the traditional ornamental epithets of

name-epithet formulae, but has been extended to cover expressions in which all words are functional (pp. 33-35); and fixity of position must not be part of the definition. Hainsworth then presents a revised definition of a formula (pp. 35-36). The essence of a formula is repetition, so it must be a "repeated word-group," and "the use of one word created a strong presumption that the other would follow. This degree of mutual expectancy I choose as the best differentia of the formulaic word-group." The word-group remains the same formula despite changes in metrical shape of its component words caused by elision or correption, inflection, shifts in meaning, changes in prefixes of suffixes, or use of alternative forms of word-stem. The formula also remains the same despite changes in the word-group arising from rearrangement of the word-order, the separation of constituent words, and the insertion, omission, or change of particles or prepositions. A formula is also capable of extension by the addition of further terms. The remainder of Hainsworth's book examines in detail certain common-noun-epithet formulae (see below), and establishes the validity of his approach beyond doubt.

A fundamental, and very lucid, approach to the nature of a formula can be found in Kiparsky 1976. Kiparsky compares formulae with the "bound expresssions" of ordinary language (e.g., "livelong day," "foregone conclusion"). Are formulae in oral literature special cases of such bound expressions? Hainsworth distinguished unchanging formulae and those which can be modified in various ways. The former can be treated as "ready-made surface structures" (Kiparsky 1976: p. 83), which do not however have an absolutely fixed metrical form as they may be altered by (for example) elision. Flexible formulae must be composed of grammatically-related constituents, and many grammatical relationships can be shown by a deep-structure analysis to be impossible in formulae (for example, adjective + verb, adverb + noun). Kiparsky makes the most important point that his analysis "allows for the inflection, separation, and modification of formulae without singling out one form as the prototype and postulating analogical processes to generate the others" (a point also made by Nagler, see below). He goes on to show how expansion of formulae fits within this analysis. Hainsworth's abandonment of the metrical criterion as part of the definition is important, because it enables the definition to be used also for formulae in relatively free meters and in oral prose. "(T)he formula makes possible the

improvisation of metrical verse. This is, however, a specialized utilization of formulaic language, not its cause" (p. 88). Kiparsky also discusses phonological repetition (Parry's "puns"), and compares the characteristics of some other oral literatures. His article is an excellent preparation for the sometimes more difficult exposition of Nagler.

Nagler 1974 (which includes a revised and expanded form of Nagler 1967) is a most important contribution to the theory of oral composition, or more precisely, of composition using traditional techniques. Nagler's first chapter discusses the "puns" or phonological repetitions Parry noted in Homer (Parry 1971:72), adding several other examples, and suggests that "these corresponsions should suggest the operation of psychological cola or rhythmical groups of some sort bearing a hitherto undetermined relation to formulas" (p. 8). Later he drops the word "formula" in favor of "allomorph," which is "a derivative not of any other phrase but of some preverbal, mental, but quite real entity underlying all such phrases at a more abstract level" (p. 12). The "entity" Nagler refers to as a "Gestalt," the preverbal template which is realized in the appropriate spoken form at the moment of utterance. The second chapter discusses the poetic significance of certain formulae and the symbolism which can be seen in them, using as example the particularly rich associations of *krêdemnon* ("head-binder," "veil," "battlement," "seal") with violation of chastity. Nagler's use of generative grammar and his perceptive and sympathetic insights make his work valuable in a unique way, and it has not yet been carried further and perhaps not yet properly appreciated and assimilated. Nagy 1976 also considers the problems arising from Parry's definition of the formula, and offers "a working definition of the formula that leaves out the factor of meter as the prime conditioning force: *the formula is a fixed phrase conditioned by the traditional themes of oral poetry*. Furthermore, I am ready to propose that *meter is diachronically generated by formula rather than vice versa*." Miller (1982:35-48) criticizes Kiparsky's views and finds that "all structuralist and truly generative accounts of the formula have been inadequate because of their grounding in erroneous assumptions, reliance on sentence-based models of grammar, and the mechanical mindlessness attributed to the poet"; he prefers a theory put forward in Miller and Windelberg 1981, which (so far as I know) has not yet appeared.

"Distinctive," "generic," and "equivalent" epithets; "economy"

Parry divided Homeric epithets into two types: "ornamental" or "fixed" epithets, which have no relationship to the context and are only a convenience for versification; and "particularized" epithets, which concern the immediate action. The latter may be dealt with briefly. Parry gave them his usual thorough examination (1971:153-65), pointing out that *polumêtis* is an ornamental epithet for Odysseus, whereas *polutropos* is not; the difference is determined by the context. At *Odyssey* 10.330 *polutropos* replaces the generic *diiphilos*, normal in that position; *pelôrios* is similarly used 10 times in place of *diiphilos*.

Ornamental epithets are subdivided into "distinctive" and "generic." The important question with these epithets is, can they have any actual meaning in an individual instance? Parry insisted strongly that they could not; it was the point which his scholarly peers found hardest to accept. (The topic will be dealt with in section 7.) In a later article (1971:240-50) Parry examined ornamental "glosses," Homeric words whose meaning is unknown or doubtful, showing that they survived even after their meaning was forgotten because of their metrical convenience.

"Distinctive" epithets are those used for one person alone in one metrical configuration. Parry showed that of 40 different name-epithet formulae of one metrical shape in one grammatical case, only six were not unique for one character alone; 34 were reserved each for one of 34 persons. He asserted that no one poet would create such a specialized system, so that it must be traditional (p. 37f.).

"Generic" epithets occupy a fixed position in the line (often separated from the personal name), refer to general heroic characteristics, and can be used for any god or hero (1971:64f., 83f.). Among the commonest examples are d*ouriklutos, diiphilos, megathumou*, and for smaller metrical spaces *dios* and *amumôn*. Did the poet have a choice among these for a particular hero? Parry gives a list of 61 of these epithets and their use (pp. 89-91), showing that of the 164 forms which occur, 91 are metrically unique while 73 could be replaced by another generic epithet. There is no alternative for *dios,* which qualifies 32 heroes, so the poet was satisfied without choice here; the same is true of the other 90. The choice of epithet is thus decided not by character but by the metrical shape of the name. The metrically identical

or "equivalent" generic epithets arise, Parry argued (p. 184f.), because they have passed over to that category after once being "distinctive" (confined to one hero); all generic epithets must have been "distinctive" at one time in order to become ornamental. Then, when their significance had been lost, they could be applied to another name by analogy. Thus *androphonoio*, used three times for Ares, ten times for Hector, and once for Lycourgos, must at one time have been applied either to Ares or to Hector, and then became a distinctive epithet for Hector; but its single usage with another hero shows that the link with Hector is breaking. In this way arose the overlapping usage of the metrically identical *androphonoio* and *hippodamoio, antitheos* and *iphthimos* (p. 186).

But what of "equivalent" formulae, those few cases where more than one metrically identical formula is used for the same character? Since they give no metrical advantage for composition, why do they exist? Do they constitute a serious breach of the economy of the system? Parry showed that many of them arise from analogy: "[The bard], by analogy, will draw from two unique formulae one which will repeat the metre of an already existing formula" (p. 176). Where analogy has not been at work, it must be that the meter has not yet brought about economy, as with *eriauchenes hippoi* and *hupsêchees hippoi*, if both formulae are in fact traditional (p. 180). Some have been preserved because they are part of whole-verse formulae.

These equivalent formulae have been the subject of valuable work since that of Parry. Pope 1963 points out that we know nothing of the stock of formulae used by poets other than the composer of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, that the gaps in even the fullest systems of name-epithet formulae are large, and that of the 379 different noun-epithet combinations in the similes only 53 (15%) occur in the rest of the *Iliad* and can be considered traditional formulae (he restricts his definition of formula to expressions repeated in identical metrical shape). Pope asks the provocative question: "Is what makes an oral poet great that he knows more formulae or that he uses fewer?" (p. 19). Hainsworth 1978 emphasizes a diachronic approach, suggesting a process of sorting and selection of formulae and an influx of commonplace epithets beside the old mysterious ones (see below, section 4). Janko 1981 studies the pattern of occurrence of equivalent personal-name-epithet formulae. A list of the occurrences of the two equivalent formulae for Hera shows that long sequences of the

same formula occur: the poet has a tendency to use the same formula repeatedly, instead of seeking variation, as one would expect of a literate author. The chance of the same formula occurring 5 times in a row, as happens in *Iliad* 5, is only one in fifteen (254). There is a run of five cases of *androphonoio* after *Hectoros* (instead of the equivalent *hippodamoio*), a chance of only one in ten. The doublet formulae for Aphrodite occur randomly in the *Iliad*, but there is noticeable run of one form in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*—it looks as though the poet "temporarily forgot about the existence of the doublet" (255). Two equivalent phrases exist for "he/she answered him/her," since one developed because of the usefulness of its final movable *n* and then became common even without the *n*. A listing shows that some formulae are strongly associated with one form or the other (though the totals are often very small). In some stretches of the texts one form is preferred; there is a run of 19 instances of one form in the *Odyssey*. Janko concludes (a) that the memory of his previous usage played a part in poet's choice, and (b) the poet sometimes tended to forget one of the alternative forms (258-59). The facts Janko provides are very interesting, but one is sometimes worried by his assumption (a) that artistry is identical with variation (". . .the poet learns to eschew monotony more successfully by alternation. . .[259]. . .Artistry is triumphantly reasserted in [*Iliad* 24], where the poet alternates between the doublets"), and (b) that if a run of one alternative recurs, the poet has recalled the preceding choice and not changed it, whereas if the other alternative occurs, he has recalled the last usage and changed it (260).

Schmiel 1984 addresses the same problem of choice between two equivalent formulae. He lists five possible explanations of the choice: that it arises from meaning and context; that one formula is associated with a particular phrase in the rest of the sentence; that one alternative temporarily slips from the poet's memory; that one alternative phrase is associated with a specific character; and that the poet alternates between formulae for the sake of artistic variation. He then tests these possible explanations by examining the occurrences of three sets of equivalent formulae. In the case of *chalkeon/meilinon enchos* "bronze/ash spear" there are long runs of each form, so there is no artistic variation; there is no association with a specific character; the same verse occurs six times with "bronze," so there may be a whole-verse association. More interesting is the fact that context appears to be significant;

Schmiel finds that in 15 cases either "bronze [spearhead]" or "ash [shaft]" would be appropriate, but in another 13 cases the alternative more suitable for the context is chosen. In only one case is the less suitable formula used, where an "ash" spear is held fast in a shield, obviously by the bronze point (*Iliad* 20.272; unfortunately Schmiel does not mention that here a considerable number of MSS have "bronze," whereas in a few other instances I checked there is little variation; in studies like this the critical apparatus must always be consulted, though for Homer it is an imperfect instrument). Schmiel justly thinks these results "both clear and significant" (p. 35). In a second case, *doru chalkeon/meilinon* "bronze/ash weapon," Schmiel finds an alternation of forms, but spaced so far apart that it is unlikely to be intentional; 3 of the 5 *Iliad* examples of *meilinon* are associated with Meriones, but the significance of the association is doubtful; since 5 of the 10 *Iliad* examples occur in Book 16, in the sequence *abbab*, memory may perhaps be a factor; there is no valid whole-line association. So far as the context is concerned, in 7 of the 12 occurrences either epithet is suitable; in the other 5, the form more suitable to the context has been chosen (I notice that in one of them, *Iliad* 16.346, one MS has the less apt form). For Schmiel's third instance, *poluphloisboio thalassês* and *thalassêa euruporoio* "noisy sea" and "sea wide-to-cross," all possibilities except context can be eliminated. From this aspect, Schmiel finds that "noisy" is found in a context of noise, sea-shore, and (often) emotional distress, whereas "wide-to-cross" in two of its three occurrences is the highway home for the character involved, and in the other is the open sea crashing over a ship, where either form would be acceptable. So Schmiel concludes, reasonably, that "suitability to the context is the best explanation for the choice of formula in the three sets of interchangeable formulae which have been studied in this paper" (p. 37). (Janko has pointed out to me in conversation that if Schmiel is right the formulae in question are no longer, strictly speaking, "equivalent" in meaning.)

Paraskevaides 1984 provides a listing of synonymous nouns in Homer, divided into two sets, one of synonymous nouns sharing the same epithets and one of synonymous nouns used with different epithets. He gives a detailed account of each noun (e.g., "sword"), showing which metrical shapes are provided for by usages of the various Greek words and what positions they occupy in the hexameter. There is no index of Greek words. He states bluntly,

in the introduction to his second section (those with different epithets), that "the use of different epithets cannot point to a particular description. . . . The terms are used without distinction of meaning" (p. 83). He does not list any of the three systems examined by Schmiel. The collection of material is useful.

Also relevant to this topic is Hainsworth 1976, which deals with the appearance of certain expressions in clusters. Hainsworth points out that all eight instances of *gerôn Priamos theoeidês*, of the thirty-eight times he is named in the *Iliad*, occur in Book 24. The Greek army is "broad" seven times between *Iliad* 1.229 and 4.436, then only twice more in the whole poem. Hainsworth lists other similar examples, and also clusters of repeated whole-verses, and concludes that "an expression, once having come to the surface of the mind and been used, tends to remain there for some time and be used again before it sinks into oblivion"; "the stock [of formulae] must be understood to include an uncertain, temporary, and everchanging component" (p. 86). Abramowicz 1972 examines repetitions of a word or root within a short space in Homer and in the Hymns to Delian Apollo and Aphrodite, without reference to formulae.

Usage of formulae: juxtaposition, modification, and positioning

Though he seems not to have known of Hermann Fränkel's work on the structure of the hexameter, which first appeared in 1926 (see section 2), Parry's study of formulae had naturally made him well aware that they fit between the caesural pauses of the verse. In his *thèse* (1971:198f.) he pointed to the fact that many metrical irregularities arise from modifications of formulae, such as the use of nouns in a different case, or verbs in a different person or tense, with consequent change of word-endings. He also discussed (p. 202f.) metrical irregularities arising from juxtaposition of two formulae when the ending of one is not in metrical accord with the beginning of the other. Metrical flaws arising from neglect of initial or medial digamma were examined both in Parry's major monograph and in a later article (p. 222f., 391f.). He concludes—as all would nowadays accept—that the text should not be emended in an attempt to remove such metrical irregularities.

The first application of Milman Parry's insights, and for a long time the only one apart from Parry's own later work, was

Chantraine 1932, an article on the "play of formulae" in *Iliad* 1. It remains the only work of its kind, an excellent source for observing how formulae are used. Chantraine deals with repeated verses, verses repeated with slight modifications, the combining of formulae which fall between the various caesurae, and modifications and changes of position of formulae. He makes a special study of the voyage to Chryse, with its high level of repeated phrases (here his views are somewhat flawed because type-scenes were not fully understood). Calhoun 1933, though dealing mainly with repetitions of whole verses, also has some perceptive remarks on the arrangement of formulae in the verse. Bowra 1963 has some useful observations on repetitions of formulae.

Hoekstra 1964 is a work of the greatest importance. After a review of Parry's work (see above), Hoekstra studies the effects on formulaic usage of three linguistic changes in Greek: quantitative metathesis (the exchange of quantity from *êo* to *eô*); the dropping of initial digamma (consonantal *u*); and the optional addition of a final *-n* to certain verb and noun forms. These linguistic changes added flexibility to pre-existing formulae by allowing the extension or declension of nouns, the conjugation of verbs, the replacement of archaic words or forms by more familiar substitutes, the insertion of additional words (particles, conjunctions, etc.), and changes of position. Hoekstra found that "the evidence for the existence of formulae originally built upon quantitative metathesis is extremely slight" (p. 38). It thus appears that this linguistic innovation virtually coincided with the ending of the creation of new formulae, perhaps the end of oral composition. A separate chapter deals with certain passages which show metrical and stylistic peculiarities arising from declension, conjugation, replacement, splitting, moving, and enjambement of formulae. A final chapter discusses the creation of epic diction. Besides its many brilliant insights, Hoekstra's work is of fundamental importance because it demonstrates beyond doubt that the presence in a verse or passage of later linguistic elements is no proof of interpolation, but merely shows that the poet is making use of innovations in his speech to increase the flexibility of his formulae and facilitate his composition.

My own long article (Edwards 1966) studies the relationship of formula and verse by examining sentence-construction and the sense-units that occur in each of the sections into which a Homeric verse is divided by its caesurae (see section 2). In the first half of

the verse, name-epithet formulae are not found, but the names or patronymics of some heroes fit well before the A caesura (*Atreïdês, Priamidês*); the various kinds of enjambement and runover words are also discussed (see section 5). Between the A and B caesurae, ornamental adjectives in certain sentence-patterns are examined, and some examples of the use of significant adjectives are given here. After the B caesura, I study the phrases which complete the sense before the end of the verse (or are complete clauses in themselves), those which begin at B and enjamb into the next verse, and adjectives falling between the B and C caesurae (ornamental and significant). Between the C caesura and the verse-end several different types of phrase occur, including essential parts of the sentence, ornamental adjectives, and new sentences which may either be complete at the verse-end or enjamb. Of particular interest are verses which are alike (or substantially so) until the C caesura and then end differently, often by replacing an ornamental epithet with the beginning of a new enjambing clause; this variety within the constricted space of five syllables seems to indicate considerable skill on the poet's part. In the conclusion I stress the importance of the caesurae as points of articulation for formulae and sense-units and the occasional addition of emphasis by the positioning of words, and suggest that a significant sense should sometimes be attributed to epithets which are normally only ornamental. In later articles I examine the treatment of formulae in Book 18 of the *Iliad*, certain alternative formulae used to convey the meaning "he/she answered," and the various formulae used to introduce direct speech (Edwards 1968, 1969, 1970). In his important short study of poetic techniques in Homer, Patzer collects the various formulae meaning "[so] he spoke" and discusses their different emphasis and semantic content (1970:15-26).

In his important book (1968) Hainsworth, after discussing Milman Parry's work and giving a revised definition of a formula (see above), proceeds with his study of formulae of two metrical shapes, - u u - u and u u - u, showing how they are moved to different positions in the verse and how their metrical usefulness is increased by changes in word-shape (elongation) or word-order (inversion). Hainsworth's concern is with the association in the poet's mind between (for instance) *kartera desma* "strong bonds," *kraterôi eni desmôi, desmoio* u - *krateroυ*, and *desmois* u u - *krateroisi*. He points out (pp. 72-73) that a system would have to be impracticably large to provide a formula for every need that

might be anticipated, and so only the principal needs are accommodated; others are covered by techniques of expansion, separation of the terms of the formula (even over the verse-end), and adaptation to receive connectives and prepositions, all of which Hainsworth illustrates in detail. In a final chapter Hainsworth suggests that a narrow limitation of position of a formula is not the starting-point of the technique but its conclusion: "Highly schematized formula-types are then the consequence of ossification of more flexible systems at points of frequent use" (p. 113).

This type of investigation has been continued by Woodlock 1981, which gives the results of a similar kind of analysis to Hainsworth's carried out on noun-verb expressions in the *Iliad*. The data used are all such phrases which occur between the Cl and C2 caesurae and the end of the verse. Woodlock shows the favored positions for each expression and the mechanisms for changing the metrical shape when required. The appendices include a useful list of these noun-verb expressions in the *Iliad* in the various forms in which they occur.

Two articles by Glavičić (1968 and 1969) study the third colon of the Homeric verse. Often this space is filled by a verb, sometimes by two words which are not a syntactic unity, and the level of association with the adjacent cola varies. The author thinks that the wide variety of semantic content casts doubt on the idea that every hexameter is composed of four cola. Glavičić 1971 deals with the interlacing of two binary syntagmes as *abab*. Various causes bring about the alteration of the simple order: a complement; the position of the verb; and the poet's tendency to emphasize a part of the phrase. Glavičić holds that these structures show the poet's conscious aspiration to create new formulae, more complicated but more poetic, as well as a more artificial phrase structure, and thinks for the more complex examples the poet must have used writing. He has many interesting examples. Muñoz Valle 1971 points out that hyperbaton, the breaking of the normal union of syntactic elements by the insertion of other words, occurs in Homer not for stylistic but for metrical reasons, primarily the need for expansion or for placing certain words in a particular metrical position. In appendixes he discusses the various types of splitting: by a preposition (e.g., *philên es patrida gaian*), by a verb (e.g., *nees êluthon amphielissai*), by a noun (e.g., *Dios noon aigiochoio*), and by other parts of speech. Unfortunately he gives very few

examples of each type. Tsopanakis 1983, a very detailed work, studies and classifies the metrical irregularities in final syllables (long syllable in hiatus not shortened; short syllable in hiatus not elided; open or closed short syllable counted as long), which Parry had attributed to modification or juxtaposition of formulae, and examines those which occur because of hyperbaton, tmesis, anastrophe, enjambement, and other variations from natural word-order. He concludes that often there is more than one factor contributing to the appearance of an irregularity.

In his study of the origin of the Homeric hexameter, Nagy has fine examples of the expansion of formulae (1974:49-102). Minton 1975, after an analysis of formulae in Hesiod's *Theogony*, has some good pages on the ways in which the formulae fit into the cola of the verse, including three-part verses (46-54). Friedrich 1975 compares the order of words and clauses in Homeric Greek and in Proto-Indo-European. Peabody's study of Hesiod's compositional technique (1975) includes a rather obscure section on formulae and cola (pp. 96-114). Muellner 1976, though primarily concerned with uses of the word *euchomai*, contains many useful illustrations of manipulation and juxtaposition of formulae. Houben 1977 studies the sequence of main and subordinate clauses in Homeric Greek. O'Nolan 1978 lists numerous "doublets" in Homer, expressions composed of two synonymous terms (English "with might and main"; Homeric *kata phrena kai kata thumon*, etc.), discusses their meaning, and shows how they fit within the verse in various metrical circumstances. Powell 1978 and Edwards 1980 examine the formulaic expressions that occur in the Catalogue of Ships in *Iliad* Book 2. Ingalls 1982 examines some mythological digressions in the *Iliad* and finds they contain "an inordinately large number of late linguistic features and . . . there is much evidence of the formular modification necessary to incorporate the new language into the traditional verse" (206). Miller (1982:57-69) lists and discusses phonological parallels in formulae. Mueller (1984:148-58), in an interesting but controversial chapter, suggests that sometimes the poet's mind "does not operate with a stock of formulas but copies parts of a particular text inscribed in its memory" (p. 158).

Russo 1971 and 1976, Ingalls 1972 and 1976, and Rossi 1978 give surveys of much of the above work.

Analogy, "schematizations," and "structural formulae"

In his major monograph Parry had demonstrated the force of analogy in the formation of Homeric expressions, and used it to explain some metrical faults: "Analogy is perhaps the single most important factor for us to grasp if we are to arrive at a real understanding of Homeric diction" (1971:68). He also pointed out that "a great many equivalent noun-epithet formulae derive naturally from that operation of analogy which, as we saw, is the dominant factor in the development of hexametric diction from its beginning to its end" (p. 176); the normal formula is *anax hekaergos Apollôn,* but *anax Dios huios Apollôn* is also found by analogy with *Dios huios Apollôn*. Parry is also aware of the importance of parallels of sound (p. 72f., 319f.). In a later study Parry spoke of analogical systems in which one word was exchanged for a metrically identical substitute, such as *autar epeidê zessen/speuse/teuxe* (p. 276), and he adds perceptive remarks about *alge' ethêke* and the parallel expressions with changes in each of the two words (pp. 308-9). Further on he remarks that "*teuche kunessin* is like *dôken hetairôi*" (p. 313), without elaborating the point that here *both* words are different and the similarities are only in meter and syntax.

Russo 1963 takes up this last point, and says: "I should like to suggest an approach that follows Parry's lead in seeking localized phrases whose resemblance goes no further than the use of identical metrical word-types of the same grammatical and syntactic pattern, as truly representing certain more general types of formulaic systems" (237). O'Neill (see section 2) showed that words occur in the hexameter at preferred positions according to their metrical shape; Russo points out that certain grammatical types, of certain metrical shapes, also have preferred positions. He gives an analysis of *Iliad* 1.1-7 along these lines (241f.), finding (for example) nouns shaped - u followed by a verb shaped u - - at the verse-end (*alge' ethêke, muthon eeipen*), and reversed, verb - u followed by noun u - - (*teuche kunessin*). In another article (1966) he analyzes further passages (using the term "structural formula" for this kind of system), and, finding such patterns more common in Homer than in Apollonius, suggests that they are an indication of oral composition. An appendix lists a number of structural formulae according to their position in the verse.

Hainsworth 1964 and Minton 1965 perceive the value of

Russo's emphasis that "phrases of a given metrical value and internal shape, expressing a more or less constant syntactic relationship within themselves, tend to have a very limited placement in the hexameter line" (Minton 1965:243), but express doubt that this is a mark of oral composition. Their reservations were confirmed by Packard 1976. By use of computer programs for automatic hexameter scansion and automatic morphological analysis of Homeric Greek, Packard checked the occurrences of some of Russo's patterns of structural formulae in *Odyssey* 1 with those in an equivalent number of verses of Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica* (4th century A.D.). He found that sometimes the one poet has more examples, sometimes the other, and that of all Russo's list of patterns, in the samples examined Homer has 87 occurrences and Quintus 106. Packard also found some patterns which occur significantly more frequently in Quintus than in Homer. Oral composition is thus obviously not the reason for the these structural formulae, but their existence in hexameter poetry is obviously of much interest.

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§ 4: The History of Homeric Formulae: Homer, the Homeric Hymns, and Later Poetry.

Homeric formulae have a long life-span. A few have been thought to date from the Mycenaean period (around 1400 BC) or even earlier. They are found in Hesiod, who composed about the same time as Homer, and continue on in epic, didactic, hymnic, and oracular hexameters, in elegiac couplets, and even in lyric poetry. And because of Homer's immense influence they are found in archaizing hexameters far into the Roman period.

Homer and before Homer

How old are the Homeric formulae? Both Page (1959:218-96) and Webster (1958:91-135), writing soon after the decipherment of the Mycenaean script, and influenced by the evidence of old forms in the epic dialect and by the *Iliad's* descriptions of places and objects which ceased to exist after the Mycenaean period, considered that some Homeric formulae might go back to Mycenaean times. Kirk 1961 gives a useful review of the evidence, pointing out that cultural details could have survived in a non-poetic tradition, and is agnostic about survival of formulae; much could have been developed during the "Dark Age" between the Mycenaean period and the 8th century. Durante 1981 investigated the pre-Ionian period of Greek epic poetry and found a number of Mycenaean legacies; in a second volume (1976) he listed Vedic parallels for certain aspects of Homeric poetry, notably in meter, epithets, metaphor and simile, personification, hymnic form, and the terminology of poetic creativity. Even richer in Vedic and other parallels to Homeric expressions is Schmitt 1967, which includes chapters on heroic poetry, epithets and attributes of divinities, sacred (or hymnic) poetry, and meter. (See also many of the essays in Schmitt 1968.) Horrocks 1980 points out that in Homer preverbs which are not attached to the verb stand either initially in the clause or before the direct object. Vedic parallels suggest that this is a Proto-Indo-European usage, but since it does not occur in the Mycenaean of the Linear B tablets Horrocks suggests it was preserved only in dactylic poetry, which thus must have existed during, and even before, the Mycenaean period. Horrocks discusses three formulaic systems which he claims support

this theory.

If the traditional language derives from Mycenaean times, the question arises whether there was more than a single line of descent. Taking up an idea put forward some twenty-five years ago by Notopoulos 1960, Pavese has argued in a series of monographs and articles (1972, 1974, 1981) that differences in language and formulaic usage show that there developed in mainland Greece a poetic tradition, including Hesiod, the composers of the Hymns, and those of later choral lyric, which was separate from that of Homer's Ionia; Pavese holds that the two streams both derive from a common source prior to the Ionian migration. Pavese's work on the language and formulaic usage in early poetry is very valuable, but it is not clear that the contact between the mainland and Ionia during the period between the migration to Ionia (about 1000 BC) and the 8th century was ever so slight as to foster such different poetic traditions. The recent work of Mureddu 1983, which shows that the formulae for major characters in Homer and Hesiod are virtually identical, has made Pavese's view even harder to accept.

At all events, there are few formulae likely to date from long before Homer's time. Hainsworth 1962 confronts the problem of why there are so few clearly identifiable survivals of Mycenaean language or culture in Homer, if the tradition derives from that period, and concludes that old formulae have been replaced by new. This important article begins his studies of the flexibility of formulae, worked out later in his book (1968). His next article (1964) also deals with the question of new formulae. After pointing out that formulae develop only at a limited number of positions in the verse, he studies how the poet creates a new expression if no suitable formula already exists, illustrating the techniques of adaptation and substitution the poet adopts; he then examines the unique expressions at certain points, showing that in each category the number of expressions which have no evident source far exceeds the total of those apparently adapted or constructed on the basis of known patterns. This proves that the poet used more creativity than is sometimes attributed to him, even allowing for our limited sample of Greek epic poetry. Hainsworth returns to the topic in his important Cincinnati talk (1978), discussing the process of sorting and selection of formulae. There is a conflict between special epithets (e.g. *polumêtis*), reserved for a particular hero and giving richness and color, and

"generic" ones (e.g. *dios*), applicable to anyone and useful for ease and economy. Nominative formulae for the main gods use few generic epithets (*klutos, kreiôn* are representative), and the mundane *thea leukôlenos Hêrê* spreads at the expense of the more dramatic *boôpis potnia Hêrê*. Similarly, formulae for a helmet show an influx of commonplace epithets (*chalkeios*, etc.) beside the old, mysterious ones like *tetraphalêros*. Special epithets like *anax andrôn* are occasionally taken over for other heroes. "The formula becomes outmoded. Its colour turns first into the rust of archaism, and finally into the magnificence of the unknown and incomprehensible: at which stage the old formula is ripe for replacement by the neutral product of generative processes, and the cycle begins anew" (p. 50).

Hoekstra's very important monograph (1964) examines certain phenomena of linguistic innovation in early Greek, specifically quantitative metathesis, the observance or neglect of initial digamma, and the use of movable *n*, showing that in each case the innovation in language has led to increased flexibility in declining, conjugating, and otherwise adapting formulae. So linguistic innovations affected the development of epic style and brought changes in the epic diction. In a later article (1975) Hoekstra analyzes the usage of several expressions and identifies innovations which have entered the diction under the influence of spoken contemporary Ionic. He also shows (1978) that certain cases of metrical lengthening (*āponeesthai, āneres*) are connected with evolution of epic diction, and that certain types arose from substitution in other phrases which are demonstrably late; *proti Ilion āponeesthai* is adapted from *Ilion aipu neesthai*, and other cases arose by analogy. Metrical lengthening is thus due to different causes and occurred at different stages in the evolution of epic diction. In another monograph (1981) he carries further his investigation of the relationship between Homer and the traditional phraseology, treating several problems involving the occurrence of hiatus at the mid-verse caesura and the influence of spoken Ionic on the use of generalizing *te*. He also discusses West's views (1973) on the origins of Greek meters (see section 2), concluding that "it seems certain that the earliest narrative poetry that has left any traces in Homer was already composed in hexameter" (p. 53). An examination of the invention of significant names suggests that they have strong links with the mainland and were probably already fixed in verse before the Ionian migration. A further

examination of the *amplitudo* or fullness of some epic expressions (a whole verse means only "then he answered") leads to the same conclusion, that epic narrative had already taken the metrical form of the hexameter before it emigrated to Ionia. The *amplitudo* too is more likely to have arisen in Mycenaean times.

The ancient question of the composition of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and the relationship between them, has also been approached through examination of formulae. Page 1955 produced a useful list of words and expressions which occur in one poem but not in the other, and asserted that the traditional vocabulary and stock of formulae of the *Iliad* were so different from those of the *Odyssey* that the two poets must have been separated not only in time but in locality. Page did not use statistical checks, and the number of occurrences of some of his examples is low; his argument was severely damaged by a demonstration (Young 1959) that a similarly loose technique can show that *Paradise Lost* could not have been composed by the same author as Milton's other poems.

In an article on the Homeric Hymns (see below), Postlethwaite 1979 suggested that the poet's facility in handling the various kinds of techniques for modifying formulae (as studied by Hainsworth 1968) can be used to identify the stylistic traits of individual poets. In a later article (1981) he applied the same technique of analysis to the "continuation" of the *Odyssey* (from 23.297 to the end), finding "quite radical stylistic differences" from the parts of the epics he used as a control. He found mobility of formulae less common than elsewhere (including in the *Hymns*), separation of component parts twice as common as in the control passages (and close to the *Hymns*), and expansion more than twice as common as in the rest of the *Odyssey* (though here, as Postlethwaite indicates, the figures are small, and show [for what they are worth] that the phenomenon is three times as frequent in the *Odyssey* as in the *Iliad*). Postlethwaite concludes that the "continuation" is by a different poet than the *Iliad* and the rest of the *Odyssey*, and the similarity in quantity of formulaic diction must be due to conscious imitation. These striking results need careful consideration by other scholars.

Hesiod

Hesiod is agreed to be roughly a contemporary of Homer (some placing him a little earlier, some a little later), and a number of works have been specifically devoted to comparison of his use of formulae and Homer's. A useful start was made with the listing in Kretschmer 1913 of phrases repeated within each of the major poems and within the corpus as a whole, with Homeric references added where relevant, though his work is far from complete. Sellschopp 1934 devotes much of her study of Hesiod's use of epithets to an examination of lines and phrases common to his work and to the *Odyssey*, deciding that the latter can often be shown to be the later work; her work is still useful, but her results have to a large extent been refuted by G. P. Edwards (see below). Hoekstra 1957 began his very important work on formulae with the problem of how far Hesiod was influenced by formulaic diction, and studied the Hesiodic modifications of Homeric formulae. He concluded that Hesiod's formulae are much the same as Homer's but at a later stage of development.

Notopoulos 1960 pointed out the importance of Kretschmer's demonstration that there are formulae within Hesiod which do not occur in Homer, and claimed that these were formulae of a regional Boeotian school of poetry. He worked out statistics (now outdated) for formulaic repetitions in Hesiod, based on Kretschmer's lists and the Homeric repetitions listed in Rzach's 1902 edition of Hesiod. Krafft 1963 studied the meaning of certain words and phrases in Hesiod in comparison with the Homeric meaning, and concluded with a useful listing (according to their position in the verse) of formulae which occur only within Hesiod or are common to Hesiod and Homer, identifying those which occur once only or more than once in Homer. Angier 1964 goes beyond formulaic usage and deals with verbal and thematic repetitions as an organizing device in the *Theogony.* Rosenmeyer 1965 discusses Hesiod's use of formulae, finding indications that they may bear a closer relationship to the context than they do in Homer, and that Hesiod "tends to compose, not only in formulas, but in words. . . . In the end the word, not the formula, determines the progress and the unity of his speech" (307). In Matsen 1968 (which I have not seen) "the *Works and Days* is examined in the light of the three Parry/Lord criteria for oral composition: formulae, enjambement, themes" (3989A).

In his major edition of the *Theogony* (1966), West gives his view that this may be the oldest Greek poem we have, and lists (after Krafft) some of the Hesiodic, non-Homeric formulae, but he has no separate discussion. In his edition of the *Works and Days* (1978) and in his study of *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (1985) he does not treat formulae. His discussion of orality in the *Works and Days* (1981) is mentioned in section 8.

G. P. Edwards 1971 is an important and comprehensive comparison of Hesiod and Homer, including (after a review of previous studies) an examination of similar word-forms, parallel phrases, verbal repetitions, formulae, and formulaic systems. Edwards found that Hesiod's observation of economy is not so close as Homer's. In addition, he studied parallels arising from similarity of sound (an innovative approach), the versification and use of enjambement, and the special question of phrases common to Hesiod and the *Odyssey*, where he disproves Sellschopp's arguments that some Odyssean expressions derive from Hesiod. He concluded that Hesiod's use of formulae is much like Homer's, and that the two must be considered similar in "orality"; he thought that Notopoulos' theory of two separate streams of poetic tradition surviving from pre-migration times in Ionia and in mainland Greece was most improbable in the light of the extensive similarities between Homeric and Hesiodic diction, and that "the most economical hypothesis may be that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* already existed and were known on the Greek mainland by Hesiod's time" (p. 203).

As part of his argument for separate Ionian and mainland poetic traditions (see above), Pavese (1972:35f.) discusses non-Homeric elements in Hesiod's language, and lists (p. 121f.) by metrical position all repeated expressions not found in Homer but occurring (1) within the works of Hesiod; (2) in Hesiod and the *Homeric Hymns*; (3) in Hesiod and archaic lyric; (4) in Hesiod, the *Hymns*, archaic lyric, and archaic elegiac; and (5) in Hesiod and in lyric poetry. He also examines (p. 165f.) the flexibility Hesiod shows in manipulating formulae, on Hainsworth's principles (see section 3), and the overlapping formulae which violate economy.

Minton 1975 accepts G. P. Edwards' demonstration of the oral character of Hesiod's work, tackles the problem of comparing the density of formulae in Hesiod and Homer, and works out a more refined system of calculating the proportion of formulae (see section 8). He finds 57.5% of Homer pure formula, compared with

36.6% of the *Theogony* and slightly over 22% of the *Works and Days*. He gives a very careful analysis of two 25-verse samples from the *Theogony*. Peabody 1975 is a large and difficult work (for a sympathetic appreciation see M. N. Nagler's review in *Arion*, n.s. 3/3 [1976]: 365-77) which bases most of its exposition on the *Works and Days*. Peabody is interested in the relationship of the formulae to the cola of the verse (see above, section 2) rather than in individual formulae; his appendices list the metrical shapes of words occurring in the poem, the ways in which they appear in the verse, and the arrangement of cola.

In order to discover if Hesiod uses the same formulae as Homer to express similar concepts under the same metrical conditions, Mureddu 1983 examines noun-epithet formulae occurring in all grammatical cases and verse-positions for a number of divinities and for "mankind," "gods," Olympus, the sea, and sexual union. She finds a remarkable overall unity in the Homeric and Hesiodic usages; in only a very few cases does Hesiod replace a Homeric formula with an alternative. This demonstration of the uniformity of this aspect of Ionic and mainland poetic diction argues strongly, perhaps decisively, against the theory of separate traditions descending from Mycenaean times. Verdenius 1985, a new commentary on the *Works and Days*, does not discuss formulae.

The Homeric Hymns

Three of the four long Homeric Hymns (those to Demeter, Apollo, and Aphrodite) are dated not much later than Homer, and the fourth (to Hermes) is usually considered not later than the fifth century; so their usage of formulae has attracted a good deal of study. Porter 1949 deals with repetition of words, sounds, and themes in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, but not with formulae. Post-Parryan studies of the relationship of the Homeric Hymns to Homer began with Notopoulos 1962, who published a formulaic analysis of lines 1-18 of the *Hymn to Apollo* and gave figures and percentages of formulaic verses in the four long Hymns, compared with samples from the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and the main works of Hesiod. He declared that this showed the oral character of the Hymns. This pioneering work is open to criticism both because of its easy equation of "formulaic" with "oral" and because of the

looseness of the principles on which formulae are identified, and it has now been superseded.

Preziosi 1966 is a careful study of the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, identifying Homeric formulae and analogous phrases found in the Hymn, and formulae and analogous phrases recurring within the Hymn itself. She found that 75.5% of verses in the Hymn contain formulae found in Homer, usually in the same metrical position, or 44.25% of its metra. Expressions analogous to those found in Homer (Parry's "system of schematization") occur in 23% of verses (11.5% of metra). Fifty-nine non-Homeric formulae recur within the Hymn, in 36% of its verses (22.5% of the metra); expressions analogous to others within the Hymn are found in 35.5% of the verses (14% of the metra).

Hoekstra 1969 examines the Hymns to Apollo, Aphrodite, and Demeter to see whether they show a different stage of development from that in the Homeric epics. He studies the evidence of vocabulary, inflection, substitution within formulae, juxtaposition of formulae, and non-Homeric archaisms of formulae in these Hymns, and concludes that in the Delian part of the *Hymn to Apollo* only the final part (the gatherings at Delos, about lines 140-81) shows oddities; in the Pythian part of this Hymn there are few oddities but they suggest sub-epic composition, with archaisms due to the poetic genre; the *Hymn to Aphrodite* shows modifications in diction which are not matched in Homer and argue for a later stage of development; and the *Hymn to Demeter* also presents un-Homeric modifications and a development beyond the Homeric stage.

Richardson's edition of the *Hymn to Demeter* (1974) usefully prints formulaic parallels in Homer, Hesiod, and the other Hymns, discusses coincidences with certain Homeric passages (p. 31f.), and lists expressions which have parallels in Hesiod but not Homer, those which are adaptations of Homeric expressions, those which are paralleled in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*, and new or adapted proper-name formulae. He suggests this Hymn was composed later than, and with an awareness of, at least the *Theogony* and perhaps the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. He also discusses the occasional lack of formulaic economy and the use of enjambement (see section 5 below). Richardson does not take a stand on whether this is oral composition or a good literary imitation of one. In his Appendix II, Richardson discusses the relationship to his own work of G. P. Edwards' researches on Hesiodic diction and the language, Hoekstra's work on the use of moveable *n*, and the question of oral

poetry and the use of writing, sensibly pointing out the ambiguities in both terms ("both literate and illiterate poets premeditate") and that no one doubts that the long Hymns were composed for recitation and used traditional techniques of epic composition.

Gaisser 1974 appeared in the same year as Richardson's work. She compares the use of noun-epithet combinations in the *Hymn to Demeter* with that in Homer, and looks for differences from the Homeric norm which occur also in Hesiod and the other Hymns (showing herself aware that Homeric usage itself is not monolithic). She has major sections on Hesiodic expressions in the Hymn (finding Homeric vocabulary used in new combinations), expressions that use non-Homeric, non-Hesiodic vocabulary, expressions using Homeric vocabulary in a non-Homeric way ("an individual quirk of style"), and a few expressions not found in Homer or Hesiod but occurring in other Hymns. Gaisser concludes that this Hymn is close to Hesiod in style, especially in a tendency to use nouns which are not found in noun-epithet combinations in Homer, and in its different handling of generic epithets. There are also apparently individual stylistic features in choice of vocabulary, and in length and positioning of noun-epithet combinations. In the final section of his second monograph on the epic tradition (Pavese 1974), the author discusses late linguistic features in Hesiod and the Hymns and presents statistics on the percentages of formulae in samples of the two parts of the *Hymn to Apollo* and the *Hymn to Hermes* (p. 117, note 6). Schröder 1975 is a concise and complicated monograph which carefully compares the formulaic expressions in the Delian part of the *Hymn to Apollo* and the *Iliad*, concluding that the former is older than our *Iliad* in its present form. Càssola's edition of the Hymns (1975) does not list the formulae. Van Nortwick's dissertation on the *Hymn to Hermes* (1975) studies the noun-epithet combinations (especially for Hermes and Apollo) in that Hymn and in Homer, finding a variety of new usages; he also examines certain whole-verse expressions, the use of enjambement, and the sentence-structure. Pellizer 1978 is concerned with verbal repetitions rather than formulae.

A very interesting recent development is the suggestion by Postlethwaite 1979 that one can use as a mark of oral composition "the composer's facility in handling the various types of formula modification," and further, that "the variations in frequency of these modifications [in the four long Hymns] may reflect individual stylistic traits in their composers" (1). He analyzes the usage of

common-noun + epithet word-groups (following Hainsworth's technique, see section 3) in order to examine how frequently they are moved to alternative positions or modified by expansion or separation of their elements. Samples of 430 lines each of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are used as a control (and are found to be much alike). He finds a greater mobility of expressions in the Hymns than in Homer (with the exception of the *Hymn to Demeter*), and a greater frequency of separation of elements and of expansion. He concludes that the probability is that if the Homeric epics were orally composed, so were the Hymns, since they show the same techniques of mutation of formulae; but that there is considerable variation among the individual Hymns, which is probably due to individual composers. Some might quibble over minor details of Postlethwaite's study, and the total figures for such relatively short compositions are regrettably low, but his results give support to a view which is itself intrinsically probable.

Several papers presented at a convention held in Venice in 1977 and published in 1981 deal in detail with formulaic usage in the Hymns. Segal 1981 examines the formulaic artistry in the *Hymn to Demeter*, and considers the poem is an oral work but shows divergences from the Homeric practice; there is more variation of epithets, more violation of economy, and more "necessary" enjambement. He argues that it certainly marks a stage beyond Homer. Segal gives special treatment to the distinctive accumulation of epithets in a single verse (p. 112), the variations of formulae (p. 119), non-formulaic usage at times of special significance, the theme of time, and expressions for wrath and grief. All this may be an individual poet's natural organic development, a work dependent on inherited tradition but also sophisticated and artistically self-conscious. Kirk 1981 discusses the familiar problems of the relationship of the Delian and Pythian parts of the *Hymn to Apollo*, together with the criteria for dating. He finds no evidence of a distinct non-Ionic mainland tradition beyond Hesiod. He then provides a commentary on the Hymn, drawing attention to modifications of Homeric language. Kirk is particularly critical of the handling of some parts of the Pythian section, finding a "maladroit bending of particular Homeric passages" (p. 179). He concludes that "both parts typically exemplify sub-epic technique, which is not, I think, a fully oral one" (p. 180). Herter 1981 examines the numerous formulae common to the *Hymn to Hermes* and Homer, and discusses how

the poet has varied the old formulae to suit his theme. He notes that a good many formulae seem to come from early but non-Homeric epic (p. 194). Pavese 1981 repeats his view that the works of Hesiod, the Hymns, and the epic cycle were orally composed in a mainland tradition independent of the Ionic tradition of Homer, summarizing the arguments of his earlier monographs (1972, 1974).

Cantilena 1982 is a careful monograph giving a comprehensive formulaic analysis of each of the Hymns; the author tabulates the formulaic density, verse by verse, in each Hymn, and prints a list of formulae and formulaic expressions which do not occur in other early epic. He also gives a line-by-line commentary on the treatment of formulaic expressions in each Hymn. Cantilena agrees with Pavese's view of a mainland oral tradition, including Hesiod and the Hymns, which is separate from the Ionic. He gives a good summary of previous work, and a full discussion of whether the Hymns are oral or not. In appendices he lists the proportion of formulae in every verse of the Hymns, the percentage of formulaic language calculated by Notopoulos' method, and the formulae recurring in the Hymns which occur in or are similar to those occurring in Homer, Hesiod, and other Hymns. There is much of value in Cantilena's work, but it must now be considered in association with Janko's (see below).

Janko 1982 is an impressive work and of great importance. The author sets out to examine, and to tabulate statistically, the use of innovative and archaizing diction in Hesiod and the Hymns, and gives excellent summaries and assessments of previous work over this large area, including the validity of various tests for oral poetry and the use of non-Homeric formulae in Hesiod and the Hymns. Examining certain kinds of linguistic changes, he observes a small development from the *Iliad* to the *Odyssey*, a larger one to the *Theogony*, and a further small one to the *Works and Days*. The changes between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (Ionian poetry) are mirrored in those between the *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, which suggests that mainland poetry fell under Ionian domination because of the pre-eminence of Homer. He then uses statistical methods to fit the results of his application of the criteria to the Hymns within this framework. After detailed treatment of each of the longer Hymns, he concludes that the epic was brought from some area of Mycenaean culture and evolved in the Aeolic settlements in Asia Minor during the Dark Ages. One branch

continued to develop in the northern parts of this area, subject to later influence by the Ionic tradition, producing the *Hymn to Aphrodite* and the *Cypria*, whereas in the southern part Ionic-speakers took over, not long before the Homeric poems, and added several new features to the diction from their vernacular. Here the *Iliad* (perhaps about 750) and the *Odyssey* (perhaps about 735) were created, and later the Delian part of the *Hymn to Apollo* (perhaps about 655). The Ionian tradition was taken to Boeotia, and used by Hesiod (together with some Attic and Aeolic influence) in the *Theogony* (perhaps about 670) and the *Works and Days* (perhaps about 650). Later on, the mainland tradition took on peculiar characteristics, such as the false archaism which shows up in the *Catalogue of Women* (which can hardly be earlier than the *Theogony* but shows slightly earlier features of diction) and the *Hymn to Demeter*. These characteristics increase in the later S*hield of Heracles*, the Pythian part of the *Hymn to Apollo* (both after 600), and the *Hymn to Hermes* (in the later sixth century). Janko includes good accounts of previous work and adds to our knowledge in many different areas, and shows himself aware (p. 191) of an important corollary of his work—that if his observations are correct (which seems indubitable, though some may quarrel here and there with the force of the deductions he makes from them) the texts of the Homeric poems must have been fixed in some way, whether by writing or memorization, before the time of Hesiod, and the other poems too at the time of their composition, in order to freeze the diction at that particular stage in its chronological and regional development.

Later Poetry

Studies of the use of Homeric formulae in later Greek poetry must be listed summarily:

Lyric poetry: Page 1963, Aloni 1981 (Archilochus); Gentili 1969; Giannini 1973 (elegiac); Mawet 1975 (epigrams).

Inscriptions: Di Tillio 1969.

Delphic oracles: McLeod 1961; Rossi 1981.

Batrachomyomachia: Glei 1984.

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Apollonius of Rhodes: Fränkel 1968; Campbell 1981b.

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§ 5: Enjambement

Enjambement, the continuation of a sentence from one verse to the next, is characteristic of Homer, but the nature of the running-over of the sense is more restricted than in literate writers, and attempts have been made to use this feature to differentiate oral from literate poetry. In Homer the framework of the sentence

is usually clear, with at least two of subject, verb, and object expressed before the enjambement occurs. This characteristic arises largely from the use of formulaic diction, and probably eases both the poet's composition and the listeners' comprehension.

Bassett 1926 examined the question whether an enjambing word standing at the beginning of the verse and followed by a pause or sentence-end—the "runover" position—carries special emphasis. He counted about 3,000 examples in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, and examined in turn the finite verbs, infinitives, nouns, adjectives, participles, adverbs, and pronouns which occur in this position. He concluded that emphatic runover words owe their emphasis to other considerations than their position, but that they are important for their part in producing "*civilité*," the continuity of thought characteristic of Homeric verse. The idea is sound, though Bassett tended to play down too much the striking emphasis of some runover words, and his collection of material is still useful and could well form a basis for future research.

Parry 1929 divided enjambement into two types: "unperiodic," in which "the sentence, at the verse end, already gives a complete thought," and "necessary," in which "the verse end [falls] at the end of a word group where there is not yet a whole thought, or . . . in the middle of a word group" (203). On this principle he categorized samples of 100 verses each from six books of the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, Apollonius' *Argonautica*, and Virgil's *Aeneid*, finding percentages of verses with no enjambement respectively 48.5%, 44.8%, 34.8%, and 38.3%; with "unperiodic" enjambement 24.8%, 26.6%, 16%, and 12.5%; and with "necessary" enjambement 26.6%, 28.5%, 49.1%, and 49.2%. The forms of "unperiodic" enjambement "more than anything else, give the rhythm in Homer its special movement from verse to verse" (207), and he attributes the difference in Apollonius and Virgil to their writing out their verses without haste, whereas Homer's traditional formulaic technique enabled him to put his spoken verse together rapidly and his need for speed in verse-making pushed him into the "adding" style of "unperiodic" enjambement. Parry goes on to discuss briefly how enjambement in Homer is related to the use of formulaic phrases, pointing out the rarity of enjambement between an adjective and its noun (unless the adjective can be understood as a substantive).

Lord 1948 compares enjambement in South Slavic heroic poems, and from an analysis of 2400 verses finds that 44.5% show

no enjambement, 40.6% show "unperiodic," and only 14.9% "necessary" enjambement. He compares the types of "necessary" enjambement in South Slavic poetry with the types found in Homer, finding the Homeric style has far more devices for continuing the thought over the end of the line, especially its use of participles and complementary infinitives and the possibility of beginning a new thought at the bucolic diaeresis and continuing it into the next line.

Both Kirk and I worked on enjambement in independent articles which appeared in the same year. Kirk 1966 analyzed all 867 verses of *Iliad* 16, and gives a table showing totals of features such as types of enjambement, stops and pauses at verse-end and at the main caesural positions, runover words, and sentences of four or more verses. He refines Parry's categories and terminology, using "progressive" for Parry's possibly misleading "unperiodic" enjambement and subdividing Parry's "necessary" category into three types: "periodic," in which (for example) a subordinate clause fills one verse and the main clause follows in the next; "integral," in which the sense overruns the verse-end and no kind of pause or punctuation is possible between the successive verses; and "violent" enjambement, when the verse-end separates a preposition or a preceding adjective or dependent genitive from its noun. These types are further modified in his discussion and tabulation, and he examines in particular the "cumulation" or addition of further phrases or clauses to a sentence already potentially complete. His figures for *Iliad* 16 show 332 non-enjambed lines (38.3%), 248 instances of "progressive" (28.6%), 106 of "periodic" (12.2%), 181 of "integral" (20.9%), the last including 3 cases of "violent" enjambement (0.35%).

My own study of the positioning of words and formulae in Homeric verse (Edwards 1966) makes a similar distinction between two types of "necessary" enjambement, and analyzes the grammatical structure of the instances in *Iliad* 1 and *Odyssey* 17. The kinds of "harsh" enjambement (Kirk's "violent" category) are also analyzed grammatically and reasons suggested for its occurrence in particular instances, with some comparisons between Homeric usage and that of Apollonius and Quintus of Smyrna. "Unperiodic" enjambement and the various kinds of runover word are also discussed, the results confirming Bassett's idea of its contribution to the smooth progression of the sense but showing that it may draw emphasis from its position in a way he did not

allow for. Other sections examine sentences which begin at the mid-verse caesura or bucolic diaeresis and enjamb into the following verse. It is suggested that a new sentence beginning at the bucolic diaeresis, where often a conventional formulaic word or phrase could have been used instead, shows special skill on the part of the poet. Glavičić 1970 studies the grammatical constructions of enjambing sentences in Homer, dividing them into eight groups and concluding with a brief account of three ways in which the thought is developed; his second article (1971) extends the same examination to Hesiod, finding that in the latter the constructions are smoother and more uniform, with less tension between meter and syntax.

Clayman and Van Nortwick 1977 challenged Parry's statistics on the grounds that his samples were not random, that he used only the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and *Argonautica*, and that he failed to test his results for statistical significance. They provide new figures for Parry's categories, based on a random sample of one-tenth of the verses of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, one-fifth of the *Argonautica*, and the whole text of the *Theogony, Works and Days,* and *Shield of Heracles*, the four long Homeric Hymns, Aratus' *Phaenomena*, Callimachus' *Hymns*, and Theocritus' *Idylls*. They find a higher proportion of "necessary" enjambement in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* than Parry did, and claim that Parry's stress on "unperiodic" enjambement as characteristically Homeric and the result of oral verse-making is false, as according to their own figures the difference is not statistically significant. Barnes 1979 shows that the differences between their figures and Parry's for lines with no enjambement result from a different definition, and provides more accurate figures (according to Parry's categories) for all the poems mentioned, based not on samples but on examination of the whole of the works (using E. Lyding's unpublished 1949 Bryn Mawr dissertation for the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*). (For the poems not examined by Cantilena [see below] these figures are the most accurate available.) Many of the differences are statistically significant. They show a decrease in the proportion of lines with no enjambement in the later poems, and an increase in necessary enjambement; "unperiodic" enjambement is lower in the *Argonautica* than in Homer, but higher in Theocritus' *Idylls*, and so is an unreliable criterion for chronology or oral composition. Barnes suggests that the significantly higher percentage of verses without enjambement in the earlier poems is a result of the

presence of formulae, which are a product of the oral tradition, and so Parry's assertion of a correlation between enjambement characteristics and oral composition is correct.

G. P. Edwards (1971:93-100) gives detailed figures (using Parry's categories) for enjambement in each 100 lines of Hesiod's works, placing him firmly beside Homer. Peabody (1975:125-43) analyzes the syntactic structures in Hesiod, the linkage of sense across caesurae of the verse, and the use of enjambement, discussing particular cases in the *Works and Days* and comparing the structure of Sanskrit epic. His Appendix III, a structural listing of all verses in the *Works and Days*, includes indications of enjambement. In his edition of the *Hymn to Demeter*, Richardson (1974:331-33) discusses Parry's enjambement figures for Homer, G. P. Edwards' for Hesiod, and his own (in Parry's categories) for the longer Homeric Hymns; he notes that "violent" enjambement between adjective and noun occurs five times in the *Hymn to Demeter*, all the result of adaptation of formulae, and is very doubtful that this suggests a "literary" poet. Van Nortwick 1976 examines enjambement in the *Hymn to Hermes*.

Cantilena 1980 supersedes much of the previous work, and provides the best figures now available for the works he studies (*Iliad* 9, *Odyssey* 12, *Homeric Hymns*, *Batrachomyomachia*, and the *Hymns of Callimachus*). He prints his analysis of the enjambement in these poems line by line in an Appendix, following the system used by Kirk (with minor refinements). He explains the differences between his figures and Kirk's, e.g. in non-enjambing verses (Kirk 25.95%, Cantilena 36.53%), by the different nature of subject-matter and amount of dialogue in the books he uses and in the Patrocleia (used by Kirk). But "periodic" enjambement is about the same (12-13%). In only 7 of the 26 categories listed by Cantilena does Homer differ from Callimachus by 5% or more; in one of these the figures are too small to be significant, and in the other six, the *Homeric Hymns* agree closely with Homer, not with Callimachus. The percentage of lines without enjambement does not vary much in any of the poems studied (35-39%), except in the *Batrachomyomachia*, where it rises to 44%. Progressive enjambement is also fairly constant (Homer 31%, Callimachus 28.6%). Obviously no distinction between oral and written composition is possible on these grounds, and Cantilena well observes that Homer *seems* to use enjambement less because of his formulaic style: a sentence often begins (for example) *autar*

Achilleus. . . . and enjambs, but the familiarity makes the enjambement hardly noticeable. Cantilena finds "violent" enjambement in about 0.8% of Homeric verses and about 4.9% of those of Callimachus, and is afraid that the difference of 4 percentage points is small (p. 25); but his figures really mean that less than 1 verse in 100 in the Homeric poems shows such enjambement compared to nearly 5 verses in 100 in Callimachus, so the phenomenon occurs five times as often. In Homer and the *Homeric Hymns*, "violent" enjambement comes about through the dislocation or modification of formulae, and it is easy to show a close formulaic connection between the last word of the verse and the enjambing ones. But in Callimachus' *Hymns*, despite the pale echoes of formulae, the syntax is articulated very differently, in a way which Cantilena finds inconceivable in oral poetry: "Negli Inni di Callimaco enjambement violenti, *Spaltungen* ed iperbati di vario grado vanno spesso insieme, fino a combinazioni talmente complesse da riuscire inconcepibili per un poeta improvvisatore e incomprensibili ad un semplice ascoltatore" (pp. 31-32). The *Batrachomyomachia* (which announces itself as a written work) has significantly more non-enjambing lines than Homer, whereas Callimachus has less than Homer; only in "progressive" enjambement is the *Batrachomyomachia* significantly closer to Callimachus than to Homer, and Cantilena rightly thinks this confirms his view that enjambement is not enough to distinguish oral style from its imitation. It may be added that Barnes' figures show a wide difference between *Iliad* 3 (461 verses) and *Iliad* 19 (424 verses) in non-enjambing lines (55.9% to 41.4%) and in lines with "necessary" enjambement (19.6% to 32.3%), so it is only on the largest scale that differences in total figures have any real meaning. The rhapsode thinks "hexametrically," as Cantilena says, and only in unusual cases avails himself of the "violent" enjambement which is much more common in literate poets; but Homer's liking for a fresh start to a sentence or clause at the bucolic diaeresis must not be ignored.

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Notes

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Australian Aboriginal Oral Traditions

Margaret Clunies Ross

1. *Aboriginal Oral Traditions*
A History of Research and Scholarship[1]

> The makers of Australian songs, or of the combined songs and dances, are the poets, or bards, of the tribes, and are held in great esteem. Their names are known in the neighboring tribes, and their songs are carried from tribe to tribe, until the very meaning of the words is lost, as well as the original source of the song. It is hard to say how far and how long such a song may travel in the course of time over the Australian continent. (Howitt 1904:414)

In 1988 non-Aboriginal Australians will celebrate two hundred years' occupation of a country which had previously been home to an Aboriginal population of about 300,000 people. They probably spoke more than two hundred different languages and most individuals were multilingual (Dixon 1980). They had a rich culture, whose traditions were centrally concerned with the celebration of three basic types of religious ritual-rites of fertility, initiation, and death (Maddock 1982:105-57). In many parts of Australia, particularly in the south where white settlement was earliest and densest, Aboriginal traditional life has largely disappeared, although the memory of it has been passed down the generations. Nowadays all Aborigines, even in the most traditional parts of the north, such as Arnhem Land, are affected to a greater or lesser extent by the Australian version of Western culture, and must preserve their own traditions by a combination of holding strategies. Thus in 1988 many Aboriginal Australians will be inclined to mourn the Bicentenary with its reminder to them of all

they have lost.

The importance of song and dance to Aboriginal people is apparent through the diaries and journals of the early settlers. They quickly perceived that people travelled great distances to learn new songs, for which they almost certainly paid in various trade goods (Backhouse 1837:14, quoted in Threlkeld 1974:I, 76; Roth 1902:20; Howitt 1904:413-14); they feted and honored talented songmen and -women (Threlkeld 1974:I, 58-59; Grey 1841:300-4) and their theatrical performances, usually carried out at night by the dramatic lighting of a full moon and flickering camp fires, impressed many writers and artists (Kerr forthcoming). The Port Jackson Aborigines' term *carib-berie* (Hunter 1793:143-45) which passed into English as *corroboree*, quickly entered the language as a term for such performances which combined song, dance, and visual display. Edward John Eyre (1845:233-34) likened Aboriginal corroborees to European theater, but the songs which accompanied these performances were not generally received with much understanding. They were considered lugubrious, repetitious, discordant, barbarous, and heathen.

It was difficult for Europeans of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and indeed remains so for many still today, to appreciate that Aboriginal hunter-gatherers, whose material culture seemed to them so primitive, had a sophisticated artistic life, not to speak of one of the most complex systems of social organization in the world and a religious life to which the older and more privileged members of society devoted a great deal of their time. Nineteenth-century views of the superiority of the white to the black races undoubtedly led to assumptions of the inferiority of Aboriginal culture which prevented all but a few early observers from even conceiving there was anything of interest in Aboriginal oral tradition, let alone trying to record it. In addition, the Christian desire to suppress heathenism did not encourage the recording of a pagan culture.

The forms of Aboriginal religion and the beliefs which early investigators could learn about from their Aboriginal informants were so different from their own Christian notions of religious beliefs and observance that they could not readily accede to the idea that they were religious in character. Threlkeld, who conducted a mission to the Aborigines of the Hunter Valley of New South Wales between 1824 and 1859, articulated a common view, even though his writings evince a good deal of sympathy for.

Aboriginal society: "The Aborigines of New Holland, in this part of the Colony, have no priesthood, no altar, no sacrifice, not any religious service, strictly so called; their superstitious observances can scarcely be designated as divine rites, being only mysterious works of darkness, revellings and such like. Nevertheless, they are not left without some instinctive feeling of dependence on the great 'Unknown Being'" (1974:I, 62). Since the accepted forms, the temples, and the institutionalized priesthood which seemed a hallmark of most religions were absent, Threlkeld could not help feeling that many an Aboriginal religious ceremony which he reported in detail in his *Reminiscences* had the appearance of a sport rather than of a religious observance (1974:I, 53). The absence of dogma compatible with Christianity and other known religions was also an obstacle to taking Aboriginal religion seriously, as was the often "obscene" content of Aboriginal myth. Heinrich Meyer (1846:11-12) voiced a common opinion in his short ethnography of the Aborigines of the Encounter Bay tribe of South Australia:

> . . . The moon is also [i.e., as well as the sun] a woman, and not particularly chaste. She stays a long time with the men, and from the effects of her intercourse with them she becomes very thin and wastes away to a mere skeleton. When in this state Nurrunderi [a creator being] orders her to be driven away. She flies, and is secreted for some time, but is employed all the time in seeking roots which are so nourishing that in a short time she appears again, and fills out and becomes fat rapidly.
>
> . . . They do not appear to have any story of the origin of the world; but nearly all animals they suppose anciently to have been men who performed great prodigies, and at last transformed themselves into different kinds of animals and stones!

Nevertheless, even in the early days of the settlement, and throughout the nineteenth century, curious, observant, and relatively unprejudiced individuals in all parts of Australia wrote down descriptions of Aboriginal ceremonies, recorded versions of Aboriginal myths and tales and sometimes gave the texts and even occasionally the musical scores of songs (Howitt 1904:419-25; Torrance and Howitt 1887; cf. A. Moyle 1977; Petrie 1904:25 and

28). These accounts are of very uneven quality and almost invariably in an educated English prose style. In most cases of texts taken down in the period up to about 1930, there is no attempt to record the way in which the Aboriginal narrators spoke to the collector, whether in an Aboriginal language or in non-standard English or a mixture of both. They are really résumés or free reworkings of the material. Thus the works of early collectors reproduce the substance of the narratives but probably not a great deal of the form or style. As an example, I quote a brief North Queensland story printed by W. E. Roth (1902:8) as an example of what he called "imaginative games." Roth was an educated man, a scientist and, at the time of recording, Northern Protector of Aboriginals. He entitled the story *The Lady Scored* (Princess Charlotte Bay):

> Mother tortoise, one hot afternoon, feeling very thirsty went to get some water, but not being able to find any, asked her lord and master where it was. He was a selfish beast and told her he had drunk it all. This, however, was a lie, for he was keeping it safe under each armpit in store for the dry season. She also had her suspicions and threw a lighted fire stick at him: this made him raise his arms in astonishment when—down fell the water, and she quenched her thirst.

There is no reason to doubt the veracity of Roth's account, and it is generally recognized that his ethnographies are of high quality; moreover, he lived among Aborigines for quite a long period of time. However, much in the tale of the creature who withholds water from others, a theme that occurs in many Aboriginal repertoires, is mediated by Roth's slightly supercilious, detached tone and authorial commentary which come through in the title, the phrases "mother tortoise," "her lord and master," and "a selfish beast" and in the omniscient "This, however, was a lie" and "She also had her suspicions." Although one could no longer prove it, one's knowledge of Aboriginal storytelling styles would suggest that these elements were the ethnographer's additions to the tale as it was told to him.

Even in early ethnographies, by contrast, we often find that the texts of Aboriginal songs are reproduced, sometimes with a glossary and a free English translation. This is probably because song texts of individual verses of Aboriginal songs are usually quite

short and also because they are naturally rather allusive, so that a commentary and translation were necessary to convey their gist to an educated Anglo-Australian readership (see, among others, Grey 1841:307-12; Howitt 1904:414-25). An early example of the recording of Aboriginal song and an attempt to convey something of its poetic power was Mrs. Eliza Hamilton Dunlop's publications in a variety of local newspapers in the late 1830s and 1840s. Her husband was a police magistrate and protector of Aborigines at Wollombi and Macdonald River in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales and she was the first Australian poet to attempt versions of Aboriginal songs (E. Dunlop 1981). I quote one verse of what she calls "Nature Poetry" together with the translation and gloss, published in the *Sydney Morning Herald*, 11 October 1848:

Nung-Ngnun
Nge a runba wonung bulkirra umbilinto bulwarra;
Pital burra kultan wirripang buntao
Our home is the gibber-gunyah,
Where hill joins hill on high;
Where the turruma and berrambo,
Like sleeping serpents lie;
And the rushing of wings, as the wangas pass,
Sweeps the wallaby's print from the glistening grass.

She glosses Gibber-gunyah as "Cave in the rock," Turruma and Berrambo as "war arms" and "Wanga" as "a species of pigeon."

Aboriginal oral tales are extant in a large variety of sources, from the early years of the white colony until the mid-1920s. During this period collectors were by and large amateurs, and even the semi-professionals such as Daisy Bates (1912-34), who corresponded with the English folklorist Andrew Lang, had no formal training in recording variant versions of tales and no formally taught linguistic skills. The following illustrates Bates' style of tale-telling. She is careful to include a number of Aboriginal key words, with English glosses in brackets, and capitalizes the names of supernatural beings to indicate their status. She also makes the narrative proceed largely by means of dialogue, so that her style appears less remote from Aboriginal tale-telling habits than does Roth's text, quoted earlier. The tale appeared in a weekly newspaper, *The Australasian* (September 2, 1922, p. 517) in a piece entitled "Springtime at Ooldea":

Jupiter was once a man who had a head only, no body.

> Katta (head) "travelled about," and one day he met two waddi (men) Maalu and Kulbir (two species of Kangaroo). They were very frightened when they saw a head, with no body, moving along towards them; but they gave Katta some of their food, and when he had eaten, he said: "Your spears and spearthrowers and clubs are no good; leave them with me and I will make them good." The young waddi left their weapons near Katta and went away, and by and by when they returned, the found splendid weapons of kurrgu (acacia), which Katta had made for them. While they were looking at their new weapons, they heard a great shouting, and looking up they saw a number of waddi running towards them to kill them. Katta heard the men coming, and his head moved along the ground towards them, and when he came up to them all the waddi fell down and died.
>
> Then Katta said to the two young waddi, "Put me in Wanbanida's kardal" (marsupial's tunnel or hole in the ground), and the waddi did so, and by and by, when Katta went up into gaddina (sky), Maalu and Kulbir went there too. Now all men of the maalu and kulbir totem can make good kajji (spears), jurding (clubs) and miro (spearthrowers) of kurrgu wood, and they can look at Katta in "nying-u" (cold time) and not be any more afraid of him.

Many of the early collectors recorded their findings in newspapers, in private diaries and journals of discovery. After the first Chair of Anthropology was established at the University of Sydney in 1926 and held by A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, many tales appeared in professional ethnographies and descriptions of ritual. A great deal of material lies unpublished in libraries and perhaps in private collections. In contrast to the situation in North America where there has been, since Boas and Sapir, a strong emphasis on the collection of Amerindian texts and interest in folklore *per se*, there have never been professional folklorists (in the North American sense of the term) at work in Australia. Ironically, although some general knowledge of the corpus of Aboriginal myths and tales reached the northern hemisphere via the writings of authors such as Sigmund Freud (1919), Emile Durkheim (1915),

and Arnold van Gennep (1906), only Geza Róheim actually conducted field work in Australia. The others drew on material at second hand. A short history of folklore collection in Australia is to be found in Waterman (1979), Tonkinson (1976) and Greenway (1961).

In the period between the 1920s and the 1960s, most recording of Aboriginal oral traditions was carried out by social anthropologists as a by-product of their field research into social structures and religious rites. There were also a few linguists at work, mostly amateurs, with the exception of Gerhardt Laves who did not publish his work (see Part 3) and Arthur Capell, who was Reader in Linguistics at Sydney University and for some twenty years the only teacher of Aboriginal linguistics in an Australian university. Other individual researchers, such as Norman Tindale and Theodore Strehlow, both in Adelaide, recorded Aboriginal myths, tales, and song texts. However, Strehlow's most important work in this field, *Songs of Central Australia*, was not published until 1971. A number of texts were recorded during this period, particularly in the journal *Oceania* (1930-) and in the Oceania Monographs and Linguistic Monographs Series. One must mention particularly the work of the anthropologists Catherine and Ronald Berndt, who produced a substantial number of texts of Aboriginal oral genres both within anthropological works (e.g., 1942-45, 1951) and separately (R. Berndt 1951, 1952, 1976a and b; C. Berndt 1952-54, 1970). Between them, they have made a highly significant collection of texts, which they are now preparing for systematic analysis (see Part 3).

In the field of linguistics, it was not generally until the 1960s, and particularly in the 70s and 80s, that Aboriginal oral texts have been recorded using morpheme-by-morpheme glosses of indigenous languages and with attention also being paid to the communicative functions of these texts. There are many extant grammars of Aboriginal languages that also contain texts, and linguists are now taking up questions concerning the character of Aboriginal oral discourse which should very soon produce greater depth of information in this field (see Part 3). It was also about the same time, or a little earlier, that the first significant analysis of Aboriginal music began with the work of Alice Moyle, Trevor Jones, and Catherine Ellis. Interest in Aboriginal music and dance went back to the early ethnographers, and subsequently scholars like E. T. Davies made a substantial contribution, but the late 50s

and early 60s was the time when musicological research could first utilize the advantages of the battery-powered tape recorder in a field situation. It is significant that Jones (1956) and Ellis (1958 and 1964), at least, did their first research on the audio-visual collections of Elkin and Strehlow, respectively. The question of the importance of audio-visual technology in the recording of Aboriginal oral tradition will be taken up in Part 2.

The Nature of Aboriginal Oral Tradition

Among Aborigines themselves the most important oral genres are those of song and dance, especially in their relationship to ritual. A man, and in some parts of Australia a woman, who is a ritual leader and expert in some aspect of ceremonial, usually song, has great prestige in his or her community which comes through control of knowledge and the forms in which knowledge is encoded. In Arnhem Land ritual is referred to in Aboriginal English as "Sunday business" and a ritual entrepreneur is a "businessman." This usage accurately reflects one important aspect of the Aborigines' own conceptualization of their oral traditions: songs, dances, icons, and even whole ceremonies are sacred and often secret, but they are commodities nonetheless which are owned by clans, executed by other clans who stand in a managerial relationship to the owners (Barker 1975-76), and sometimes exchanged with other groups in return for rights to perform an alien song or dance or in return for desired trade-goods and ceremonial artifacts (Thomson 1949, Roth 1902:144, Akerman 1980).

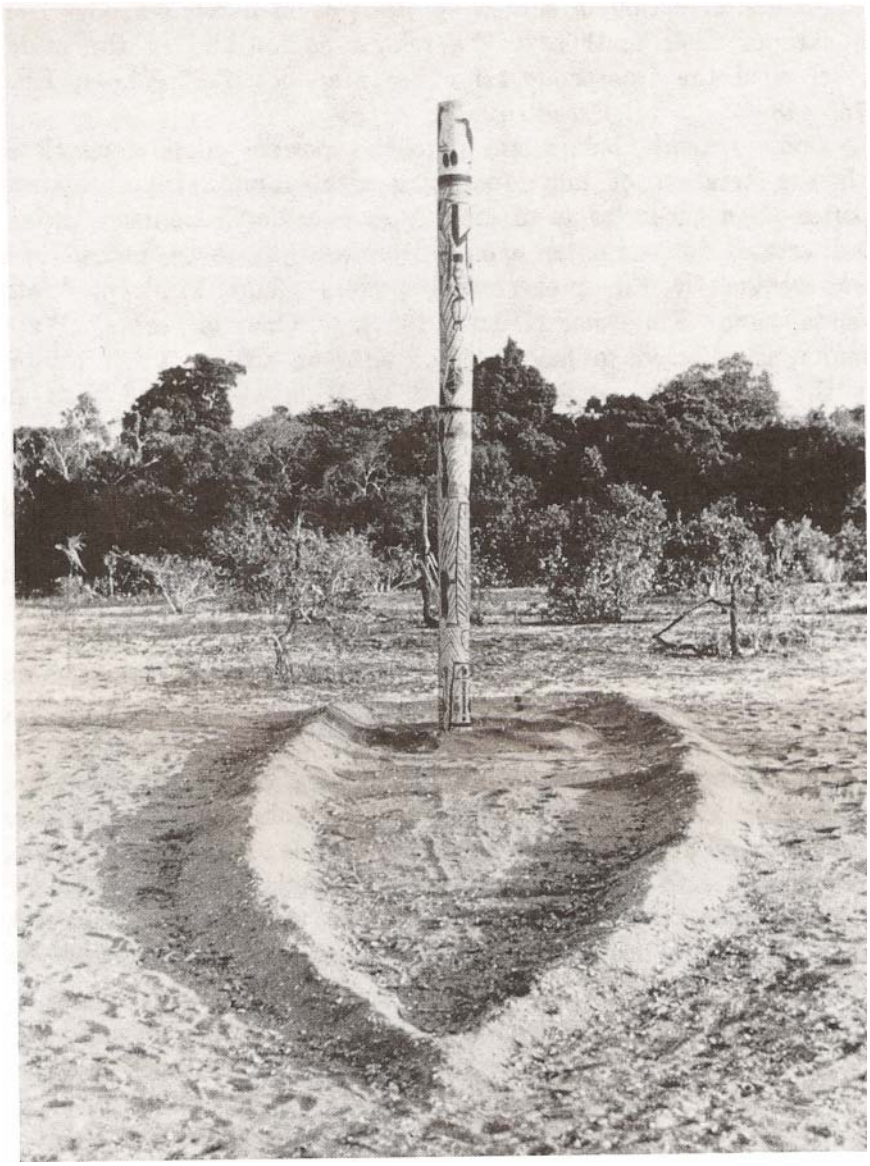
As the earliest observers realized when they took the word *corroboree* into the English language, the essence of much Aboriginal tradition lies in its multi-media nature. Together song, dance, and the painting of totemic icons or the construction of ritual grounds give expression through art to Aboriginal perfomers' conceptualization of totemic beings. These powers are considered to have been active during a period known as The Dreaming when enduring shapes of the world were made. Totemic beings may be world-creative powers of a transcendental nature, such as the Baiamai of South Eastern Aboriginal groups or the Rainbow Serpent known through much of Northern Australia (Maddock 1982:107-17). The transcendental powers are characteristically represented as being immanent at initiatory rites, where the idiom

of human procreation is turned on itself as men remove boys from the care of their mothers to be reborn as initiates in the sacred mysteries of the transcendental cults (Maddock 1982:121-41; Hiatt 1975b:143-62; R. M. Berndt 1951).

Some totemic beings are parochial powers, closely associated with the creation of individual clan estates and striking natural features upon those tracts of land. On one North Central Arnhem Land estate, for example, named Djunawunya, seven named sites were created by the supernatural powers Giant Fishtrap, Water Goanna, and Kingfisher (Hiatt 1982). One of these, Water Goanna, is believed to have created sites on various other estates, but the other creators are localized at Djunawunya and thus are important symbols of identity for Djunawunya people. Fishtrap, for example, is regularly drawn as a sand sculpture at Djunawunya mortuary ceremonies. The celebration of parochial totems in song, dance, and visual media is particularly important in mortuary ceremonies, for it is through mortuary rites rather than through any specific genre of personal eulogy that a dead individual is acclaimed.[2]

I have stated that I believe Aborigines have traditionally regarded song and dance as the high forms of their culture and there is ample evidence for this. Such an assertion raises the question of the status of story-telling among traditional Aboriginal communities and the relationship between spoken and sung genres. There is no doubt that Aboriginal people value story-telling. Constance Petrie's report of her father's experiences in the 1840s as he accompanied a group of Aborigines to the Blackall Ranges in search of Bonyi nuts strikes a true note to anyone who has experience of Aboriginal camp life:

> After the camp fires were made and breakwinds of bushes put up as a protection from the night, the party all had something to eat, then gathered comfortably round the fires, and settled themselves ready for some good old yarns, till sleep would claim them for his own. Tales were told of what forefathers did, how wonderful some of them were in hunting and killing game, also in fighting. The blacks have lively imaginations of what happened years ago, and some of the incidents they remembered of their big fights, etc., were truly marvellous! They are also born mimics, and my father has often felt sore with laughing at the way they would



After the climax of a *largan* mortuary rite, the hollow log ossuary Badurra, covered the totemic icons, stands inside a sand sculpture of Angadjadjia, the giant Fishtrap, at Djunawunya, North-Central Arnhem Land.

Photo: Peter Barker

> take off people, and strut about, and imitate all sorts of animals (Petrie 1904:12).

On the other hand, Roth was probably right when he made the following assessment of the status of "fables and stories" in North Queensland:

> The light in which such stories are regarded varies markedly in different districts. In the N. W.-Central areas, the women, and those men who are "lazy" —i.e., those who are always loafing around the camps—are the best hands at telling them: an individual in the full vigour of mental and bodily physique looks upon it as womanish and childish, almost derogatory, to know anything concerning them, and will almost invariably refer to his gin when any such matters are enquired of. At Princess Charlotte Bay (east coast), on the other hand, it was the men who prided themselves on spinning these yarns, and many a night I have spent in the camps listening to their narration, each tale being interpreted for my benefit (1902:7).

It was presumably one such process of interpretation and reworking which has given us *The Lady Scored*, quoted above.

There is good evidence that many Aboriginal communities have special forms for enculturating children (C. Berndt 1952-54; Lucich 1969; C. and A. Ellis 1970; Kartomi 1970 and 1984), while others have nothing that one might specifically call children's literature or song (Hamilton 1981:114).[3] The function of story-telling in traditional communities is probably best considered as partly existing in its own right, and partly as an adjunct to forms of the high culture, notably songs. The esoteric nature of most Aboriginal song has made the development of spoken texts which interpret the song to various audiences well-nigh inevitable. Donaldson (1984:248) has rightly observed that "the less a song's language is understood, the more prominent become accounts of what the song is about." She was writing about dying Aboriginal traditions in present-day New South Wales, but the proposition holds true for Aboriginal cultures in a more healthy state as well. The repertoire of recorded Aboriginal tales, in which we find many narratives of wandering creator beings and the sites they created, and tales of supernatural beings who have human as well as animal characteristics, corresponds to the repertoire of sacred song and

dance, and almost certainly acts as a sort of *Begleitprosa* to it.

Aboriginal songs, whether sacred or secular, are characteristically allusive and often very short. In cases where songs accompany ritual, each song verse is brief but either it is repeated many times, as in Central Australia, or variants using a finite corpus of song words are improvised by the singers, as in Central and Eastern Arnhem Land. In some cases, as when a song accompanies ritual imported from another part of the country, the audiences may understand little of the referential meaning of individual song words (Roth 1902:144; Keen 1977; Donaldson 1979), and in most Aboriginal communities the language of song is different from that of everyday discourse, sometimes markedly so. This difference is achieved by several means, including the addition of syllables to words of the everyday language, phonological changes, such as metathesis, possibly the use of archaisms (Alpher 1976), and morphological simplification, but above all by the use of a special lexis. As an example, I quote the opening lines of a song I have recorded from the song series Djambidj owned by Anbarra people from North Central Arnhem Land. The subject is the totemic being Djodja, Marsupial Mouse:

djodja wambarg nganaiei	Marsupial Mouse eats wild honey
djodja wambarg nganaiei	Marsupial Mouse eats wild honey
wana-wanamurna rrumadaiei	enormous [mouse] with prominent teeth.. .

(Clunies Ross and Wild 1982:34)

In this brief section, only the word *djodja*, name of the spirit being, occurs in Burarra, the spoken language of the singers. *Wambarg* corresponds to *wama*, the Burarra word for wild honey, while *ngana* is the everyday word for mouth, here given euphonic syllabic additions. In the third line *wana-wanamurna*, glossed as "enormous," has its everyday cognate in Burarra *wana*, "big." As for *rrumada (rrumadaiei)*, I do not know a Burarra equivalent.

Not only the recondite vocabulary but also the polysemous nature of individual key words in Aboriginal song makes interpretative glossing inevitable. In a society in which knowledge is not free for all, but must be dearly bought, control over the process of interpretation traditionally belonged to senior men and women, particularly the former. Sacred knowledge was imparted to young men gradually over the span of their lives, though it was recognized that some were more gifted and creative than others

(Hale 1984). In some societies initiands had to speak in a special kind of antonymous language while they were being inducted into the religious mysteries (Howitt 1904:ch. 9; Hale 1971). Even songs that belong to the genre of occasional verse and which are not centrally connected with religious rites often need to be interpreted on more than one level. Donaldson (1979:79-81) published a text composed by a young Arnhem Land singer, David Marrputja Munung-gurr, which has to be interpreted on two levels: it appears to be a naturalistic description of pelicans feeding on fish, but to those in the know there is an exophoric reference to a Toyota truck also called "Pelican" for which "scooping up water" means getting stuck in the mud.

Little systematic attention has so far been paid to either emic or etic classifications of Aboriginal traditional genres, with the exception of the writings of Ronald and Catherine Berndt (1962, rpt. 1982:53-55; 1964:198-216 and 326-47; C. Berndt 1973, rpt. 1978:72-90). Their classifications tend to place greater stress on the use to which oral traditions are put in Aboriginal society than on the form, style, or content of the given material. The problems inherent in this approach have been outlined by Hiatt (1975a:1-3). One of the major criteria of the Berndts' classification system is whether the text serves a secret-sacred or a secular purpose. Here the system immediately runs into trouble with texts of the "same" tale that appear in both secular and sacred contexts, or, as Aborigines say, where we have an "outside" version of an "inside" myth. It has yet to be determined whether there are major formal or conceptual differences between the two versions in such cases, but most evidence to hand suggests that the differences lie more with the interpretations brought to bear on basically similar material and not with structural changes to the material itself. However, the criterion of use or performance context does have some role in determining Aboriginal oral genres, as do formal and cognitive criteria. Thus the Arnhem Land genre of *manikay* (clan song) is distinguished from other named genres in the region by its conventional performance contexts as well as by its form and subject matter.

Aboriginal communities in different parts of Australia have had a considerable variety of distinct oral genres. There have been some differences in the range of genres practiced by individual groups. Many communities had whetting songs, often sung by women (Grey 1841:309-16; Howitt 1904:345-46), and other

formalized incitements to battle which frequently included insults and obscenities (Roth 1902:16 and 21-22). Haviland (1979a:33) reports a special sort of extemporaneous song from Hopevale in Queensland, called *ganhil*, which allowed people to praise or abuse others with impunity. The formal accompaniments to many kinds of tournament or inter-tribal warfare are now almost defunct, no doubt partly owing to white suppression of violence outside the European law. One has the impression from ethnographies, however, that they were once an important tradition. Sorcerers' songs are reported from a wide area, and especially from Central and Southern Australia, where "clever men" played a central part in the religious and social life (Elkin 1977). Songs concerned with love magic and the ensorcelment of a desired lover are widespread (R. Berndt 1976a and b; R. Moyle 1979:20-25), as are what the Berndts called "gossip songs," usually complaints about sexual infidelity and the jealousy it arouses in the forsaken lover. An example of the type is Djalbarmiwi's song, translated by Catherine Berndt in Hall (1981:209).

Other common genres include "playabout" and other comic songs, lullabies, and curing songs. In many Aboriginal traditions there are numerous examples of occasional verse, made by an individual composer to commemorate a striking event. The inspiration for such compositions is often said to come to the singer in a dream-vision in which an ancestor or Dreamtime being gives him the idea for the new creation. A good example of an occasional song is Paddy Biran's Song, translated from Girramay by R. M. W. Dixon (Hall 1981:375-76; Dixon 1980:57-58), of which this is the first part:

> Ngaa . . . now then
> mist which lies across the country
> a bulldozer nosing into Guymay-nginbi
> the place becoming cleared
> mist which lies across the country
> a bulldozer nosing into Guymay-nginbi
> dynamite which exploded . . . .

The song laments the desecration of traditional sites sacred to the Girramaygan people by an American pastoral company, using bulldozers and dynamite. The mist hanging over the country is conceived as the land's reaction to its despoliation.

At the other end of the continuum from occasional song is

Manikay clan songs accompany every stage in the preparation of a hollow log ossuary. Here Frank Gurrmanamana (right), with clap sticks, sings the song "Hollow Log" from Djambidj, while the as yet unpainted log is being carved with a special *berper* ridge. The location is Kopanga, Blyth River, Arnhem Land.

Photo: L. R. Hiatt

that which is tied to ritual performance. Here we find a great wealth of genres, connected principally with increase rituals, initiation, and death. These include not only the songs used on such occasions but the ritual choruses and invocations that accompany them. Apart from the work that has already been published on men's and women's secret cults, it will probably not be possible to publish material relating to these genres for the foreseeable future, as Aborigines have made it clear that they do not want such knowledge disseminated. Some of the most beautiful published texts from these genres were recorded by T. G. H. Strehlow in his *Songs of Central Australia* (1971). Here are two verses from the Northern Aranda Bandicoot Song of Ilbá̤intja which refer to the Bandicoot ancestor and the ceremonial ground painting, executed in blood and eagles' down, which represents the primeval Ilbá̤intja soak on the ritual ground:

> Lo, his knees, firm, hard, and strong;
> Lo, his knees, hard as white quartz!
> Lo, the great sire of the painted ground;
> Lo, his limbs, firm, hard, and strong!
>
> (Strehlow 1971:135)

In this survey of Aboriginal oral traditions, I have deliberately confined myself to those which have something to do with the human voice, though I have included dance, for it never occurs without song. I have therefore left many important Aboriginal cultural forms out of account. Those which deserve a brief mention here are the visual arts, which traditionally were often executed during rituals, and those communicative arts which are marked by the absence of language. I refer to sign language, which is extremely well developed among Aboriginal people (Sebeok and Umiker-Sebeok 1978; Kendon 1980 and forthcoming) and is often used to communicate when speaking would be inappropriate, as, for example, during a hunting expedition.

2. *Field Work*

There is no part of Australia in which field research into Aboriginal oral traditions has not been carried out, though there may well be some communities whose songs, dances, and tales have not been recorded. Two very important technological developments

have made it possible within the last twenty-five years to document aspects of Aboriginal traditions that could not have been recorded before. These are the portable battery-powered tape recorder and the portable sound-synchronous camera which can be used away from main power supplies. This allows a fieldworker to be independent of the facilities of towns, missions, and government settlements. In recent years Super 8 film and video facilities have given the researcher even greater resources.

Before this sort of equipment became generally available in Australia, roughly in the period between 1960 and 1965, most texts had to be taken down by dictation (Clunies Ross 1983a:19-20) and film was divorced from "living sound." In spite of the limitations imposed by early audio-visual equipment, the history of sound recording and ethnographic film-making in Australia has been a distinguished one, and includes such early pioneers as A. C. Haddon and W. Baldwin Spencer (Dunlop 1979; Mulvaney and Calaby 1985:195-200), as well as A. P. Elkin. It continues to be distinguished today with the films of Roger Sandall, Ian Dunlop, Judith and David MacDougall, and Kim McKenzie.

Those wishing to conduct field work at present among Aboriginal people must seek permission from the groups among whom they want to work, either from relevant individuals or from Aboriginal councils or other governing bodies. They are obliged to explain the nature of the proposed research and its possible benefit for Aborigines to the people with whom they wish to work. Most intending fieldworkers apply for advice on field conditions to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies in Canberra.[4] They may also apply for grants of money for field work, which are awarded on a competitive basis by the Council of the Institute after review by specialist subject committees and its research committee. The Institute is a statutory government body whose major concern is to promote research into all aspects of Aboriginal culture. It has a specialist library and archive of written material, photographs, tape, and film. Several staff members are appointed to coordinate research being carried out in the field and to advise intending field workers. There are also specialist research officers in some subject areas, including ethnomusicology. Since its inception in 1964, the Institute has played a leading role in guiding and initiating research in Aboriginal Studies.

As I have included mention of much ongoing research into Aboriginal oral traditions in Part 3 of this article, I shall here

confine myself to stating that field research in all parts of Australia is still likely to record much information about Aboriginal traditions, even among people in densely settled areas of the south who are popularly thought to have lost their culture. Much valuable work is being conducted in the south as well as in the more obviously traditional north of the continent. Hercus' two-volume work on the languages and traditions of Victoria (1969) is a fine example of such salvage work and, more recently, Tamsin Donaldson (1985) has made a study of how the old systems of social nomenclature among Aborigines from Western New South Wales have been carried selectively into the present. She is also working on the implications for Aborigines of changing from speaking an Aboriginal language to speaking English (forthcoming a) and editing a Wayilwan vernacular version of a text to be found in English in Mrs. K. Langloh Parker's *Australian Legendary Tales* (1897). A comparable study of the inter-generational transmission of knowledge among Nyungar people from the South West of Western Australia is being carried out for a doctoral dissertation by Patricia Baines at the University of Western Australia. I quote a summary description from her supervisor, Basil Sansom: "Her work shows that each Nyungan family possesses a corpus of tradition, that Nyungan story telling belongs to genres and that stories are owned while their telling is governed by rules about closeness of relationships and so on."

3. *Aboriginal Oral Traditions: Present Trends and Future Directions*

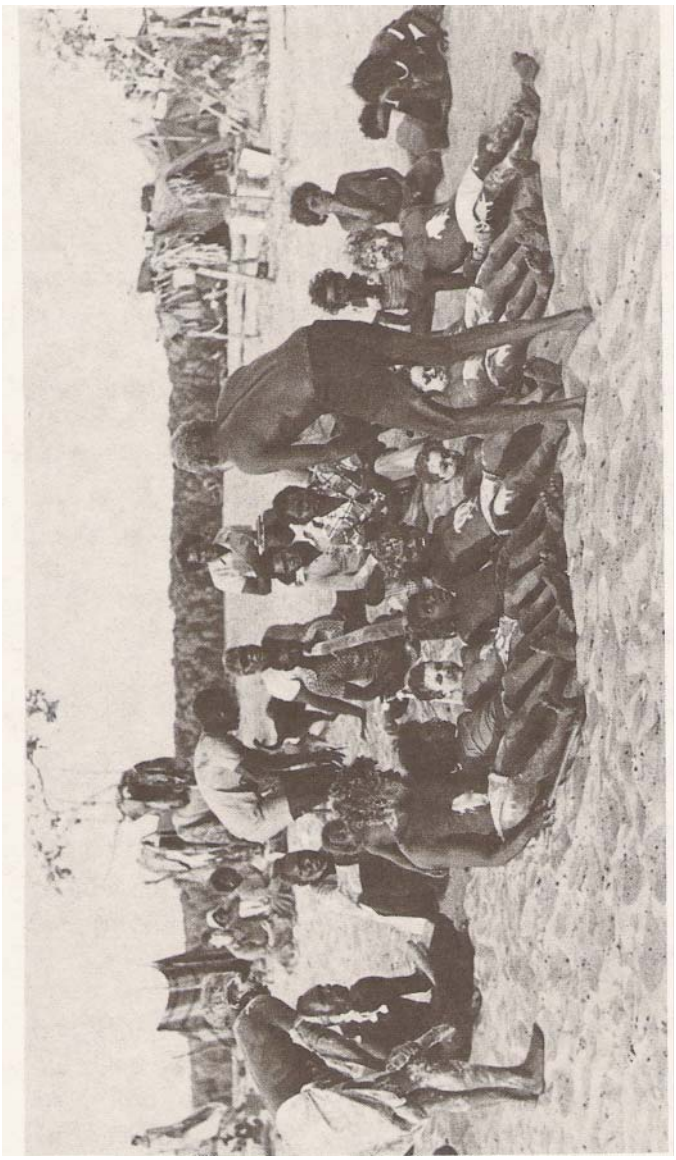
In recent years, work on the recording and analysis of Aboriginal oral traditions has been distinguished by its greater sophistication and by closer attention to the circumstances of the texts' production. I include under the latter heading a concern for orally-generated texts as discourse produced by and to some extent for Aboriginal people. Aborigines have begun to speak with their own voices, both in their own writings or oral histories (among others, Mirritji 1976; West 1984; Davis and Hodge 1985; Miller 1985) and in the "joint efforts" of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal collaborators in text production (Shaw and Sullivan 1983; Roe 1983; Benterrak, Muecke, and Roe 1984; Muecke, Rumsey, and Wirrunmara forthcoming). The journal *Aboriginal History* (1977-)

has done a great deal to promote such collaborative texts. This same new egalitarianism is to be found in the production of film. Not only are there now Aboriginal film-makers who are recording their people's traditions (Barker 1983; Bostock 1980), but schemes conceived by traditional Aborigines and put into effect by them in association with non-Aboriginal film-makers and scholars have produced some interesting film documents. One such is *Waiting for Harry* (McKenzie et al. 1980), which explores the ritual politics of a mortuary ceremony as well as providing a record of the songs, dances, and icons of several North Central Arnhem Land clans. Towards the end of the film, Frank Gurrmanamana, the senior clansman whose idea it was to film the mortuary ceremony, clearly indicates how he sees film as an important medium for disseminating his culture:

wuro man-ngaipa *picture* mangabo	but this [is] my picture man-ngaipa
picture mangabo	this [is] my film,
wana	an important one,
wuro ngaipa ng-gunata nguweya	and I stand here to speak:
rarrak ngudjindjira gunata	the paintings [on this coffin]
ngabitamirra nguworkia gun-ngaipa	belong to me. They were laid down by the gods and I have always followed them.
. . . gun-ngaipa gubiriyinabara	. . .men will see these
mitpe gunigipa nganana	[paintings] of mine,
man-nga djinabeiya	just as I have seen theirs everywhere.

(*Waiting for Harry*, Camera Roll 99)

Aboriginal texts produced in present circumstances may be in Aboriginal languages, including Aboriginal creoles, in Aboriginal English, in Standard Australian English, or in varying mixtures of these. There may also be accompanying film, painting, or other visual illustration of the non-verbal components of Aboriginal oral performances. There is a zeal to reproduce as much as one can, using non-oral media, of a particular performance or performances. But herein lies a dilemma; do we strive for authenticity by reproducing as much detail as possible and so risk alienating the non-specialist reader? Or do we recognize the quicksilver nature of oral performance and practice a discerning selectivity? Should one produce archival versions of oral performances, which could be said



During the extensive preparations for Arnhem Land mortuary rites, there are opportunities to pass on traditions to the young and to have a good time. Song and dance are the main vehicles of instruction. Here Gurrmanamana (back to camera) instructs a group of young boys in the Wardagurdog dance (Spangled Grunter, a freshwater fish) from Djambidj. Many of the dancers have the fish painted on their chests and thighs.

Photo: L. R. Hiatt

to correspond to diplomatic editions of manuscripts in a written culture, while issuing critical editions for public consumption? One answer to the problem of producing texts for a diverse readership of specialists and non-specialists in Aboriginal culture is to do what Ronald Berndt did with his *Love Songs of Arnhem Land* and *Three Faces of Love* (both 1976), and that was to issue a scholarly and a popular version of the same material, but publication difficulties and sheer cost often preclude such a course.

The desire to retain many features of an Aboriginal text which were often suppressed or ignored by earlier scholars is occasioned by the conviction that Aboriginal discourse is primarily dramatic and should therefore be presented in such a way that it can be re-performed. Most Aboriginal prose texts can be seen as either monologue or dialogue or mixtures of these two forms, and they often advance narrative by means of conversational exchanges between the dramatis personae. Recent publications have therefore drawn on the written conventions of European drama and poetry to present the oral-dramatic character of Aboriginal discourse and include in the text the names of participant speakers, stage directions, and other paralinguistic features, setting out the basic collocational units of discourse as discrete lines (Benterrak, Muecke, and Roe 1984; Muecke, Rumsey, and Wirrunmara forthcoming). In a manner similar to the Amerindianist texts produced by Tedlock (e.g., 1983) and others, but independently evolved (Muecke 1982; Muecke, Rumsey, and Wirrunmara forthcoming; Clunies Ross 1983b:11), lines are defined as stretches of speech bounded at each end by significant pauses. As a footnote to recent practice, the first Aboriginal texts to have been recorded by a trained linguist (Laves 1929) are written wholly in dialogue form with "stage directions" and names of characters indicated by Laves himself. These interesting manuscripts of two Northern New South Wales myths have not yet been published, though Hiatt (1985) prints an English translation of the shorter of the two. A major study of Laves' papers is at present being undertaken in Chicago by Mark Francillon and is supported by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

The present concern to reproduce the speaking or singing Aboriginal voice and all its paralinguistic accompaniments calls for renewed scrutiny of our methods of transcription, editing, and, in some cases, translation of texts. Donaldson (1979) has identified the necessity of providing extensive documentation of Aboriginal

oral texts as one of the main difficulties involved in making them accessible to non-specialists. This requirement challenges those of us who want accuracy as well as readibility in a text. Many readers will probably not want to be bothered with stage directions and non-standard English. Aboriginal texts in Aboriginal languages or in an English that is too far removed from standard forms for easy comprehension also require three parallel lines of text, or have conventionally received such treatment by linguists: first a phonemic transcript of the Aboriginal language text, then an interlinear or morpheme-by-morpheme gloss, and finally a standard English translation.

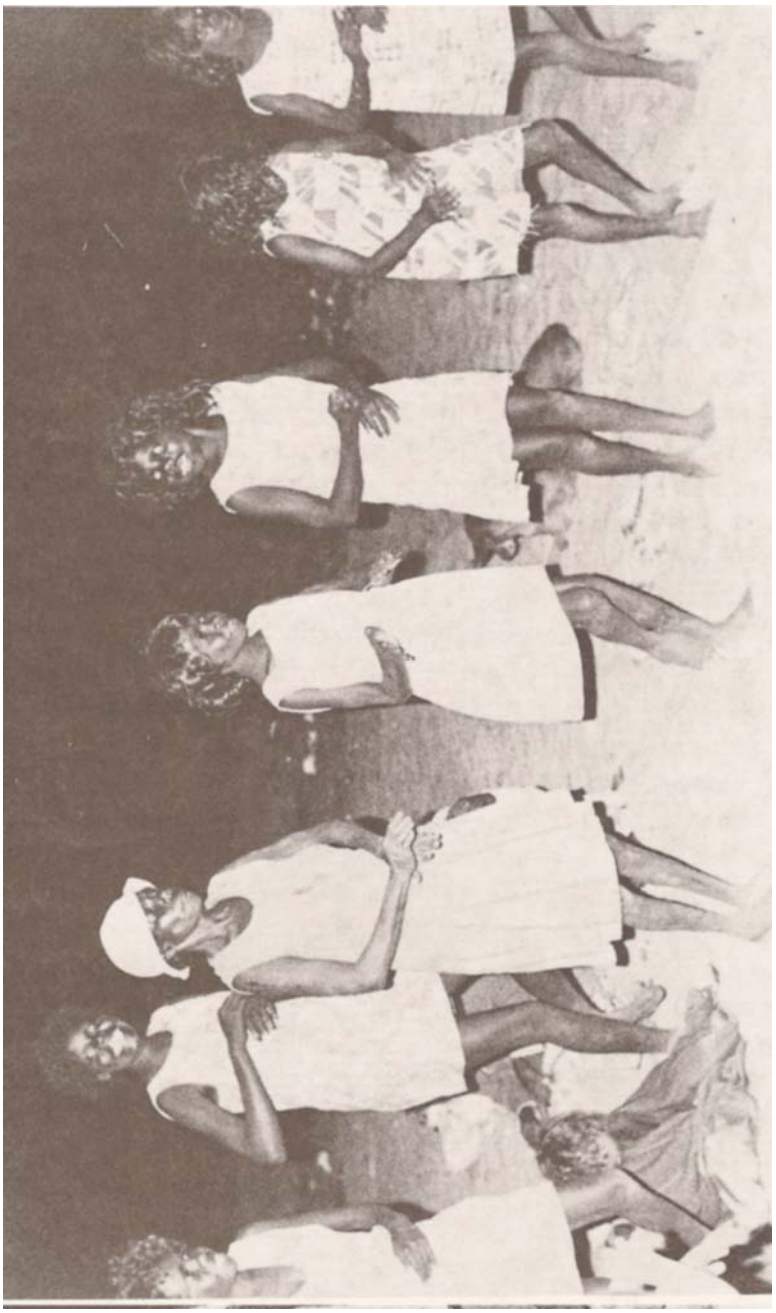
The problems which confront those who produce written texts of spoken Aboriginal discourse are not generally as complex as those involved in presenting comprehensible texts of Aboriginal performances that include song, dance, and other kinaesthetic acts. As it is characteristic of much Aboriginal performance to use several media simultaneously, it is necessary to devise a means of notating the several media both individually and in concert. Whatever system is used, the final result of the analysis should be comprehensible to both the interested layman and the specialist. Again, as with texts of spoken discourse, one can make different kinds of transcription for different kinds of readers, and texts may be accompanied by tapes or discs and film or video.

As an example of present undertakings in this field, I cite several publications of my own in conjunction with the ethnomusicologist Stephen Wild. We have published information in several different ways about Djambidj, the North Central Arnhem Land song series that we are investigating in collaboration with two of its Aboriginal singers, Frank Gurrmanamana and Frank Malkorda. We have produced a book to accompany a recorded performance of Djambidj which includes the text of a complete performance occasion with accompanying English translation, as well as several chapters of anthropological, musicological, and biographical background to the series and the singers (Clunies Ross and Wild 1982). We have also developed what we call "performance profiles of song verses," which enable those who cannot read music or dance notations to understand the interaction of vocal melody, instrumental accompaniment, dance, and ritual calls in Djambidj performances (Clunies Ross and Wild 1984). At present we are engaged in a more detailed study of a representative sample of verses from all twenty-one of the totemic

song subjects that comprise this song series, taken from a variety of performance contexts. In the publication that results, we will be aiming to construct a "score" that expresses all the performance elements, including the dance notated according to the Benesh system by Andrée Grau and Margot McCallum. However, we still intend our results to be comprehensible to a non-specialist readership via performance profiles, verbal summary, and tape recordings.

The Anbarra people, with whom we and several other scholars work, have also been resourceful in making their culture accessible to outsiders. In late 1982, for example, at their initiative, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies in Canberra played host to a group of twenty Anbarra men and women from the Maningrida area of Arnhem Land. They presented a Rom ceremony, a ritual of traditional diplomacy, and performed songs and dances from the Djambidj and Goyulan (Morning Star) song series. One singer from each of these series had painted a set of bark paintings within which almost every subject of each song series was represented visually. Thus the large audience who attended the Rom ceremony had both visual and auditory representation of the totemic beings celebrated in several different art forms. The embryonic Museum of Australia has now bought the entire collection of bark paintings and collaborated with the Institute in the production of a book recording this performance (Wild 1986). Hence it will be accessible to many people remote in time and space from the occasion of its original enactment.

The recent emphasis on the performative dimension of Aboriginal oral traditions has resulted in increased interest in several neglected areas of research. The most thoroughly neglected field has undoubtedly been that of Aboriginal dance, partly because of the technological difficulties mentioned in Section 2, and partly because there have been no choreologists with anthropological training working in Australia. There are at present no courses in dance ethnography at Australian universities, although the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies has tried various means of promoting this area of study. To date, only three dissertations have been produced on Aboriginal dance alone (Quisenberry 1973 in Arnhem Land; Grau 1983 among the Tiwi; and Llinos-Jones 1984 on Warlpiri women's dance); none of these studies were carried out by Australians. It is to be hoped that new initiatives by the Institute to establish dance ethnography at Australian



Women have their own dance movements for every *manikay* song subject. Nancy Bandeiama (in the hat) leads a group of young girls around the evening camp fires at Kopanga while they delicately "throw the sand."

Photo: L. R. Hiatt

universities will enable Australian researchers to investigate all the Aboriginal performing arts, including dance, in their cultural context.[5]

The scholarly neglect of Aboriginal dance is particularly unfortunate because it is a tradition of major importance to the people themselves and an art form of great distinctiveness and dramatic force. Many kinds of Aboriginal dance still thrive. The traditional dances of Southern Australian Aborigines have largely disappeared, except to the extent that they have been recorded in the journals and illustrations of early explorers and other observers and live on in the memories of an older generation of Aborigines. Extant dance styles range from the experimental works of the Aboriginal-Islander Dance Theatre based in Sydney to traditional ritual dances performed in their homelands by Aboriginal dancers. In recent years small troupes of semi-professional performers from Northern Australia, including singers, dancers, and instrumentalists, have had considerable success touring in both Australia and abroad. Not only are new performance contexts being sought out by Aborigines, but new song and dance forms are arising in many parts of Aboriginal Australia. To give one example from Cape York Peninsula, the island dance style that Queensland Aborigines first learned from Pacific Islanders is now being used in conjunction with song to commemorate notable events in local communities or to encode social commentary. Black and Koch (1983) have notated and recorded the words of several island-style lyrics, including "Magnificent Hotel," composed to commemorate the opening of a beer canteen in 1977:

> Magnificent Hotel, standing open with honey,
> Standing on the heaps of feathers;
> We stand here in long lines,
> We drink honey out of baler shells.
>
> (Black and Koch 1983: 167-68)[6]

There are several major areas of research into Aboriginal dance and theatrical performance generally that need investigation now and in the future. First, we need more dance ethnographies carried out by choreologists with anthropological training; then we need studies of the nexus between music and dance, a subject first investigated in Australia by Alice Moyle (1972) and Stephen Wild (1975). From this follows the investigation of the cueing that passes between musicians and dancers in Aboriginal theatrical

performance. Donaldson (forthcoming b) has made some persuasive deductions about the formal means whereby singers give directions to dancers in the now almost defunct performance traditions of Ngiyampaa speakers from Western New South Wales, and Gummow is investigating comparable systems among the Bandjalang singers of the North East of New South Wales, while Clunies Ross and Wild (1984) have analyzed a still vigorous song and dance tradition from North Central Arnhem Land.

Leading on from the study of the relationship between song and dance, we need to investigate the ways in which these two media form the backbone of lengthy rituals, both the secret rituals of initiation conducted by men and in some places by women, and other, more public rites, such as mortuary ceremonies. Almost no work has been done on what one might call the grammar of ritual, though one can think of Elkin's monographs on two Arnhem Land rituals, Maraian and Yabuduruwa (both 1961, rpt. 1972) as early examples of the kind. My own and Stephen Wild's work, taken in conjunction with the film *Waiting for Harry*, in both its public and archival versions, take up a number of issues having to do with the liturgy of ritual, and the recent monograph *Journey to the Crocodile's Nest* (Morphy 1984), which accompanies the film *Madarrpa Funeral At Gurka'wuy* (Dunlop et al. 1979), provides a close anthropological commentary on a long film of an Eastern Arnhem Land mortuary ceremony.

Finally, a survey needs to be carried out of all the existing literature on and illustrations of Aboriginal dance, and a coherent overview produced. There are many close descriptions of theatrical performances in the works of nineteenth-century writers which require collation and comparison with what we know of existing traditions. As an example of the kind, I include a vivid description by George French Angas (1847:63) of dances performed by Aborigines from the Lakes Alexandrina and Albert region of South Australia:

> We encamped one day at Bonney's water-holes, and in the evening the lake natives performed some singular dances. One, the dance of the frogs, consisted of a number of men painted and armed with wirris, which they beat together, singing all the time; then, squatting on the ground, they leaped along one after another in circles, imitating the actions and movements of a frog. In another dance they go through the performance of

> hunting the emu; one man imitating the voice of the bird. Their last amusement was that of sitting cross-legged round a fire, in a circle, singing and beating time with spears and wirris; suddenly they all stretched out their right arms as if pointing to some unseen object, displayed their teeth, and rolled their eyes in a dreadful manner, and then jumped on their feet with a shout that echoed for miles through the stillness of the night.

If we now turn to the state of the art of recording Aboriginal spoken texts, there are a number of new developments to report. It is recognized that we need to record more texts, for the Australian repertoire is minuscule by comparison, say, with that of the North American Indian or the African traditions. We need texts whose circumstances of production have not unduly restricted and normalized the data (Heath 1982). There is also a growing collaboration between scholars in several fields who recognize that the holism of Aboriginal traditions can only be matched by cooperation between specialists or by specialists extending themselves into fields of study other than those for which they were originally trained.

Widespread interest during recent decades in the "ethnography of speaking" has focused on the communicative functions of formal linguistic systems. Important work in the Aboriginal field has come from this approach (Sutton 1978; Von Sturmer 1981; Liberman 1982a and b; Heath, Merlan, and Rumsey 1982; Sansom 1980) and more can be expected. Special speech styles have received renewed attention in the last two decades (Dixon 1971; Haviland 1979b and Rumsey 1982 on mother-in-law language and avoidance styles; Heath, Merlan, and Rumsey 1982 and Merlan 1982 on the languages of kinship; Laughren 1984 on baby talk) and one can expect that a finer definition of genres of Aboriginal discourse will also result from the recording and analysis of "naturally occurring" speech and song. Genres to be investigated include the harangue, the politico-religious oration, the eulogy, and the self-presentation of Aborigines in land-claim cases, which have become a significant forum for Aboriginal talk in the 1970s and 80s. Another subject that requires investigation is the nature of the relationship between prose narratives of myths and songs which refer to the same material in a more allusive way.

Investigations of Aboriginal traditional genres will require their

closer definition in terms of form and content and the more specific characterization of such dimensions as vocal timbre, gesture, performance occasion, focus among linguistic components, syntactic resources, and stylistic features such as repetition and emphatic lengthening of syllables. The indigenous classification of genres by Aborigines themselves needs much further work, in the fields of spoken discourse, song, and dance. It is clear that some areas of linguistic and stylistic research need to be explored further than they have been up to now in order to facilitate the analysis of Aboriginal discourse genres. Although since the 1960s many Aboriginal languages have been well researched in the areas of phonology and morphology, there needs to be more intensive investigation of some aspects of Aboriginal syntax if the subtleties of discourse are to be understood. The resources of Aboriginal languages in the area of hypotaxis need further investigation (cf. Merlan 1983:136), as do factors which effect cohesion. The topic of the relationship between direct and indirect discourse is due for close scrutiny, given that in many Aboriginal languages there is no formal distinction between the two modes.[7] Lexicography is another field that should see advances in the near future (Austin 1983), for many languages that now have good grammars written for them still lack good dictionaries. The comprehension and enjoyment of texts is obviously impossible without the depth of understanding afforded by a discriminating glossary.

This brings me to the important subject of the aesthetic value of Aboriginal oral tradition, first for Aborigines themselves, and then for non-Aboriginal audiences, and how it may best be conveyed. Here we must distinguish what is important in their linguistic and performative ideology for Aborigines themselves and what emerges, usually via a translation or commentary, as aesthetically valuable to a wider audience. There is no fast division between these two audiences and the demands they make on texts; moreover, it should be possible to isolate the essential aspects of their being from the texts themselves. Rumsey (1986) suggests, for example, that the implication of the lack of formal distinction between direct and indirect discourse in Aboriginal languages may be that Aboriginal linguistic ideology focuses on interpersonal meaning rather than ideational or referential meaning as the essential aspect of talk. Many scholars have observed the marked difference between the high value Western cultures place on referential meaning and the apparently low value accorded to it

Aboriginal men's dances are usually more vigorous than the women's. Here a group of senior men, led by Michael Maragulbiana, perform Ngalilag (White Cockatoo) from Djambidj at Kopanga, Blyth River.

Photo: L. R. Hiatt

in much Aboriginal song, where sometimes restricted understanding is regarded as a positive good (Keen 1977; Donaldson 1979:75; Harris 1980:114; Clunies Ross 1983a:23). By contrast, polysemy is a very significant characteristic of Aboriginal song texts, which is why the Aboriginal intellectual elite of older men (and sometimes older women) have an important part to play in providing informal or formal *scholia* on these texts to novices and, nowadays, to outside scholars.

It is important that the aesthetic value of Aboriginal oral traditions, what one might call their literary conventions, be made apparent to the general public. Two groups within this wider audience have a special purchase on Aboriginal traditions: non-traditional Aborigines who want to understand and identify with their traditional culture and perhaps adapt it to their own ends; and non-Aboriginal writers, artists, and musicians, mostly Australian, who see Aboriginal culture as an important resource for the creation of a distinctively Australian aesthetic. Several recent anthologies of Australian poetry, for example, contain a selection of translations from Aboriginal traditional songs (Hall 1981; Murray forthcoming) which have excited many literary people who have not previously had much acquaintance with Aboriginal culture. I am told that Ronald Berndt's translation of the Wonguri-Mandjigai song of the moon-bone (Hall 1981:13-19, first published in 1948) is much admired.

It is very difficult, as things stand, for anyone, scholar or layman, to gain an overall impression of the nature and extent of Aboriginal oral tradition. I observed earlier that there have never been any fully professional folklorists in Australia and hence there exists no systematic collection of Aboriginal texts, except for that of van Gennep (1906), which is not comprehensive. However, there is a remarkable wealth of material available in a diversity of sources going well back into the nineteenth century. What is now badly needed is a systematic catalogue and typology of the corpus of Aboriginal oral tales and songs, so that the extent and nature of Aboriginal traditions can be made known. There are several indications that this process of review and classification has begun. Patricia Waterman (personal communication) has had her dissertation, "A Tale-Type Index of Australian Aboriginal Oral Narratives" (University of California/Berkeley, 1979) accepted for publication by Folklore Fellows Communications of Helsinki and this should provide an excellent foundation for the task. Ronald

and Catherine Berndt, who for over forty years have been recording Aboriginal oral traditions all over Australia, are presently working on an Australia-wide study of Aboriginal mythology. They report (personal communication) that this is to be a study in which "the basic material has been taken from our field note books covering virtually all the major areas in which we have worked. In short, it is myth in context, with individual and general comparative analysis." Variants will be recorded, including versions of the "same" myth by male and female narrators. Once the process of classification is underway, we can expect analysis of the structures of Aboriginal oral narrative and song, which is a field in which almost no work has yet been done.

In the near future we can look forward to a considerable increase in the publication of Aboriginal texts of all kinds, as linguists turn from the writing of grammars to the production of texts and dictionaries, and as the study of Aboriginal music broadens to include the analysis of song texts and whole rituals in their performance contexts. As signs of the times, the journal *Aboriginal History* is about to bring out an issue devoted to Aboriginal texts, and at a symposium on Aboriginal songs held in Canberra in May, 1984 there was a lively exchange among linguists, anthropologists, and musicologists on the subject of present issues in song research. The conference organizers, Tamsin Donaldson, Stephen Wild, and I, hope to publish the papers delivered at this symposium as a book in the near future. In response to my request for information about ongoing research for this survey, I have received details of text-editing projects from many people. As an example, I learned from Peter Austin of LaTrobe University of texts that he and Bernhard Schebeck have in preparation from Aboriginal people of Western Australia and South Australia. Luise Hercus is preparing several texts from the Simpson Desert area. Other communications have been incorporated into the body of this survey.

To sum up the present state of the study of Aboriginal oral traditions, one must admit that much has yet to be done to make them accessible to the world at large. In many respects, Aboriginal studies lag behind the study of oral traditions in other cultures, although present investigators are busy with a wide range of first-rate projects in this field. There are good reasons for the lag; one is the very nature of Aboriginal artistic traditions, which are difficult to detach from the general fabric of religious and social

life; another is their often esoteric, if not secret, character. I also suspect that the absence from what I have called the Aboriginal high culture of genres readily recognizable as the equivalents of important Western European literary forms may have had a lot to do with the relative slowness with which Aboriginal oral traditions were accepted by scholars and the general public as art forms worthy of study. There are no indigenous long narrative song types, though some texts recorded by R. M. Berndt (e.g., 1948) appear to be an exception to this generalization; nor are there genres corresponding to the epic or heroic lay of Western European traditions. The riddle and the genre of praise-poetry are likewise absent.

The climate of intellectual life in the Australian universities and the absence from them of certain disciplines have undoubtedly affected the way in which Aboriginal oral traditions were recorded and the people who have recorded them. Many of the best earlier collectors were not academics and, if they were, their primary training was likely to have been in fields other than folklore, oral literature, musicology, or linguistics. Fully fledged linguistics departments arrived very late on the Australian university campuses, and the Australian departments of anthropology mostly followed the British model and on the whole did not prepare their students very well for the collection of texts. There are no folklore departments in universities in Australia and, until recently, ethnomusicology was not strong. At the time of writing this essay, there is no course available in ethnochoreology at any Australian university. Nevertheless, often on an informal level, courses are being mounted which bridge departmental barriers and scholars are becoming more eclectic in their attempts to record Aboriginal oral traditions. Aborigines are themselves playing an active part in recording their traditions and making them known more widely. There is no doubt that a combination of intellectual curiosity and ethnic pride will make Aboriginal oral traditions much better known in the near future.

University of Sydney

Notes

[1]I am indebted to many people for help in compiling this review; to the following who sent me information about their current research: Peter Austin,

Catherine and Ronald Berndt, Tamsin Donaldson, Luise Hercus, Les Hiatt, Stephen Muecke, Alan Rumsey and Basil Sansom; to Stephen Wild for details of two theses on Aboriginal dance; to Les Murray for information on his forthcoming anthology of Australian verse; and to Bernard Martin for supplying me with a sample from Daisy Bates' tale collection and for general discussions on the setting out of the paper.

[2]The exception here seems to be North Queensland, where special songs about the dead were composed, according to Roth (1902:21). John von Sturmer, who has also worked in Cape York, has reported on various ways in which one can more or less directly praise the dead. Elsewhere, it seems that taboos on naming the dead preclude the development of genres in their honor.

[3]Although Hamilton writes that she might have missed the importance of story-telling to Anbarra children, Les Hiatt and I have worked among the same people and we have never witnessed or heard of any such genres. I have often seen children playing at performing adult genres; groups of boys practicing singing, clapping sticks, and playing the didjeridu while the "kid mob" dances. Girls of any age, even toddlers, are encouraged to dance in camp.

[4]The Institute's address is: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, G.P.O. Box 553, Canberra, A.C.T. 2601, Australia. Intending fieldworkers should write to the Research Director in the first instance or to the Librarian for archival matters.

[5]The University of Sydney instituted an undergraduate course in the Aboriginal Performing Arts in 1984 with this objective in mind. It is based in the Music Department but taught by a consortium of academics from the Departments of Anthropology, English, Fine Arts, Linguistics, and Music. Murdoch University runs a course on Aboriginal oral literature; the chairman is Jack Davis and the deputy chairman Colin Johnson. Catherine Berndt is honorary adviser.

[6]The honey referred to here means beer, no doubt likened to wild honey on account of its color and probably its precious, intoxicating properties. Black and Koch give a slightly different explanation and compare beer to commercially produced honey. Traditionally, however, wild honey could sometimes be fermented and the "hot" parts of the "sugar bag" or wild honey comb were reserved for senior men. The line "Standing on heaps of feathers" refers to the fact that the canteen was built on the site of an old earth-oven used to cook plains turkey and wallaby.

[7]This subject is certain to be discussed at a symposium on Aboriginal discourse scheduled for May, 1986 at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies' next biennial meeting.

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Orality in Medieval Irish Narrative: An Overview

Joseph Falaky Nagy

Celtic scholars do not doubt that there was an active oral narrative tradition functioning in pre-Christian and medieval Christian Irish society. Until recently, tradition-bearers with amazingly large story-repertoires could be found among Gaelic-speaking peasants and fishermen in Ireland and Scotland. These creative oral artists, often neglected and no longer listened to in their own time, bore vivid testimony to a long-lived and rich Gaelic tradition of stories and narrative techniques—a tradition that is often referred to in the extant corpus of medieval Irish literature, from its earliest stages (the sixth to ninth centuries A.D.) to the beginnings of the modern literary era (the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries). Although the documented contemporary *sgéalí*, "storyteller" (*scélaige* in earlier Irish spelling), is an amateur—that is, he is not paid for his performance, nor does he live by his storytelling craft—the medieval narrator usually was a professional, and in fact was often a member of the exalted sodality of professional poets known as the *filid* (singular *fili*, from a root meaning "to see"), who together with musicians and other possessors of special technical knowledge constituted the wider class of the *áes dána*, "people of art[s]," or (*áes cerda*, "people of craft[s]." While the *fili's* main activity was the composition of verse celebrating his patrons and detailing the genealogy and lore of families and tribes, we are told in a medieval Irish tract on the training of *filid* that the oral transmission and performance of traditional prose tales—*scéla*, sing. *scél*, from a root meaning "to say" (Greene 1954:26)—was an essential aspect of *filidecht*, "the poetic profession":[1]

In hí dā foglaim na hochtmaide bliadna .i. fiscomarca filed .i. duili berla ₇ clethchor choem ₇ reicne roscadach ₇ laíde .i. tenmlaída ₇ immas forosnai ₇ dichetal do chennaib na tuaithe ₇ dínshenchus ₇ primscéla Hérend olchena fria naisnéis do ríghaib ₇ flaithib ₇ dagdhoínib. Ar ni comlán ín fili chena, sicut dixit poeta:

Nibadúnad cenrígu. nibafili censcéla.
níbaingen manibfial. nímaith ciall neich natléga.

(Thurneysen 1891:49-51)

These are what are taught [to the *fili* candidate] in the eighth year [of his training]: the "wisdom-tokens" of the *fili*; that is, the elements of language, the *clethchor choem* ("fair palisade," a type of poem and/or meter), the *reicne roscadach* ("poetic rhapsody," another metrical genre), and *laíde* (a third type); that is, the *teinm laída* ("chewing of the pith"), *imbas forosnai* ("great wisdom that enlightens"), and *díchetal do chennaib na tuaithe* ("incantation from heads of the tribe") [these are probably rituals]. [Also to be learned by the poet are] place-name lore [*dindshenchas*] and the prime tales (*primscéla*) of Ireland besides, which are to be related to kings, princes, and noblemen. For a poet is not complete without them [i.e., the tales], as the poet said:

A fort is no fort without kings;
a *fili* is no *fili* without tales;
a girl is no girl if she is not modest;
the intelligence of one who does not read is not good.

Evident in the fourth line of the cited quatrain is a well-documented phenomenon of early Christian Irish culture that complicates the oral-literary issue considerably: the gradual integration of the Christian monastic *literati* with the native poetic class. The *filid* had relied on oral transmission in pre-Christian Ireland (like the druids of Gaul as described in classical sources[2]), but after the coming of Christianity and the Latin alphabet, more and more they came to articulate their learnedness in terms of literacy and book-learning. At least for the *filid*, the "aristocrats" of verbal performers, the notion of an illiterate poet or singer of

tales became untenable during the period reflected in the extant literature. Thus the *fili* of the Middle Ages was not only an oral performer but also, in theory if not always in practice, a *fer légind*, "man of reading [i.e., learning]."[3] The reverence accorded the written word by the medieval Irish poet does not, however, necessarily preclude the kind of compositional intelligence poised between the literary and the oral which is evident in other medieval European literary traditions that have been informed by traditional, pre-literary techniques of narration.

Certainly the *fili*'s storytelling function was not extrinsic to his roles as singer of praise and recorder of tribal legend. The narratives he learned and performed contained paradigms of social behavior and an ideological world-view, which together provided the essential counterpoint to his poetic compositions. These traditional tales, furthermore, were interlaced with the legendary, genealogical, toponymical, and even legal lore that it was the *fili's* responsibility to transmit. This point was made forcefully by Seán Mac Airt in his discussion of the *fili* as both storyteller and exegete (1958:150):

> Undoubtedly there are many instances, such as that in the story of Forgoll and Mongán, which indicate that the *fili* did recite tales to his patron, but this entertainment could quite well be provided by the *scélaige*, or the many others of this genre such as the *rígdruth* (royal buffoon) Ua Maiglinni, who amused the king and the army with stories on the eve of the Battle of Allen. On the contrary I suggest that the *fili*'s main business was not the mere recital of tales, but first the exposition of them, for example from the genealogical point of view, to the noble classes (*di n-aisnéis do rigaib ₇ flathaib ₇ degdainib*) just as he might have been required to do at an earlier date in a lawsuit. Secondly he was expected to use them for the purpose of illustration (*fri deismirecht*), as a distich from a poem attributed to Cormac enjoins. The kind of illustration meant is exactly that exemplified by the later bardic poets in their use of incidents from heroic tales.

One of the most notable of these poet-storytellers to appear in the pages of medieval Irish manuscripts is the legendary *fili* Urard mac Coisse, in the tale *Airec Menman Uraird Maic Coisse*, "The Ruse of Urard mac Coisse" (Byrne 1908; see Mac Cana

1980:33-38). His household raided by the kinsmen of the king Domnall mac Muircertaigh, the angered poet goes to the royal residence, where he is greeted by Domnall and asked to tell his news ("iarmifocht in righ scéla dosum iar tairisiem," Byrne 1908:42). Urard, careful not to lodge accusations directly against the relatives of his powerful host, takes advantage of the semantic ambiguity of *scél*—which can mean both "news" and "tale" —and interprets the king's polite question as a request for information concerning Urard's repertoire of tales and traditional lore. What Urard virtuosically then presents to Domnall is a remarkable and, for us, very valuable catalogue of traditional tales known to the author of the text: an inventory of titles that is divided into genres according to subject matter, including cattle-raids (*tána*), battles (*catha*), feasts (*fesa*), floods (*tomadmond*), visions (*físi*), loves (*serca*), campaigns (*sluaigid*), migrations (*tochomladha*), and slaughters (*orcne*). At the very end of his list of titles in the last category, the *fili* refers obliquely to the story of his own misfortune, and the king, unfamiliar with the title, asks Urard to tell the unknown story. He does so with relish, and after the telling of the thinly veiled composition, the informed monarch sees to it that justice is done.

Urard's catalogue is echoed and amplified in other tale-lists and references to the *fili*'s storytelling repertoire that have survived in medieval literature. We do not know whether these enumerations of genres and specific tales refer to available manuscript texts, to the range of oral tradition in general, or to both. Many of these tales have in fact survived in the literature, but only a few have left vestiges in recent oral tradition.

While there is no doubt as to the existence of an Irish oral narrative tradition of long standing, much controversy has swirled, especially during the past three decades, over the question: to what extent is this oral tradition reflected in substance and style in extant medieval Irish narrative texts? While many have already joined the fray in this debate over the nature of the relationship between the oral and the literary tradition in Irish cultural history, it has perhaps only begun. There are no easy answers in this controversy, for, as a proverb attributed to the bewildered Saint Patrick encountering the complexities of Irish narrative attests, "gablánach in rét an scéluigheacht" (Stokes 1900:lines 3666-70), "storytelling is a thorny business." Proinsias Mac Cana has succinctly formulated the reasons why it is difficult to distinguish

the category of "literary" from that of "oral" in what has been called the Irish *Doppelkultur* (Gaechter 1970):

> Before the sixth century Irish literature was, for all practical purposes, purely oral. From then on it had two modes of transmission, the oral and the written, and it is the interaction of these two modes which constitutes the great problem—and in some ways the peculiar interest—of Irish literary history. Other literate peoples have their oral traditions, but generally these are sub-literary, in the sense that they comprise the common fund of popular ideas and lore which are rejected or ignored by the *literati*. In Ireland, however, while the native men of learning, the *filí*, did not eschew the use of writing, particularly in the post-Norman period, the fact is that they inherited something of the druidic preference for the oral mode, both in their teaching and in their composition.
>
> Consequently, the Irish oral tradition embraced the literature of greatest social prestige as well as the common lore of the mass of the people. And precisely because this literature of prestige was cultivated and conserved by an order of learned men specially trained to the task, it had its own separate existence, quite independent of writing, though not of course uninfluenced by it. (Mac Cana 1969:35).

These same issues were raised in a brilliant and polemical way by James Carney in his 1955 publication *Studies in Irish Literature and History*. Consisting of a series of essays that offered rare examples of a detailed critical approach to medieval Irish texts, Carney's *Studies* issued a healthy challenge to those labelled by the author as "nativists":

> Scholars tend to conceive of our sagas as having had a long life in oral tradition before being (with suggestive phrase) "committed to writing." They find it hard to reject the sentimental notion—flattering, perhaps, to national vanity—that these tales are immemorially old and were recited generation after generation in the "halls of kings." . . . I find it impossible for many reasons to believe that the form of any of the fictions or entertainments preserved in our medieval manuscripts is in any way close to the form in

> which they would be told when they existed (in so far as they actually did) on a purely oral level. It is sometimes not remembered by scholars that the written material of a literate society and the oral material of a society that has not yet been seriously affected by literacy are on different planes of existence—hence the transmission of material on each plane is governed by rules appropriate to its own special nature. There has of course been transference of material from the oral plane to the written. But the transmission was necessarily made in the first place by people whose minds had been opened to the great world of classical and Christian literature. When they wrote (or, to concede a phrase, "wrote down") fictions with an Irish traditional background they were naturally concerned with seeing that this material was presented as literature, and that the presentation was worthy of the new degree of sophistication which their society had attained by the very fact of becoming literate. There can be no question of regarding these stories as semi-sacred compositions, transmitted for centuries in an almost unvarying form and finally "written down" by an enthusiastic antiquarian with the scientific approach and attitude of a modern student of ethnography. The fact is that the texts themselves generally show clear signs of being composed in early Christian Ireland. (Carney 1955:276-77).

Carney's excellent reminder to scholars about the incompatability of oral and written compositional styles does not necessarily invalidate an impression we receive, particularly from later medieval narrative literature, that what we see here are texts that were meant to be read aloud, or at least used as the basis for an oral performance (see below). What Carney disputes, and rightly, is the notion of oral tradition as a static repository for "authored" texts, and the image of the literary tradition as a museum for enclosing and preserving these static texts. The earlier advocates of this naive notion, such as the great nineteenth-century scholar Eugene O'Curry, had in fact already been corrected by the careful scholarship of Rudolf Thurneysen in his classic study *Die irische Helden- und Königsage* (1921), in which he demonstrated that behind many of the texts which more

enthusiastic scholars had attempted to use as a window onto a pre-Christian, pre-historic, and pre-literary world, lay a dense and complicated history of textual transmission that in many respects obscured the *Sitz im Leben* of the recorded stories and traditions (see especially Thurneysen 1921:72-74).

But the textual editor's awareness of the revolution of the written word in early Christian Irish culture, as evinced in the work of Thurneysen, was perhaps carried to an extreme by Carney in his *Studies*.[4] Virtually rejected out of hand here is any possibility that the variations and cruces so characteristic of medieval Irish narrative texts in their often widely differing extant forms were not the results of scribal invention, error, or inflation of previously existing versions, but instead a reflection of the multiformity in the tradition of oral performance existing behind *and alongside* the texts and the literary tradition which created and transmitted them.

For instance, the earliest text of the lengthy tale of the *Cattle Raid of Cúailnge* (*Táin Bó Cúailnge* = TBC), which is preserved in the eleventh-century Book of the Dun Cow (Lebor na hUidre = LU) and known as Recension I, is notorious for its inclusion of "doublets," that is, redundant episodes and details. Cecile O'Rahilly, the most recent editor of TBC, gave ear to the nuances such textual problems present:

> Such repetition of themes or motifs in the development and expansion of the original tale, as represented now by LU, is merely an indication that the story had existed for a long period in tradition. As the central theme was elaborated and the tale grew by the accretion of episodes, the same theme was introduced more than once, with variation of context or with additional detail. . . . But Thurneysen's view of the origin of doublets is different. He seems to have held that a doublet of this type cannot occur within one version of a tale. To him the repetition of a motif denotes a different version. (O'Rahilly 1967:xix).

Elsewhere she states:

> The episodic nature of TBC, the result of continual accretions, is precisely what we should expect in an orally preserved tale. Further the saga is uneven and lopsided, some parts having been elaborated and expanded and stylistically embellished. It has been

> suggested that the native genius of the Irish writer is better suited to the short story than to a work of long and complicated structure. (*ibid*.: xxv).

The same "episodic nature" and accretional texture to which O'Rahilly points as evidence for the oral nature of the tale and/or its transmission are cited by Carney as possible proofs of the literary origins of another medieval saga, the *Cattle Raid of Fráech* (*Táin Bó Fraích* = TBF):

> When, therefore, we find inconsistencies and contradictions in a fictional work that we might reasonably expect to be logical and coherent, we are justified in suspecting that the underlying cause may be the disparity between the various simples that went into the making of the compound. But there is another possibility that has not to my knowledge been reckoned with by Irish or Anglo-Saxon scholars. The failure to advert to this possibility is due, I think, to a prejudice that exists as to the nature of the material: that is, that works like TBF and *Beowulf* are considered as being necessarily *traditional*. By "traditional" an Irish scholar, thinking of a tale such as TBF, would mean that it had, before being committed to writing about say 700 A.D., an oral existence of perhaps many hundred years, being based ultimately, according to the scholar's individual leanings, on either early historic events or on primitive mythology. The tendency to regard tales such as TBF as necessarily traditional in this sense has prevented scholars from seeing the possibility of a type of conflation other than that which has been envisaged, the type of conflation that exists in all fictional works. In short, a tale such as TBF may be a fiction composed of traditional and other elements, a new composition modelled on and borrowing from pre-existing material, whether oral or written; the author wishes only to compose a tale and it is a matter of indifference to him whether the episodes he borrows were earlier attributed to hero X or Y, whether they were Irish or foreign, traditional or non-traditional. (Carney 1955:28-29).

The aesthetic range of such literary conflation extends from shoddy patchwork to an integrated text with an individual artist's point of

view—a feature which when present, claims Carney, militates as much as inconsistency against the argument for oral provenance:

> It cannot be denied that the parts of the Táin [Bó Cúailnge] I have adverted to bear the mark of a single personality. The tricks of presentation are characteristic of a literary rather than an orally preserved tale, and the characterisation shows a degree of sophistication that is not met with in Irish oral narrative, and rarely, if ever, in early Irish literature. Had this tale been written in the seventh century, and substantially preserved in oral tradition until the ninth, the finer aspects of the epic and the individual touches would have been levelled out: the whole would have been reduced to the conventional form of the oral narrative. (*ibid*.:71).

Carney, giving precious little credit to oral tradition, leaves it barely any room in the vast complex of medieval Irish literature. If the text is a poor job, or at least is so judged according to our modern aesthetic criteria, it is probably a purely literary production. If it is consistent, sophisticated, and sustained, according to those criteria, then too it is probably a literary production. The hypothetical oral or orally based text is left somewhere in-between: it is restricted, to use Carney's term, to a "conventional form."[5]

This radical point of view pervades another important work on medieval Irish narrative, Alan Bruford's *Gaelic Folk-Tales and Mediaeval Romance* (1966). While it remains the best available source of information on literary narrative later than the material covered in Thurneysen's *Irische Helden- und Königsage*, Bruford's opinion that "the Romantic tales are so complex that they are hardly likely to have been preserved primarily in any other way than writing" (46) hampers his appreciation of a synergistic relationship between the literary and the oral traditions, and sets in place a tyrannical primacy of the former. In Bruford's defense, it must be said that certain contemporary storytellers have in fact memorized written texts, and that the oral tradition itself encourages the conceit of a memorizing storyteller. But narrative scholars in other fields have long ago given up complexity as a criterion for discriminating literary from oral texts, or memorized from orally composed texts, and there is no longer any compelling reason to maintain such a criterion in the field of Irish—especially

in light of the re-examination of scholarly assumptions about the Gaelic storyteller offered in Seán Ó Coileáin's article "Oral or Literary? Some Strands of the Argument" (1977), in which the author includes a most useful assessment of the different applications of the "Gaelic Storyteller" model, as canonized by James Delargy, to the study of medieval texts (see also Ó Coileáin 1978).

With the notable exceptions of a fluid body of ballads centered on the hero Finn mac Cumaill and his band of heroes (the *fían* or *fianna*) and some *dindshenchas* poems, there are no significant genres of narrative to be found in extant medieval Irish literature in a metrical form. We should note, however, that, particularly in early narrative prose texts, poems are an integral part of the textual fabric, especially in narrative contexts of dialogue. Indeed the *prosimetrum* format as used in both medieval Irish and early Sanskrit literature, reflecting two far-flung yet closely allied Indo-European traditions, was marshalled by Myles Dillon and other comparative scholars before him as evidence for the archaic and originally oral nature of medieval Irish narrative:

> The narrative form preserved in the Brāhmanas and Jātakas is the common saga-form in Ireland. The Irish sagas are prose tales with occasional passages of verse, the verse being used for direct speech. . . . In some of the sagas, many of the verse passages that survive are in a very archaic metre, stanzas with a varying number of syllables in the line, and with alliteration but no rhyme, and the language of these passages is obscure and is for the most part still untranslated. We may suppose that in the period of oral tradition to which this heroic literature belongs, the verse passages of direct speech were fixed as canonical and memorised, and the narrative was left to the creative memory of the reciter. Then when the tales came to be written down, in the ninth century and later, the archaic verse texts at first remained unchanged, and were then, as time went on, recomposed in the "new metres." (Dillon 1975:78-79).

Furthermore, there are features of Irish narrative prose, as exemplified in the performances of recent storytellers and most faithfully realized in a written form during the Early Modern Irish period (1200-1650), that can be considered semi-metrical

constraints, such as the frequent alliteration and the parallel construction of phrases or clauses. The study of the style of medieval Irish narrative prose is still in its infancy, but some tentative explorations of the mechanics of its composition have been undertaken. Inspired by Parry and Lord's work on Homeric and South Slavic epic, the classicist Kevin O'Nolan, in his 1968 article "Homer and the Irish Hero Tale," presented a sampling of what he termed "formulae" in some late medieval Irish prose texts, functional phrases and constructions used by the scribe and/or storyteller to tell the tale within a highly stylized sonic and semantic framework:

> There are particular and specific epithets applied to persons, places and things, as well as epithets of a general kind. In place of metrical fixity Irish prose has a binding force in alliteration, and this involves the use of more than one epithet with a noun.
>
> In the story of the Giolla Deacair ["Difficult Lad," the supernatural character featured in this tale about Finn] we find, for example, *i nAlmain lethanmhóir Laigen* and *dá chúiced mórdhalacha Muman*, characteristically accurate epithets. Other examples are *Manannán mórchomachtach mac Lir*, "Manannán greatly powerful [son of Lir]"; a hunt is described as *tromthorrtach,* "yielding a rich harvest of game"; the epithets *láidir lánchalma*, "strong and valorous," are applied in one case to an impulse or thrust, on another occasion describe the *gruagach*, an otherworld warrior . . . . The principle of alliteration is well illustrated by three different words for spear or javelin which occur in our tale. We have *craoiseacha crannremra cinnderga, dá mhanaois móirremra*, and *dá shleig shénta shlinnlethna*.
>
> The mere fact of alliteration does not ensure the formulaic character of a phrase. Anyone can alliterate, and where there is a large alliterative content a composer's individual contribution might well be alliterative and go unnoticed. However it is not possible to have a large individual contribution in one tale without its being apparent, nor is it possible for a composer, even if he wanted to, to make up on a large scale epithets which match the type of epithet

> confirmed by tradition. The composer suggests and invents epithets to a limited extent, but it is the tradition that chooses some and rejects others.
>
> What does ensure the formulaic character of a phrase is repetition, even repetition within a single story, for a storyteller is more likely to repeat phrases already known to himself and his listeners than what he invents and tells for the first time. But of course when we go outside the story and find the same phrases elsewhere, we may conclude that they are beyond question formulae. (O'Nolan 1968:15-16).

O'Nolan does in fact trace some of the formulae in his base text, the *Tóraigheacht an Ghiolla Dheacair*, "Pursuit of the Troublesome Lad," over into other texts of other tales, and even finds some of those same formulae in the texts collected from twentieth-century Gaelic storytellers. Furthermore, he discerns what he calls "themes" or "formulaic passages" in the literary as well as the folktale texts, both of which, as noted by scholars before O'Nolan, are characterized by "runs" (*cóiriú catha* in Irish): recyclable and variable descriptions of recurring scenes or situations, such as setting out to sea, fighting, feasting, and so on (O'Nolan 1968:9-10, 14; see also O'Nolan 1971-73). Citing Lord's theory in *The Singer of Tales* that formulas originally had a pre-poetic, ritual function (Lord 1960:66-67), O'Nolan in another of his articles attempts to free the concept of formula from a strictly metrical framework, arguing that formulas can precede and give rise to meter, and that the type of narrative "formulaic" prose characteristic of Irish storytelling may have been the precursor of epic verse (1971-73:234-35; see also 1969:18-19).

The prose of earlier narrative texts, in particular those that were originally preserved in the seventh-century manuscript Cín Droma Snechta (including the famous *Immram Brain*, "Voyage of Bran" = IB), has also been examined for evidence of oral composition, notably by Proinsias Mac Cana. The contrasting uses of language apparent in these texts—ranging from a terse, almost synoptic style to a more ornate, elegant, and balanced prose—indicate to Mac Cana the early *literati*'s attempts to forge a literary style out of elements of the prevailing oral style. While Mac Cana does not dispute Carney's claim that these texts are indeed literature, he has demonstrated forcefully the important role played by "traditional," that is pre-Christian and oral, concepts

and motifs in them (Mac Cana 1972, 1975, 1976). Indeed, Carney's thesis of a massive Christian rehauling of a native oral tale in the case of IB is considerably weakened by Mac Cana's careful presentation of non-Christian, distinctly Irish and/or Indo-European analogues to the messianic and otherworldly images that permeate the text.[6]

The impact such careful comparative study of content can have upon our estimation of the oral component in medieval Irish literature is also to be felt in the work of Daniel Melia, who has uncovered several of the generative story patterns underlying early Irish narrative (1972; 1977-78). In his examination of the parallels between the narrative frames of TBC, the Indian epic *Mahābhārata*, and the *Iliad*, Melia concludes:

> If we look at the *Táin Bó Cuailnge* in the light of these other stories with similar patterns and from cultures with cognate languages, several apparently vexing structural problems seem to be less intractable. The traditional narrative shape of each of the epic stories must have embodied the same original cultural intention, and such a structure will tend to persist so long as the narrative structure continues to embody significant meaning for the culture in question. The strange little story of the "Finding of the *Táin*" is almost identical to the first book of the *Mahābhārata*, which tells how a king found the only surviving man to have heard the story from the disciple of the man who composed it. . . .
>
> Because form and function are so closely tied together in an oral/traditional milieu, it is legitimate to argue that the persistence of the plot structure of ancient Indo-European epic in medieval Ireland reinforces the suggestion that oral/traditional models of composition and performance persisted until quite late in medieval Ireland, probably well into the twelfth century, and, further, that the cultural intention embodied in the structure of traditional sagas continued to have validity for its audience. (Melia 1979:260-61).

Yet we are, of course, still left with the issue of the origins of the actual form and style in which these traditional tales were recorded. What for Mac Cana and Carney passes as the beginnings of a literary style was analyzed by Gerard Murphy as,

in many cases, the fruits of the difficult process of transcribing or paraphrasing an oral performance of traditional narrative. In his classic *Saga and Myth in Ancient Ireland* (1955; rpt. in Murphy 1966), he explored the problematic contrast between the earlier prose tales, which often seem fragmented and are difficult to follow in their terseness, and the later prose tales of medieval literature, which are full-blown, even superabundant narrative texts:

> When we think of the well-constructed narratives which even the unlearned peasant narrator to-day can produce, and when we judge of the greater power of Old Irish storytellers by consideration of certain passages through the inartistic manuscript versions of their tales which have been preserved, we can be fairly certain that the tales, as really told to assembled kings and noblemen at an ancient *óenach* [assembly], were very different from the poorly-narrated manuscript versions noted down by monastic scribes as a contribution to learning rather than to literature. (Murphy 1966:99).
>
> It is certain that, from the fifteenth century on, lay men of learning, in close touch with storytellers of the aristocratic tradition, both wrote and used manuscripts. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that Early Modern Irish tales recorded by such scribes seem to be closer in form to what was really told than are the manuscript forms of tales of the Old and Middle Irish period, when manuscripts were mainly monastic and scribes were interested in the historic rather than the aesthetic value of the matter they recorded. It is significant in this respect that in describing Early Modern Irish tales in this section it was nowhere necessary to surmise how certain passages used to be really told or how lacunae were to be filled. . . . (*ibid*.:192).

Mac Cana's appreciation of early literary style and Murphy's characterization of it as a scribal exigency deriving from an oral style are, of course, compatible points of view, which, when placed side by side, alert us to the impossibility of distinguishing the functional from the aesthetic traits of medieval Irish literature. But one suspects that where Murphy would have seen a "good" passage—that is, one in which, according to Murphy, the style of the original oral telling is for once faithfully recorded, as opposed

to mangled and inaccurately relayed—Mac Cana might well see evidence of the young literary tradition's coming into its own. The latter scholar's point of view is well demonstrated in his comparison of two of the short surviving texts from the Cín Droma Snechta manuscript, the *Compert Con Culainn*, "Conception of Cú Chulainn," and the *Echtra Machae*, "Adventure of Macha," both tales from the Ulster heroic cycle:

> Here the tale of Cú Chulainn's birth is told in a spare and uncomplicated style which sets the pattern for classical Old Irish narrative in general, but which at the same time offers certain indications that the Compert is not very far removed from the first emergence of this kind of prose. To begin with, the spareness of the writing is one which suggests economy rather than abridgement: the sequence of events is clearly marked and at no point does it give an impression of serious hiatus. On the other hand, the narrative is concise to the point of abruptness and lacks those stylistic features which are most typical of traditional oral narration: alliteration, repetition, description and dialogue. . . . There is yet another feature of *Compert Con Culainn* which seems to mark a divergence from the oral mode, namely its relative lack of the sentence connectives which are virtually indispensable to spoken narrative .... (Mac Cana 1972:109-10).
>
> By way of contrast *Echtra Machae*, while it has one brief series of short sentences with the verb in initial position, otherwise exploits a greater variety of word-order and sentence-length, not to mention its snippets of dialogue. . . . The disparity between the texts is unmistakable: one appears to have for its primary purpose to provide a clear statement, precise and unembellished, of the incidents which constitute the saga, whereas the other shows the author/redactor consciously moulding this functional medium into the semblance of a literary style. (*ibid.*:110).

The stylistic features distinguishing Irish oral from literary prose style are still in the process of being explored and formulated by Celticists, particularly Mac Cana (see also 1977) and Edgar Slotkin (1973, 1983). Before we arrive at an adequate set of textually based criteria, however, scholars will continue to a greater

or lesser extent to base the distinction between oral and literary upon aesthetic factors (is the prose "good" or "bad"?), which in turn are charged with the scholar's attitude toward the oral tradition. Especially to those who have had personal experience with traditional Gaelic storytelling, oral tradition may seem to offer the best of narrative styles. On the other hand, the scholar who views oral tradition hypothetically is tempted to allow it at best a "conventional" narrative style, implicitly deemed inferior to the literary style (cf. Jackson, 1961:6). Whatever one's point of view, Seán de Búrca's insightful analysis of the style of a folktale text collected from a Galway storyteller should be taken into account, as a lesson on the dangers of making generalizations about the style of narrative in oral and literary traditions, or early and recent traditions:

> A severe simplicity of style characterizes the recital of *An Giolla Géaglonnach*. In many cases a sentence consists of a single clause, varying in length between three and seven syllables. . . . Longer sentences may comprise a few clauses of the foregoing type, in paratactical construction. . . . Along with simplicity there is pervasive brevity. . . . However, it must be remembered that brevity and conciseness need not coincide in a text. In *An Giolla Géaglonnach* there are various expressions which occur repeatedly while adding virtually nothing to the tale itself. . . . Whole clauses may be repeated. . . . From this duplication and redundancy, it is obvious that the brevity which exists in the tale has not been sought systematically. The impression given is one of composition during performance: of the transmitter fashioning his story (largely in his own words) from its basic elements as he goes along; and this improvization is further indicated by personal comments or asides that he makes in the course of his recital. . . . In the light of the foregoing considerations, and bearing in mind the typical form and content of early examples in the extant tradition, it seems to me that the genuine Irish tale deriving from the preliterate period was relatively short. (Búrca 1973-74:58-60).

In *Saga and Myth* Murphy noted yet another possible sign of the influence of the oral heritage on medieval Irish literature: the

multiformity of narrative patterns, already mentioned in Cecile O'Rahilly's discussion of the TBC doublets cited above. Of the literary inconsistency surrounding the old tale of Mac Dathó's pig (best known in the Old Irish redaction entitled *Scéla Mucce Meic Dathó*, "Tidings of Mac Dathó's Pig"), Murphy said:

> That the living tradition of the story was an oral one is suggested not alone by differences between details in the version preserved for us today and similar details referred to in two old poems appended by Thurneysen to his edition of the ninth-century tale, but also by the apparent inclusion of the tale, under the title *Argain Meic Dá Thó* (Mac Dá Thó's Slaughter), in the two main lists of tales which *filid* should be able "to tell to kings and noblemen." (1966:126).

The bewildering proliferation of variants which often characterizes the medieval literary transmission of Irish narratives takes on new meaning when viewed as the imprint of an ongoing oral tradition. Daniel Melia, in his article on the "boyhood deeds" (*macgnímrada*) section of the TBC (1975), draws important conclusions from the fact that at least two compatible versions of this "flashback" text, centered on the youth of the hero Cú Chulainn, were circulating in medieval literary tradition:

> There is strong evidence that the "Boyhood Deeds" must be in origin one of the most archaic parts of the *Cattle Raid of Cooley*, that Versions A and B are parallel narrative equivalents of each other, that this parallelism is an example of the kind of multiformity more characteristic of oral than of written tradition, and that the evidence here for an updated multiform text of a single archaic incident group is a further indication that one of the strongest forces operating on the tradition of this important saga was the introduction of variants.
>
> If Versions A and B of the "Boyhood Deeds" did in fact exist in multiform close to the time of compilation of the earlier version of the *Cattle Raid of Cooley*, this fact may help to account for the "modernity" noted by Carney and others, for if conflation of an existing multiform tradition of the story was a recent event, there is no reason why some "improvement" might not have been attempted. In

> addition to the above conclusions, these tales illustrate the ways in which story patterning exists on levels beyond the semantic ones of "formula" and the narrative ones of "theme"; the process of building and manipulating concrete metaphors pervades early literature to an extent we find hard to comprehend in the milieu of modern psychological fiction. (1975:37).

The possibility of such textual "improvements" under the influence of an ongoing oral tradition affects our concept of the scribal transmitters: monks and, later, members of scribal families, none of whom were by any means isolated from the oral tradition thriving in the society around them.

In his study of the myth of Cenn Faelad, supposedly the first amanuensis of the secular oral tradition in Ireland, Edgar Slotkin takes the issue of multiformity beyond the hypothetical primal stage of the redactor taking down an oral performance, or the oral performer creating an autograph text (see Ó Coileáin 1977:30-31). The medieval transmitter of literature may not always have treated the text as fixed, partly because he wanted to incorporate multiform oral material, and partly because he viewed or mentally "heard" certain types of passages in the written text in terms of oral performance:

> Given the attitude of scribes towards their work, we can think of each one of their productions as a kind of multiform of their original. In this sense, the entire nature of a critical edition of a saga is a false concept. Surely, the "interpolation" of a late scribe may be traditional, meaningful, and necessary to the tale or that particular scribal performance of the tale. Every saga must be evaluated, and each manuscript of each saga, separately. If our evaluation leads us to suspect that scribes regarded their texts as multiforms, we may treat such a manuscript as if it were a somewhat specialized separate performance. The motivations that produced the differences were the motivations of the oral teller of tales. (Slotkin 1977-79:450).

Still taking its first faltering steps is the study of how the medieval Irish scribes and storytellers themselves viewed their own traditions—both literary and oral—and how they conceptualized the acts of memorization and composition. Knowledge of this ideological background would form a valuable complement and aid

to our slowly evolving understanding of the actual mechanics of composition that lie behind the texts. There is extensive material upon which to base such knowledge, including a rich vocabulary of relevant terms, the use and semantic range of which await scholarly examination. Urard Mac Coisse, the *fili* storyteller discussed in the first part of this piece, is said in a sixteenth-century poem to have retained his repertoire of stories *do ghloin mheabhra* (Knott 1926, 1:23), "with pure memory/completely preserved." The word for "memory" here, *meabhar* or *mebair*, is a borrowing from Latin *memoria* (Vendryes 1960:s.v. *mebair*), and it is attested as early as the Old Irish glosses. *Mebair* can refer both to the capacity of memorizing and to the thing(s) memorized; in the prose text of the *Airec* it occurs three times in plural form with the latter meaning, to indicate Urard's mental control over his repertoire (e.g., *ar batar mebra laisium coimgneda ocus sceoil . . .* [Byrne 1908:42], "for he knew the accounts and tales . . ."). The phrase featuring *mebair* in the poem cited above, *do glain mebra/mebair*, "in memory, memorized," is an idiom often found in other texts as well. In the late medieval compilation *Feis Tighe Chonáin*, "Feast of Conan's House," it takes on a distinctly mystical connotation. The hunter-chief Finn is describing one of the wonders of his heroic band: *Ōglāch bodhbhur atā 'san bfēin, ⁊ nī dearnadh duan nō duathchann nach biadh do dirm degh-foghluma ⁊ do glan meaba[i]r aige* (Joynt 1936:lines 449-51), "a deaf warrior who is in the band: the poem or song has not been composed that he has not learned swiftly and committed to memory completely." In another medieval text, the *Acallam na Senórach*, "Colloquy of the Ancients," Finn's musician (*airfitech*)—a dwarf (*abhuc*) from the otherworld named Cnú Deróil, "Trifling Nut" —is described in similar terms: *Gacha cluinedh tiar is tair/ do bhídh aigi do meabair* (Stokes 1900:line 681), "everything he heard west and east, he kept in his memory." That Cnú Deróil heard and retained more than just musical compositions can be assumed, given the fact that musicians are often credited in medieval Irish literature with the talents of storytellers (Murphy 1953:191). Our musical dwarf in his versatility reminds us of his father, who, according to a Fenian ballad (Murphy 1933:118), is the god Lug. In the text of the *Cath Maige Tuired*, "[Second] Battle of Mag Tuired," this divinity claims to be a harper (*cruitire*), a *fili*, and a shanachie (*senchaid*); he is appropriately called *Samildánach* "Possessor of All Arts" (Stokes

1891:76).

There is another otherworldly musician in the *Acallam* noted for his retention: the harper Cas Corach, who accompanies the old hero Cailte in order to collect the many stories the aged informant has to tell (*d' fhoglaim fhessa ₇ fhireolais ₇ scelaigechta ₇ morgnim gaiscid na Féinne* [Stokes 1900:lines 3354-55], "to learn the wisdom, the true knowledge, the stories, and the great deeds of valor of the *fían*"). Here again, as in the above description of the deaf singer, we see the word *foglaimm*, "learning," which is the verbal noun of *fo-gleinn* "collects" (RIA Dict.:s.v.). The otherworldly Cas Corach's mnemonic mode of "collecting" stands in contrast to the technique utilized by the sacred and secular mortals in Cailte's company, who record his stories in writing. After Cailte recites a poem about the history of the *fían* (war-band), a composition containing information that Cailte says was in his *mebair (mebair lem*, Stokes 1900:line 2491), his royal auditor, Diarmaid mac Cerbaill, demands to know:

> Caid a filet sin ₇ senchaide Eirenn? Scribthar i tamlorgaib filed ₇ a slechtaib suad ₇ a mbriathraib ollaman co mbere cach a chuid lais da crich ₇ da ferann bodein da each ní dar' indis Cailti ₇ Oissin da morgnimarthaib gaile ₇ gaiscid, ₇ do dindshenchus Eirenn (Stokes 1900:lines 2588-94).
>
> Where are the *filid* and the shanachies of Ireland? Let this be written in the stone-tablets of *filid*, the recensions of scholars, and the words of prime poets, so that each may take his share back to his own land—of all that Cailte and Oisín have narrated of the great deeds of valor and warfare, and of the place-name lore of Ireland (cf. *ibid*.:lines 299-303, 3104-6).

Supernatural storytellers such as Cas Corach may not need scribes or manuscripts, but, in the world-view dominating not just the *Acallam* text but most of Old/Middle Irish literature, writing is—at least for mankind—a wonderful invention. It is, among other things, a device for preserving the *mebair* of oral tradition, and learned men such as *filid* naturally come to depend upon the written word. A paradigm of scribal behavior as well as a rationale for a written tradition are presented in a popular medieval tale alluded to in various texts (e.g., Binchy 1978:250), about the poet-warrior Cenn Faelad, the "patron saint" of scribes.

The very name of this legendary character, "Head (of) Instruction," seems to refer to the process of transmission. *Faelad* or *fáelad* is the verbal noun of *fáelaid*, "teaches," a verb that is possibly derived from the reduplicated stem of *fo-gleinn*, "collects" (RIA Dict. : s.v. *fáelaid*)—the verbal noun of which (*foglaimm*) we encountered above in the descriptions of Finn's deaf transmitter of songs and the musician Cas Corach. The story of Cenn Faelad rests on the odd premise that he developed an amazing memory only after he lost his *inchind dermait*, "brain of forgetting," as the result of a battle wound. While convalescing, Cenn Faelad heard the lessons emanating from nearby schools of learning (including a school for poets), and whatever he heard uttered during the day, by night he had captured completely in his *mebair* (*cach ni docluined-sum [ ] na tri scot each lae dobid do glain mebru aice each naidche*). This lore he proceeded to put in poetic form and then write down. Thus, the story goes, began the Irish literary tradition. There is something puzzling in the logic of this etiological legend, and we may speculate that, as suggested by Slotkin (1977-79:437-40), the brain of forgetting did not disappear with the wound in the original form of the story but instead was caused by it, so that Cenn Faelad wrote down what he heard because he could no longer preserve it in his *mebair*.

In the tale about the rediscovery of the *Cattle Raid of Cúailnge* (see above)—known as the *Do Foillsigud na Tána Bó Cúailnge*, "Concerning the Revelation of the *Táin*" —we find the implicit message that the availability of written texts can corrupt *filidecht* and the storyteller's *mebair* (the tale has survived in several different versions: Best and O'Brien 1967:1119; Meyer 1907:2-6; Joynt 1931:lines 1004-1303; see Carney 1955:166-79 for summaries). The chief poet (*ardfhili*) of Ireland, Senchán Torpéist, and a delegation of his fellow *áes dána* (craftsmen) force themselves upon the Connaught king Gúaire Aidne in an attempt to test his well-known generosity. After the "heavy hosting" of the artisans has become intolerable, Gúaire or his brother Marbán devises a ruse for getting rid of them: Senchán and his company are asked to tell the story of the Cattle Raid of Cúailnge. The professional tradition-bearers are forced to admit that it is not in their memory (*mebair*, Meyer 1907:4), and that the written text of the *Táin* had been given away in exchange for a copy of Isidore's *Etymologiae*! Senchán and his companions thus lose the right to impose upon Gúaire any longer, but in order to preserve his honor

as a *fili* and fulfill the request of his audience, Senchán goes in search of the story of the Cattle Raid. The chief poet, or his son Muirgen, finally obtains it when he goes to the grave of Fergus mac Róich, one of the heroes of the story, and brings him back to life with a poetic composition, in which this hero of long ago is addressed as if he were alive. In the company of his bardic audience, the resurrected Fergus, who is noted for his storytelling within the story of the *Táin* itself (it is he who narrates the boyhood deeds of Cú Chulainn referred to above), chants the account of the Cattle Raid (*rochachuin Tain*, Meyer 1907:4) from beginning to end. The gigantic Fergus cannot be heard when he is standing, so he sits or lies down as he tells the tale. This live oral performance lasts three days and three nights, during which time the mortal auditor(s) remains shrouded in a magical mist. Afterwards, Senchán has the tale written down, and so it is captured once again for posterity.

Certain aspects of this description of Fergus' performance, and the storyteller's simultaneous imbibing of the previously lost text, bring to mind details contained in surviving accounts of how Gaelic poets composed their poems. In an eighteenth-century source detailing the homework of Irish bardic pupils, we read:

> The Professors (one or more as there was occasion) gave a Subject suitable to the Capacity of each Class, determining the number of Rhimes, and clearing what was to be chiefly observed therein as to Syllables, Quartans, Concord, Correspondence, Termination and Union, each of which were restrain'd by peculiar Rules. The said Subject (either one or more as aforesaid) having been given over Night, they work'd it apart each by himself upon his own Bed, the whole next day in the Dark, till at a certain Hour in the Night, Lights being brought in, they committed it to writing. . . . The reason of laying the Study aforesaid in the Dark was doubtless to avoid the Distraction which Light and the variety of Objects represented therein commonly occasions. (Thomas O'Sullevane in the *Memoirs of the Marquis of Clanricarde*, 1722; quoted in Bergin 1970:6).

A roughly contemporary Scottish observer of Gaelic customs, Martin Martin, gives a similar description of the process of poetic composition utilized by the professional poets of Scotland: "They shut their Doors and Windows for a Days time, and lie on their

backs with a Stone upon their Belly, and Plads about their Heads, and their Eyes being cover'd they pump their Brains for Rhetorical Encomium or Panegyrick; and indeed they furnish such a Stile from this Dark Cell as is understood by very few" (*Description of the Western Islands of Scotland*, 1703; quoted in Bergin 1970:8). The composing bard's need for darkness, enclosure, and at least the semblance of sleep, echoes a recipe for mantic trance preserved in the tenth-century *Cormac's Glossary*. After offering to the pagan gods a sacrifice of raw meat, the *fili* in search of knowledge, we are told in this text, lies down to sleep, his face covered with his hands, and awaits enlightenment (Meyer 1912:64). The term used in *Cormac's Glossary* to describe the transmission of knowledge to the sleeping *fili* is *foillsigud*, "revelation" —the same word used in the previously discussed texts to describe the remarkable procedure whereby Senchán recovers the *Táin*.

The revenant Fergus, who is asked by the poet in search of an old story to lie or sit down so that his tale may be heard, reclines like the composing poets described by O'Sullevane and Martin. But for Fergus, this passive position facilitates the transmission of his memory of a traditional tale to his audience, while for the poet, the passive position is conducive to supernatural inspiration and the creation of a new poem. Concomitant with prostration in both cases are containment and concealment in darkness, conditions antithetical to the secular acts of reading and writing; yet it is these uncomfortable circumstances that enable the poet to function as divinely inspired singer of praise as well as storyteller equipped with a complete and accurate *mebair*. The composing *fili* emerges from his room or hut with a fresh composition ready to be performed; Senchán or Muirgen emerges from the magical mist with an old story restored to his memory. Whether it is a praise-poem or a *scél*, the next and essential step is to commit it to writing. But, as the story of Senchán's embarrassment over the *Táin* shows, the written word is no substitute for the poet's *mebair glan*, "pure memory," or the numinous oral tradition behind it.

Senchán, locked with a king in a muted struggle concerning poets' rights, is tricked by his audience when he is asked to perform the one story he does not know. Since he does not know it, Senchán loses to Gúaire and must leave the court; hence, the relationship between poet and patron, which was threatened by Senchán's excesses, maintains its equilibrium. Urard, on the other

hand, is also involved in a discreet battle with a monarch over rights, but the poet in this case has both a legitimate grievance and a comprehensive narrative memory. So the trick is played on the audience, for the *airec menman*, "trick of the mind," referred to in the title of the tale is an extension of Urard's professional *mebair*. He names a story that no one else has ever heard—a new tale, based on the old ones, that he has composed. With this invented *scél* the *fili* wins his case and obtains restitution from the king; thereby, the rights of poets are preserved. Lesser *filid* struggle to preserve intact the old tales of heroes who lived long ago, and they must rely on the written text. But Urard with his remarkable control over the repertoire can become another Fergus: a subject of narrative who narrates his own experiences in a form that enriches, sustains, and even protects the tradition and profession of poets and storytellers. Thus, for this supreme *fili*-storyteller of pure and creative memory, as for Fergus and the many other figures of traditional narrative who are said to have been brought back to life by saints and scholars seeking to revive the narrative tradition (Nagy 1983), orally transmitted personal memorates become the traditional *scéla* that form the backbone of both oral and literary tradition.

Underlying the tales and texts sampled above is a distinction being made between oral and literary transmission, and there are many further nuances of theme and vocabulary to be decoded here. The clues to understanding the mysterious process of composition behind the tales of our medieval manuscripts are still where they always have been: within the texts themselves. For the student of oral tradition, one of the outstanding *desiderata* in the field of medieval Irish literature is an inventory of the words relating to the concepts of composition, memory, and narration, accompanied by analyses of their etymologies and various uses. We have barely explored the connotations of *mebair*, and there are other words for memory, such as the native Irish word *cuman*, which deserve similar exploration. Further analysis of vocabulary pertaining to transmission, performance, and memorization would complement the existing scholarship on the Celtic lexicon of poetry, poets, and their craft (Hamp 1977; Watkins 1963:213-17 and 1976; Williams 1971 *passim*). With the accumulation and integration of such studies we would arrive at a deeper understanding of medieval Irish narrative,

even without the actual context of composition and performance before us—just as the wondrous Fenian singer mentioned above could "hear" all the songs ever composed, even though he was deaf.

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Notes

[1]Similarly, the medieval Welsh poet is credited with the talents of *cyfarwydd*, "storyteller" (Ford 1975-76). The emergence of a Welsh literary style out of oral traditional narrative is the subject of Roberts 1984.

[2]Tierney 1980:243 (Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*, V1.14). The close relationship between the functions and traditions of the Celtic druid and the Irish *fili* has most recently been described in Mac Cana 1979.

[3]Concerning the connotations of *légend* as in the term *fer légind*, by which the Irish *literati* sometimes designated one another, Edgar Slotkin says: "*Légend* (from Lat. *legendum*) has a number of meanings which may be applicable: 'reading', . . . 'monastic learning', . . . 'studying', 'text'. The range of semantics here is instructive: literacy is connected with Latin learning, not native scholarship. *Légend* is used in the earlier texts to refer only to ecclesiastical studies." (1977-79:439, n. 13).

[4]In his address delivered to the Sixth International Celtic Congress, Carney said of this work: "When it was written Irish scholarship was dominated by two frustrating, oppressive, and powerful orthodoxies, one concerning the nature of early Irish saga, the other concerning the date, career and personality of St. Patrick. This book was a perhaps overstrong rebellion against both of these deeply entrenched orthodoxies. I can say quite briefly that if I were to write in the calmer atmosphere of today I would make many modifications, and not merely in tone." (1983:127-28).

[5]The validity of treating the organization or disorganization of episodes in a literary narrative as a criterion for oral provenance is an issue also touched upon in Slotkin 1978 and O'Nolan 1969-70. Of the sequence of events in a medieval Irish prose version of the *Aeneid*, O'Nolan says: "In the case of the Irish Aeneid, the translator has attempted a structural re-casting of the story so as to relate the events in the order of their occurrence. This involved prior reading and close examination of at least the first four books. The only feasible explanation of the procedure adopted by the translator is that he found the 'in medias res' method strange and unacceptable, out of accord with Irish narratives which, however much they may have found refuge in manuscripts, are nonetheless oral in character" (129).

[6]Carney himself, in an article written several years after the publication of his first controversial piece on IB, speculated that the author of the text was a *fili* "personally involved in the problem of being a Christian, while at the same time retaining as much as possible of his traditional heritage" (1976:193).

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The Collection and Analysis of Oral Epic Tradition in South Slavic: An Instance

David E. Bynum

The earliest certain textual evidence relating to the South Slavic oral epic tradition that has been discovered up to the present is a little less than five hundred years old. That earliest scrap of evidence has come down to us in literary learning as the result of a conscious act of *collection* by an Italian to whom not only the poetry itself but also the dialects of the South Slavs were entirely foreign. What was true of him in his time has remained true in principle of all the collecting activity by all the collectors who have recorded oral traditional epic poetry in the South Slavic world ever since: collecting has, by its very nature, been the act of outsiders to whom the tradition was essentially strange, who nevertheless were interested in it as though it were literature, and who did not understand it. Thus the whole history of knowledge about the South Slavic oral traditional epos has been shaped by three constant factors: 1. The tradition has been substantially alien to all its cognoscenti, regardless of their nationalities. 2. It has been valued and acquisitively pursued by them for its perceived literary features. 3. But the possession of texts from the tradition, no matter how the collecting has been done, has continued always to pose some of the most difficult historical and analytical problems known to literary science; namely the questions of how, why, and when narrative poetry arose in human culture to begin with, which of its original characteristics have remained constant in the life of such traditions, and what they disclose about the nature and history of the human mind. Those questions are all as unanswered today as they were five hundred years ago, and are indeed all now far more problematical than ever before. For

while other kinds of natural science have made sure progress in explaining physical phenomena, the phenomena of oral poetic traditions have only very recently come to be appreciated as being truly natural phenomena, and not merely artifacts of culture manipulable at will by the persons whose culture it was. The literary author and the influential critic do, by what they think and what they surmise, actually change literature in the process of its making, and so its constant features as it evolves are only the constant features of their own minds. This reality about written literature necessarily also shapes the historical study of it. But that is not the reality at all about the oral epic tradition, where there have clearly always been objectively verifiable mechanisms sustaining the tradition independently of what anyone has merely conjectured about them; and this difference is at once both the central problem and the central attraction of the tradition for those literary minds that have most successfully understood what it was exactly that they have not understood about it.

But whereas the earliest known textual relics of the South Slavic oral epic tradition (its poetic fossil-finds and paleontology, as it were) presently date from no more than five centuries ago at most, nothing has ever during that five hundred years been found in the tradition itself that would be a sufficient reason not to suppose—and there are many strong reasons why one might suppose—that the tradition has obtained among the South Slavs and their progenitors for a very much longer span of time, as long a length of time indeed as it is possible to imagine. In this way too the radical difference between the collectors' knowledge and the traditional oral epic singers' knowledge is apparent. For a few centuries only, a few people of literary bent have now and again wanted to own texts of the tradition for one purpose or another, but the tradition itself never consisted of texts. It consisted only of a way of making texts; it was a process, not a product. Thus, in the Slavic Balkans, the idea of keeping texts is a cultural novelty of startling recency, while knowledge of the way to make such texts is probably prodigiously older. This is paradoxical not only for literary history, but also for education; not only with regard to the past, but also for the future. For if one believes that the preservation of texts and the knowledge of them in coming generations are important for the continuity of civilization (as all the collectors of the South Slavic oral epic tradition have uniformly believed), and if one values continuity of civilization,

then one must believe and hope that the texts collected from the South Slavic tradition will somehow be preserved indefinitely into the future, even though the collection of such texts was a recent cultural innovation.

Meanwhile the fate of the tradition itself that gave rise to the texts and that was the object of the collecting—the native South Slavic traditional bard's way of making epics—that fate is sealed. Prodigiously old it may have been, but we in the final quarter of the twentieth century have finally witnessed its irrevocable extinction as the very last of the Balkan bards have departed through death or emigration. All the texts there ever were to be collected have now been collected, and what we cannot learn about the tradition from them we shall never know. It remains for our descendants no less than for the descendants of the former bards and of their people to realize sometime far in the future what we cannot yet clearly discern: whether continuity of civilization is in fact better served by practicing a certain way of making things, or rather by attempting to preserve for all of future time the collections of products already made. All that can presently be said with certainty about this question is that the South Slavic experience to date markedly favors the former over the latter probability.

To feel the full force of this uncertainty, one must comprehend more than is usually understood even by experts about the actual precision and scope of the collections as a whole: how fully and how well they document the tradition even within the few centuries when any collecting at all was done. The South Slavic tradition has without a doubt been the most massively collected of all such traditions that have ever been documented anywhere in the world. Yet fewer than three hundred individuals formed all the collections that have survived to be of use in our time. Until the second half of the present century, the Balkans south of the Danube have not experienced a single generation without warfare since the end of the *pax romana*. Much that was once collected has perished or disappeared through pillage. What does survive is nevertheless wonderfully copious and for the most part thus far unused for any purpose whatever. No one has previously attempted even to set down in one place a comprehensive list of who the collectors were whose collections are now, taken as a group, all that still exists of the South Slavic tradition. The following are, with certain omissions (in those

instances particularly where there is much uncertainty as to the continued existence of the collection), those collectors whose names are known and whose accumulations are either certainly or probably still accessible to the modern researcher in some form or part:

Serbo-Croatian

Ante and Miroslav Alačević
Miho Andjelinović
Vjekoslav Babukić
Ante Balović
Filip Banić
Juraj Baraković
S. R. Bašagić
Nikola Begović
Luka Bervaldi-Lucić
Petar N. Besarović
Julije Bišćan
Andrija Blagović
Jakov Bobinac
Krsta Božović
Miladin Božović
Marko Bruerović
Manojlo Bubalo-Kordunaš
Bade Budisavljević
Ivan Bulić
Todor Bušetić
David E. Bynum
Ilija Ćulum
A. Debeljaković
Pero Delić
Djuro Deželić
Todor Dimitrijević
Djordjije Dragović-Ćuričković
Stevan Dučić
Ivo and Mato Duić
Lazar Dunda
Mustafa Džinić
Djuro Ferić
Alberto Fortis
Dominik Franković
Baldo Melkov Glavić
Aleksandar Godler
Bartuo Grgić
Stjepan Grgić
Esad Hadžiomerspahić
Petar Hektorović
Kosta Hörmann
Dragoljub Ilić
Luka Ilić
Nikola Ivanaj-Arbanas
Anibal Ivančić
Ivan Ivanišević
Petar Ivanković
Stjepan Ivičević
Miloš Ivković
Ernest Jelušić-Štrkov
Ivan Franjo Jukić
Ivan Justić
Vladimir Kačanovsky
Ivan Kačić-Miošić
Vuk Stefanović Karadžić
Milan Karanović
Nikola Kašiković
Gojko M. Kilivarda
Lazar Kirjak
Josip Klarić
Jovan Koprivica
Simo Kosnić
Franjo Kovačević
Ivan Kraljević
Friedrich Krauss
Nikola Stanov Kukić
Ivan Kukuljević
Muharem Kurtagić
Sime Ljubić
Niko Ljubidrag
Albert B. Lord
Andrija Luburić
Melko Lucijanović
Luka Marjanović
Krsto Marković
Marko Marković
Pero Marković
Grga Martić
Djuro Matijašević
Stjepan Mažuranić
Fran Mikuličić
Mihailo Dj. Miladinović
Mato Milas
Sima R. Mileusnić
Milan Milićević
Fran Milošević
Sima Milutinović
Petar Mirković
Ana Mladineo-Dobrila
Antun Mostahinić
Andro Murat
Jovan Mutić
Rinald Nališ
Alija Nametak
Dobroslav Nedić
Lazar Nikolić

Petar II Petrović Njegoš
Ivan Krst. Novak
Milan Obradović
Mato Ostojić
Vidak Otović
Rogeri de Pacienza di Nardo
Vice Palunko
Milman Parry
Mićun Pavićević
Mijovio Pavlinović
Božo Peričić
Djoka Perin
Jovan L. Perović
Bogoljub Petranović
Marko Petričević
Atanasije Petrović
Martin Pletikosić
Aleksa Popović
Dušan S. Popović-Momir
Stefan Popović
Mihailo S. Profirović
Mato Projić
Filip Radičević
Ivo Rajić
Dragutin Rakovac
Mihailo St. Riznić
Branislav Rusić
Mijat Saridža
Alois Schmaus
Ćamil Sijarić
Tadija Smičiklas
Jovan L. Srećković
Ivan Stipac
Blagoje Stojadinović
Sreten Stojković
Rudolf Strohal
Omerbeg Sulejmanpašić-Despotović
Andrija Svilokos
Dobroclav Sarić
Novica Saulić
Mirko Šestić
Miloš B. Skarić
Niko Štuk
Marijan Šunjić
Djuro Šurmin
Nikola Tommaseo
Fran Tonković
Mat. Topalović
Nikola Tordinac
Ivan Trnski
Jevrem Veličković
Mijailo Viljić
Stefan Verković
Milojko Veselinović
Djuro Vijolić
Jovan Vorkapić
Vice Vodopić
Fran Vrbanić
Martin Vučković
Tatomir Vukanović
Joso Vukelić
J. M. Weiss
Dušan Zorić-Dragoš
Jovan Dj. Zorić
Vid Žunjić
Ivan Žuvela

In addition to the collections formed by the foregoing persons, there are also a few valuable elder manuscript collections whose makers are uncertain or unknown. Among these are the Balović, Mazarović, and so-called Zmajević mss. of Perast, the famous "Popijevke slovinske" (signature R. 4091 in the University Library, Zagreb), and the two "Zagreb" mss. (signatures 638// IV.a. 30 and 641// I.b. 80 in the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts), as well as the Erlangen Manuscript and the Ohmućević ms. (Dubrovnik).

The collection of oral traditional epics in the Slavic-speaking Balkans began in and about the then highly Italianate Adriatic littoral and did not penetrate into the inner fastnesses of Slavic Macedonia and Bulgaria until the nineteenth century. A number of the latter-day collectors of Serbo-Croatian texts also collected in Slavic Macedonia or Bulgaria, or both. The following list indicates most of the collectors in Slavic Macedonia and Bulgaria whose

collections remain important resources for the modern student of this poetry, without repeating names already included in the foregoing list of the collectors of Serbo-Croatian texts:

Bulgarian and Macedonian

Božan Angelov
Mixail Arnaudov
Ivan A. Bogoev (Bogorov)
G. P. Bojadžiev
S. Iv. Bojanov
Nikolaj Bončev
Zlata Cicelkova-Božkova
D. Ćitakov
Auguste Dozan
Marija Enjuva
Kozma Galičničeski
Najden Gerov
N. Xadži Gerovič
Ivan Gintolov
Vasil Ikonomov
Mixail Ilčinkov
I. Ivanov
Rajna Kacarova
Nikola St. Kara-Nikolov
L. Karavelov
P. Karavelov
N. D. Katranov
Genčo Keremidziev
Evgenija Xadži Gergeva Kisimova
Zaxari Knjaževski
Petŭr Sveštenik Ljubenov
Mara Mixajlova
D. Mitrev
Pančo Mixajlov
Ivan Murinkov
Simeon L. Podbalkanski
Elenka N. Popova
Rajno Popovič
Krste Popovo
Georgi S. Rakovski
Petŭr Račov Slavejkov
A. P. Stoilov
Vasil Stoin
K. A. Šapkarev
Georgi Teoxarov
X. Vakarelski
St. Vatev
Jurij Iv. Venelin
Stojan Vezenkov
At. V. Vŭrbanski
Panajot Xitov
Dobri Xristov
P. E. Zdravevski
K. P. Žinzifov

The historical accident of the Slovenes' geographic contiguity, and subsequent political community, with other Slavic-speaking peoples of the Balkans whose dialects have been host to the oral epic tradition has sometimes encouraged them, as a matter of ethnic pride, also to claim possession of an oral epos in some sense. Such a claim however deforms the definition of epos beyond much practical utility, and learned Slovenes themselves do not conventionally use the word to describe what they properly prefer to call simply "narrative songs" (*pripovedne pesmi*), occasionally with the additional epithet "heroic" (*junaške*). Since the collected relics of such poetry from Slovenian tradition are both very short (never exceeding two hundred verses in any text) and notably exiguous in number, publishing them has been easier and has reached a much more comprehensive stage than for any other region of the Slavic Balkans. Consequently a reader can conveniently consult virtually all that there is to consult of this sort from Slovenia in two very serviceable publications (Štrekelj 1895 and Kumer et al. 1970).

Finite though the number of surviving collections is, on average they are big, making the sum of the collected textual evidence from the South Slavic oral epic tradition truly enormous. In all of its variety, the corpus as a whole is indeed quite beyond the possible scope of any one person's knowledge, and it is so dispersed as to be, practically speaking, inaccessible *in toto* to anyone.

Historically, a common way of setting bearable limits upon what one has considered it necessary to know in order to function as an analyst of the tradition has been to restrict one's purview to texts of a particular ethnic or regional provenance: texts from Orthodox Serbs, or from Moslems in Bosnia and Hercegovina, from Dalmatian Catholics, or Muslim Bulgars, and so forth. There have of course often been other motives as well for this balkanizing tendency in the treatment of the epos, but regardless of its several causes and their relative weights, no other single factor has by itself been so obstructive to the advancement of understanding about the South Slavic tradition as this one has.

Not so blatantly obvious, but a close second to ethnic bias as a prevailing cause of confusion has been the problem of accuracy in the recording and even more in the publishing of texts. No technique was ever devised by anyone in the entire five-hundred-year history of the collecting that would assure consistent perfection in the translation of this poetry from sound-waves to alphabetical characters on paper. With no exceptions whatever, *some* element of prejudice on the part of collectors and their helpers as to what the poetry *should* be has crept into the actual fixing of it in its finally fossilized textual form. In consequence, the very first requirement for every analyst of the South Slavic oral epos is to determine what parts of the recorded corpus are reliable, or to what extent they may be unreliable, for every *other* analytical purpose. In actual practice therefore, due care with regard to the qualities of texts—in what ways they do or do not mirror the actual tradition—sets much more rigorous and realistic limits upon what part of the extant corpus may properly be used for any particular analytical task than mere ethnic preferences ever did. The only known method for judging what texts are good reflections of tradition, and which are not, derives in the universal experience of all the cognoscenti from knowing the tradition directly, not merely in its texts, and how this indispensable source of practical wisdom can possibly be

replaced now that the tradition has finally died is a new problem of great magnitude for this field of learning.

Collectors' biases have distorted their collections, but editors' interventions have often falsified published texts outright. Thus, the mere fact that an editor of whatever excellence has previously worked to establish authoritative texts upon a given collection has rarely meant that published texts were even as reliable as the originals were before editing took place. No fault *per se* of editors in the Slavic Balkans was to blame, for they were many of them quite as good as their best western European counterparts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The fault has been in the very idea—the western European idea, indeed—of *Textkritik* and editing in accord with it: to establish from flawed epigonic copies and conflation a perfect original text in all its self-explanatory pristine clarity as it must have been before later folly and error obscured it. The very idea and motivation of such editing ran foul of the fundamental difference between literature and the tradition, which, utterly unlike literature, had no original at all, perfect or otherwise, and derived its authority from another kind of source, the nature of which was not even suspected by anyone until a mere fifty years before the final extinction of the South Slavic tradition.

So throughout the entire half-millennium of the collecting activity, editors have with only rare exceptions assumed not only the license but indeed have felt the positive responsibility to "correct" texts so as to render them better literature than they appeared to be in their original, true oral traditional form. The usual result of such tampering has been neither durable literature nor a good representation of the tradition. The many ways in which deliberate meddling with texts has distorted the record of the tradition are almost too many to name, and they infest every moment of the record from its very beginning. Indeed, the very first text in the entire record is a revealing case in point, inasmuch as it vividly displays the most irresistible of all motives for editorial tampering: the editor's inability in some respect to understand his text *unless* he alters it. In this aspect more than any other the texts of an oral epic tradition do not tolerate treatment as though they were literature. For entirely unlike literary texts, epics in an oral tradition are never, nor do they ever need to be, either self-explanatory or wholly intelligible in and of themselves. In the tradition that made them, they were never more than the flitting shadows of the thought which they

transiently expressed, and which none of them ever could or would attempt to replicate completely. Every line of such poetry means what it meant in a hundred other places at other times in other men's tellings; but shear it away from that potent system of resonance with its own past—a past as old as time itself—and while it will still mean *something,* its power to convey meaning is inevitably crippled. Every editor recognizes the worst instances of such crippling and sees how they blemish the poem under his editorial treatment, but too often the editorial prostheses are a cure worse than the ailment, because, while they are only meant to correct the "awkward," literarily unacceptable features of a text, in doing that they also commonly obliterate all trace of the corrected text's vital connections with the other elements elsewhere in the tradition that originally give it a great part of its meaning.

The central principle involved here, namely that *no text from the oral tradition is an entity in its own right nor intelligible apart from the rest of the tradition,* is well illustrated by the case of what is supposedly the very first text in the collected record of the South Slavic oral epos. The text in question is very short, but the circumstances of its collection are extraordinarily well documented. Those circumstances are indeed much more fully recorded in this instance than for any text of comparable length in any manuscript collection from any other time during the past half-millennium.

The poem was recorded, very badly, by an Italian poetaster, Rogeri de Pacienza di Nardo, on the afternoon of Thursday, June 1, 1497, in the small southern Italian town of Gioia del Colle in what is now known as the province of Puglia. The occasion was a royal procession by the newly crowned Queen Consort of Naples, Isabella del Balzo, from her estate in the district of Lecce to the east toward Naples in the west by way of Taranto. As part of the festivities marking her pause at Gioia del Colle, the local nobility arranged for Isabella and her numerous retinue (among whom Rogeri de Pacienza was one) to be entertained with song and dance performed, as it happened, by a company of thirty or more "Slav" colonists of that vicinity. Besides a fragment of their oral poetry, Rogeri de Pacienza also noted the names of twenty-eight of the performers, a number of which are unmistakeably Serbian (Vukašin, Raško, Vukosava, etc.). De Pacienza's function in the Queen Consort's company was to record in poetry all the personages and events connected with her royal progress to Naples, which occupied nearly five months' time, from mid-May to 15

October, 1497. This he did in the form of an epic of nearly eight thousand Italian verses dedicated to Isabella under the title "The Balziad" *(Lo Balzino)*, into which he inserted many snatches and tags and oratorical effusions that occurred during the royal progress, of which the "Slavic" poem heard in Gioia del Colle was only one. Miroslav Pantić, a Serbian scholar particularly of the literature of the Dalmatian Renaissance and Baroque, has admirably gathered and reported the historical facts surrounding this poetic incident, and has attempted his own reconstruction of the Serbian text from Rogeri de Pacienza's bad writing (Pantić 1977).

Following the *editio princeps* of "Lo Balzino" (Marti 1977), Pantić worked from the following lines in fifteenth-century Italian orthography, which cannot be taken as an intact text in any known or positable Slavic dialect:

> Orauias natgradum smereuo nit core
> nichiasce snime gouorithi nego Jamco
> goiuoda gouorasce istmize molimtise
> orle sidi maolonisce dastobogme
> progouoru bigomte bratta zimaiu
> pogi dosmederesche dasmole slauono
> mo despostu damosposti istamice
> smederesche Jacomi bopomoste
> Jslaui dispot pusti Jsmederesche
> tamice Jatechul napitati seruene
> creucze turesche bellocatela vitesco
> cha

Adding something to this text in seventeen places (I show his additions below by underscoring), subtracting something in seven places (I show his omissions in brackets), and interpreting the orthography differently from place to place twenty times so as to standardize the text phonetically (I show such interpretations in italics), Professor Pantić reconstructed the text as follows, with ten lines instead of Rogeri's twelve:

> Ora<u>o</u> <u>se</u> vijaš<u>e</u> na*d* grad*o*m Sme<u>de</u>rovo<u>m</u>.
> Nitkore n*e* ćaše s n<u>j</u>ime govorit[h]i,
> nego Ja*n*ko *v*ojvoda govoraše iz t<u>a</u>m<u>n</u>ice:
> "Molim ti se, orle, sidi ma[o]lo niže
> da s tobome progovoru: B*o*gom te brat[t]a *j*imaju
> podji do smedere<u>v</u>ske <u>gospode</u> da s' mole

slav[o]nom*u* despo[s]tu da m' o<u>t</u>[s]p*u*sti iz tam<u>n</u>ice
smedere<u>v</u>ske;
i ako mi Bo<u>g</u> pomo<u>ž</u>e i slav<u>n</u>i d*e*spot pusti
i<u>z</u> smedere<u>v</u>ske tam<u>n</u>ice, ja to *ć*u[i] napitati
*ć*rvene krvce ture*ć*ke, bel[l]o*g*a tela vite*š*ko*g*a."

I translate:

An eagle circled over Smederevo city.
No one desired to speak to it
Save only Yanko, leader of troops, who spoke to it
from (where he lay in) prison:
"I pray thee, eagle, descend a little lower,
So that I may talk to thee: I have thee (as my) brother;
Get thee to the noble folk of Smederevo, let them beseech
The famous despot to set me free from Smederevo prison;
And if God aids me and the famous despot sets (me) free
From Smederevo prison, I shall feed thee
Crimson Turkish blood, white flesh of mounted warriors."

Now this is unquestionably a great improvement upon the error-ridden original notation by Rogeri de Pacienza, who by his own admission knew no Slavic and understood not a word of what he had recorded. How he recorded the poem is unknown; whether by his own hand as it was sung, or from a dictation repeated after the actual singing, or with the help of some other literate person who perhaps understood more of this foreign language than did Rogeri. What is clearer is who sang the poem; de Pacienza uses the third person plural in his Italian description of the scene, and says moreover that the whole company of men and women, children and adults alike, sang the song together at the top of their voices *as they danced* ("saltando como caprii girava et insiem tal parol cantava"). Professor Pantić has helped to clarify at least the sense of what they were singing, which Rogeri de Pacienza did not know at all.

In another aspect of the poem however, the fifteenth-century Italian poet, who was at least very accustomed to counting syllables, may have understood something about the little Slavic dance-song which Professor Pantić did not observe. Rogeri's *division* of the lines from one another is impossible as he recorded them; Pantić no doubt correctly divided all of the first four differently. Yet Rogeri heard a syllabic meter in the Slavic poem, and wrote it accordingly even though he had to divide the lines strangely in order to compensate for the absence of words which he

had missed. For bad as they are linguistically, metrically Rogeri de Pacienza's lines are quite regular: no line varies by more than one syllable of length more or less than the length of the line before or after it, thus:

(1) 13
(2) 13
(3) 14
(4) 13
(5) 12
(6) 13
(7) 12
(8) 12
(9) 12
(10) 13
(11) 13

Professor Pantić's reconstruction is radically different in this respect:

(1) 14
(2) 12
(3) 15
(4) 12
(5) 16
(6) 10
(7) 18
(8) 15
(9) 15
(10) 17

For Professor Pantić, the explanation for this great metrical irregularity (and for much else that is peculiar about the poem as well) is to say that it is a *bugaršti*ca, i.e., a kind of South Slavic oral traditional epic of which several dozen manuscript and printed examples have survived associated with various dates between the mid-sixteenth and mid-eighteenth centuries. It is, however, a form of epic which no one has reported from any live singer since more than two hundred years ago, by which time it had apparently died out. Until the recent productive attention (entirely within the last decade) to the Slavic debris in Rogeri de Pacienza's unique autograph copy of "Lo Balzino" (which is preserved in the municipal library in Perugia), there was no known association of the *bugaršti*ca-tradition with any Serbian singer, and the tradition itself was known to have existed only on the eastern littoral of the Adriatic Sea.

But is the little dance-song from 1497 really an epic *bugaršti*ca? Two aspects of it speak decisively against any such notion: the one is metrical, as already observed (more concerning it hereafter), and the other is the fact that never in five hundred years, with hundreds of collectors collecting millions of lines from the tradition—never has there ever been a single report of oral

epos being sung by a group of men, women, and children whilst leaping about "like goats" (*come caprii*) in a strenuous dance such as that in Gioia del Colle. The very idea is ludicrous on its face, for it supposes what is self-evidently a physical impossibility. Short dance-songs of a few lines' length have of course been reported in teeming abundance everywhere in the Slavic Balkans, not only where epic has been found but also where it has not, and there is a long-established name for this different *genre*, which, unlike epos, has indeed been universally known and sung by people of both sexes and of every age group that is able to dance. Such a song is called a *poskočica* in Serbian (meaning literally a "jumping" or "leaping" song, from the root *skok-*/*skak-*) and by other equivalent names in the other Balkan Slavic languages. But nothing in the entire spectrum of human social kinetics is farther removed from the jumping, leaping, and sure breathlessness of the South Slavic ring-dance in all its forms than the long-winded, quietly seated, leisurely singing and listening of the oral epic tradition. On that ground alone, Rogeri de Pacienza's scrap of Slavic poetry is not, and never could have been, an epic. But even if it were metrically indistinguishable from epic, to call it epic merely for that reason would require us also to call Anacreon an epic poet just as Homer was because both composed in dactylic hexameters. This we clearly cannot do.

Having recognized that much, we are still left however with the *formal* issue that Professor Pantić has usefully posed: for if indeed it is not epic (which it certainly is not), is the little piece from Gioia del Colle nevertheless truly indistinguishable *in its form* from the epic prosody of the long-extinct *bugaršti*ca-type? This question brings us around once more to the metrical peculiarity already noted in Professor Pantić's reconstruction, and to certain other equally striking anomalies thereto related.

For the past hundred years, the academic tradition has been to say of the *bugaršti*ca-meter that it displays certain tendencies toward regularity of syllable-count without, however, being entirely confined to those tendencies. In general, the earlier the date of such texts, the more frequent is the irregularity, and the later the date, the stricter the regularity.

The regularity consists in a hierarchy of features with a descending order of significance. The first and most consistently observed feature is division of the "line" into hemistichs by a word-boundary falling approximately mid-way in the line, a

juncture which may consequently be called a medial caesura, provided it be understood that the term does not necessarily imply any audible pause in delivery of the line as for inhalation, about which nothing is known with certainty. The first hemistich, the one before the medial caesura, when it is regular, is further divisible at a word boundary within it into two syllabically measured cola, either 4 + 3 or 4 + 4.

The second hemistich similarly, when it is regular, consists of either 4 + 4 or 5 + 3 ≃ 3 + 5. Thus, *two different placements of word-boundaries were widely practiced in each hemistich*, of which one was dominant and the other a recessive or secondary alternative in each half-line:

Dominant schema: 4 + 3 // 4 + 4

Recessive schema: 4+ 4 // 5+ 3 ≃ 3+ 5

So, for example,

(4 + 3) Ma se bješe / žalostan // s grešnom dušom /
razd'jelio (4 + 4)
So the miserable wretch gave up his sinful ghost

shows the dominant schemas in both hemistichs, while

(4 + 3) Bez glave je / ostavi // usred zelene / planine (5 + 3)
And having beheaded her he left her there in that green
mountain wilderness

shows the dominant schema in the first hemistich, and the recessive one in the second hemistich. Essentially the same construction also produced the line

(4 + 3) Kad je došla / maladjahna // prid starca / despota
Djurdja (3 + 5)
But when, charming young creature that she was, she came
before the old man, Despot George

The recessive schema in the first hemistich and the dominant one in the second hemistich abolish the usual asymmetry of the line, and yield lines in which the first and second hemistichs are completely interchangeable:

(4 + 4) Otidoše / govoriti // vrli Turci / Mostarani (4 + 4)
The fearsome Turks from Mostar then began to speak

Finally, there is the infrequent but still often enough attested construction with the recessive schemas in both hemistichs:

(4 + 4) Jutro rano / podranile // budimske / mlade djevojke (3 + 5)
The young maids of Buda rose early on the morn

Besides the foregoing metrical components of the *bugaršti*ca-form, there were also cadential refrains which at least

some of the *bugaršti*ca-singers added to their lines from time to time *ad libidinem.* These refrains did not conform metrically to any of the habitual schemas of either cola or hemistichs, but were *sui generis*. They varied in length from four to six syllables, and tended to occur (when they occurred at all) as a kind of pause after some *even number* of lines: sometimes two, occasionally four, less commonly six or eight, and in a few instances at the end of "runs" as long as twelve lines. Examples are, closing a quatrain:

(4 + 3) A sad mu je / od rana // i bolesti / potamnjelo, (4 + 4)
A punice moja (6)
But now it is grown ashen by reason of his sickness and
his wounds, O mother-in-law of mine

And closing a couplet:

(4 + 3) Vino da mi / popiješ // pehar da ti / na dar bude (4 + 4)
Moj Šajnoviću (6)
So the wine and keep the cup as apophoreton,
My good man Shainovich

And closing a sextain:

(4 + 3) A on mi se / junakom // tihim mukom / ujimaše (4 + 4)
Radosave ((4)
Though full of silent sorrow, he betook himself away in
manly wise, did Radosav

It should be noted too that the number of syllables in the refrain had no dependency on the number of lines in the stanza which it closed. Of the three metrical varieties (four, five, or six syllables), the six-syllable refrain was much the most frequent.

Now in an oral epic tradition it is inevitable—since human beings make it and not automata—that singers sometimes compose "bad" lines. In fact, the more fluently and rapidly a singer composes, the more certain it is that he will eventually produce faulty lines; and the more he sings, the more they accumulate in his texts. The process of dictation, which is slower than singing, reduces the total number of bad lines, but by no means eliminates them. In singing, a bard often simply "aborts" a bad line, leaving it unfinished. If he is aware of having spoken confusedly (for, having his mind concentrated upon what comes next in his story, he perhaps will not even notice), he may elect to make the line over again "correctly" (i.e., in the habitual way), or else—it is truly unpredictable—he may simply leave it in its partly formed and imperfect state and pass on to the next thought. But on the other hand he sometimes also forms unusual lines completely, quite as though there were nothing exceptional about them, and never so

much as notices their unconventional features. Common instances of this kind include both hypometricisms and hypermetricisms, when a singer unwittingly "omits" something (which, if confronted with the fact, he may firmly believe and insist he has actually said) and so produces a "short" line; or else he adds something, often by conflating similar or related formulas into an unconventionally expanded line, which will typically contain all the expected metrical units and some surplus of others in addition. These, when they have been fossilized by writing, become the mysterious "long" lines that may puzzle metricians but never even enter the singer's consciousness as somehow different from all his other lines. For traditional epic singing is a biological process, not capable of recursive inspection by those whose process it is, and like every other biological process it is not perfectly efficient and never completely conforms to rules. In fact it *has* no rules, but only tendencies, and these mere tendencies are all that we can properly invoke in speaking about the "meter" of an oral epic tradition.

Consequently *there is no more certain indication of intervention in a text by a literary editor, regardless of whether the text was dictated or actually recorded as sung, than the complete absence in it of prosodic "irregularities*," for there never was an oral traditional text of any length and substance that was not endowed with a certain share of such irregularities at birth. This is no less true of the *bugaršice* than of any other form of oral epos.

Once a singer in the *bugaršica*-tradition was fluent in making first and second hemistichs of both the dominant and recessive kinds, it was effortlessly easy for him by negligible inversions of word-order to anticipate in a first hemistich, for example, some part of what otherwise would be second-hemistichic phrasing, and to substitute in the place of an anticipated phrase that part of the first hemistich which the anticipated words would supplant. Thus, instead of

(4 + 3) *I sa mnome / ni plinca // nije veće / rasdilio[1] (4 + 4)
Nor shared booty with me anymore

which would conform perfectly to the dominant traditional metrical schemes in both half-lines, the line which we *actually* have in the sixteenth-century text is

(4 + 4) I sa mnome / nije veće // ni plinca / rasdilijo (3 + 4)
Nor anymore with me shared booty

Such lines show us incidentally that syllable-count stood much higher in the hierarchy of conventional metrical tendencies than did the placement of accents (which was chiefly trochaic in this tradition, just as in the tradition of the shorter, ten-syllable lines).

If, in analyzing such a verse as this, one is guided by literary notions of metrics, it will seem highly irregular, for clearly constructions of 4 + 4 // 3 + 4 are random deviations from the metrical norms of the *bugaršice*; yet at the same time such lines are neither so utterly rare nor so artless as to be attributable either to scribal error or to poetic incompetence in their makers. Many an analyst of the *bugaršice* has been driven by such appearances of metrical and other prosodic lawlessness to invent cabbalistically mysterious (and completely imaginary) invisible supra-segmental accentual forces as explanation for such lines, or else to abandon all faith in any governing prosodic forces whatever and to declare that the *bugaršice* were simply an early kind of free verse. Nothing could be farther from the truth. It is indeed extremely difficult—perhaps even impossible—by exercises in isolated cudgeling of one's own brain to conceive of how such poetic mutations can happen. One must pass many attentive hours listening closely to how the oral epic bard actually makes his lines (before any editor gets at them) in order to recognize, for example, the powerful metrically refractive force of such habits as word-order inversion, which is very common in all forms of the South Slavic oral epos.

Another easy and (from the traditional point of view) perfectly "lawful" process whereby the *bugaršice*-singers made "abnormal" lines was by first composing a first hemistich and a second hemistich of the usual kinds to form a line of a common type, but then, rather than making a new first hemistich at the head of the next whole line, enchaining instead an additional series of two or more further second hemistichs, with the single initial first hemistich of the ordinary kind thus made to stand as a sort of *incipit* to a whole couplet or more of multiple lines, of which all but the first line would appear to be "irregular" in meter. Thus we find in the manuscripts such unusual "first hemistichs" (which would however be, and are in fact, perfectly ordinary *second* hemistichs) as the following:

(5 + 3) više košulje / nosaše // vezenu l'jepu / mahramu (5 + 3)
Over the shirtdress wore a lovely 'broidered shawl

or again

(5 + 3) I još mu ide / djevojka // ove r'ječi / govoriti (4 + 4)
These were the words the maiden said to him again

It is quite likely moreover that the basic *recessive* type of first hemistich (4 + 4) actually arose in the first place in just this manner; and quite naturally 4 + 4 is much more frequent than 5 + 3 (≃ 3 + 5) as an alternative to 4 + 3 in first hemistichs for the same reason that 4 + 4 is more frequent than 5 + 3 (≃ 3 + 5) also in the second hemistich itself.

Consequently, we are surely right to recognize a fundamental functional difference between the dominant schema (4 + 3) and the recessive schema (4 + 4) in first hemistichs: the shorter, seven-syllable schema, with its habitual heroic feminine caesura distinguishing it from *all* other types of hemistich, had the basic character of an *incipit,* while 4 + 4 and 5 + 3 or 3 + 5 were fundamentally mechanisms for the adding of more phrases to a poetic period that was already in progress.

Academic confusion about the meter of the *bugaršice*-tradition has persisted for more than a century because the basic metrical unit of that tradition has heretofore always been supposed to be the entire *bugaršica*-line as written in the manuscripts. But as we have now seen, such confusion dissolves the moment one recognizes the *half*-line, rather than the whole line, as the basic rhythmic determinant in the *bugaršica*, for all half-lines are formed by one permutation or another of only three simple, basic metrical components, two of which were obligatory and one optional. Those three components were, namely: 1) an incipital meter - - - - / - - - //; 2) an octosyllabic continuative meter composed of two either symmetrical or asymmetrical cola; and 3) an optional explicital meter, either a hexasyllable or a pentasyllable, divided into two or three either symmetrical or asymmetrical cola.

It is further understood that all three of these metrical systems were fundamentally syllabic in character, i.e., they were based upon the fundamental vocalism of the language and not upon any system of accentual features at either the segmental or supra-segmental level. That certain accentual regularities also occur in the *bugaršice* is not disputed; it is only that they have no significance for metrical analysis, since they are only the incidental consequences and not the causes of the syllabic

regularity.

To recapitulate this entire matter succinctly therefore: the *bugaršice*-singer systematically used

-To begin, seven syllables in two strictly defined cola;

-To continue, eight syllables with any one of three arrangements of cola;

[-To conclude, either five or six syllables with caesura(s) according to one of the following patterns:

- / - - -(-)
- - / - - -
- - - / - - -
(-) - - - / - -
- / - - - / - -
- - / - - / - -]

Now it is true that the *bugaršica* as a form of epos disappeared from the oral tradition two hundred years ago at least, as it would seem from such evidence of it as survives in written records. Yet the thing that has disappeared from tradition is only the mirage of the long line, which was however, metrically speaking, never really a "long line" at all, but only a couplet of lines, each of which was formed according to one of the rhythmic schemes outlined above. For it so happens that all of the metrical forms involved in the composition of the *bugaršice* have survived robustly in the *oral lyric tradition* of the Slavic Balkans right down to our own time; only the habit of conflating the three meters into long lines has faded from tradition.

Each of the incipital and continuative meters that were "combined" to make *bugaršice* set the rhythm to which whole songs of single meter were sung widely in the Serbo-Croatian-speaking territory during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The same seven-syllable arrangement found as the *incipits* of *bugaršica*-lines (- - - - / - - -) gave the measure to such songs as these:

Pasla moma / jelenke,
na vodu ih / navraća.
Jelenci joj / predjoše,
al' ne može / ta moma.
Osvrte se / jelenak,
Uze momu / na roge,
pak je hit / na brege.
Gde je moma / padnula,

to je rasla / brekinja.
K njoj dohode / čobani:
potsjekoše / brekinju,
od nje prave / svirale,
u svirale / govore:
"Predi, momo, / darove!" (Vu 244)[2]

A lass was pasturing a drove of stags
And led them to a stream.
All the stags passed lightly o'er,
But the lass alas could not.
One of the stags therefore turned back
And, catching the girl upon its horns,
Pitched her across to the farther bank.
There where the girl did fall to earth,
Just there a beam-tree grew.
Certain shepherds drawing nigh
Cut the beam-tree down
And out of it carved flutes.
But when they blew upon the flutes, this is what they said:
"Weave for us, sweet maiden, weave us
wedding-gifts!"

Stole mi se / oženi,
Uze žena / rabotna
Leb ne znaje / da mesi,
A leb znaje / da jede.
i t. d.
(Va 318)[3]

Joiner's got himself a wife,
He's married an industrious woman:
She doesn't know how to make bread,
But she knows how to eat it.
etc.

Heptasyllables of the same description alternated (i.e., formed couplets) with octosyllables (4 + 4) in innumerable songs such as the following:

1. "Šta je uzrok, / moj dragane,
Što me mladu / ne voliš?

What's the reason, oh my love,
why you don't like me, young thing that I am.

4. Ja sirota / majke nejmam,
Tajnu ljubav / otkrivam.
Being a motherless orphan, foolishly
I've betrayed the secret of my love.

5. Ćela sam ti / venac plesti
Od rumeni' / ružica,
I had meant to weave for thee a diadem
of deep red roses,

6. A sada ću / ti ga oples'
Od grkoga / pelina.
Now instead I'll weave it for thee
out of bitter wormwood.

7. U kafezu / bumbul pjeva,
Ja ga mlada / ne slušam,
A humble-bee is whirring in the lattices,
but I don't listen to it, young thing that I am,

8. Jer zbog toga, / moj dragane,
Što me mladu / ne voliš.
i t. d. (PL 50)[4]
And that, my love, is just because
you don't even like me, young thing that I am
etc.

Boga moli / mlado djaće,
Mlado djaće / Pećanče,
"Daj mi, bože, / labud-krila,
Labud-krila / da letim,
Da odletim / u Srbiju,
n.b.-> Da ja vidim / Srbijanke,
Srbijanke / devojke,
Što imaju / belo lice,
Prizrencima / groznice,
Što imaju / bele ruke,
Djakovcima / za muke,
Što imaju / alt'n čelo,
Pećancima / videlo." (Va 4)

A young deacon prayed to God,
    A young deacon of Peć:
"Give me, God, the wings of a swan,
    The wings of a swan that I might fly,
That I might fly to Serbia
To see the Serbian girls,
    The nubile girls of Serbia,
Whose faces of light complexion
    Make the lads of Prizren tremble and blush
        as though they were seized of a fever;
Whose light-skinned arms
    Are a torment to the men of Djakovica,
Whose brows of radiant gold
    Illuminate the men of Peć.

Whole songs in octosyllables (4 + 4) were very common too:

Visoko se / soko vije,
još su viša / gradu vrata:
Andja im je / kapidžija:
suncem glavu / povezala,
mesecom se / opasala,
a zvezdama / nakitila. (Vu 468)

High overhead a falcon glides,
But the city gates rise even higher.
Angie is the guardsman at the gate.
For a scarf she's tied the sun about her head,
And girded the moon about her waist,
Put on the stars for jewelry.

"Sad moj dragi / kulu gradi,
Oko kule / lozu sadi.
Hoće mene / da prevari.
Neka gradi, / neka sadi,
Neće mene / prevariti.
Sedam sam hi / prevarila,
Sve begova / Tanovića,
I *j*osmoga / Fazlagića. (PL 2)

My lover is building himself a house
And planting vines about it,
Hoping thus to catch me.
Let him build and let him plant,
He'll never take me in.
For I have cozened seven beys ere this,
All the Tanovići,
And an eighth one too, named Fazlagić.

Octosyllables with asymmetrical cola (5 + 3 ≃ 3 + 5 [3 + 2 + 3]) were quite as common as the symmetrically divided type; thus, 5 + 3:

Veseo Pavle / na divan,
-> a neveseo / s divana.[5]
Išeta pred njeg' / Jelena
Jelena, sestra / rodjena,
da bratu konja / privati;
bratac joj Pavle / govori:
-> "Tamo, potamo, / Jelena,
Jelena, sestro / rodjena!"
Jelena bratu / govori:
"Tako ti boga, / mlad Pavle,
mlad Pavle, brate / rodjeni!
-> o čem gospoda / divane?"
-> "0 čem gospoda / divane,
-> Već o tebika, / Jelena,
. . .
-> izdalek' joj se / ukloni,
-> izbliza joj se / pokloni,
i t. d. (Vu 746)

Paul went to the conclave in high spirits,
But returned from it dejected.
Helen came forth to meet him there,
Helen, his very own sister,
To catch his horse's bridle.
Paul, her brother, said to her:
"Helen, stand aside,
Helen, my very own sister."
Helen said to her brother, said she:

"I conjure thee by God, young Paul,
Young Paul, my very own brother:
What did the lords discuss?"
"What the lords discussed
Was nothing, Helen, else than you."
He bowed to her at a distance,
And again when he drew nigh.
etc.

And 3 + 2 + 3:

Kol'ka je / noćca / noćašnja,
svu noć ja / zaspat / ne mogo
slušajuć / kolo / i pesme.
U kolu / moja / dragana,
sve moje / pesme / ispeva.
Digo se, / odo / u kolo,
ali se / kolo / raspusti.
Sve drago / s dragim / zaspalo,
a moja / draga / nasamo,
metnula / kamen / pod glavu.
i t. d. (Vu 315)

All the long night through
I could not fall asleep
For listing to the songs and dance.
The one I love was in the dance
And singing all my songs,
And so at last I rose and gat me to the dance,
But no sooner had I come than it dispersed.
Sweethearts everywhere about were falling asleep
together;
Mine alone amongst them all slept by herself
With only a stone beneath her head to serve her
for a pillow.
etc.

Again, in the nineteenth- and twentieth-century collections of oral traditional melic poetry, octosyllables (but not heptasyllables) are sometimes followed by five- or six-syllable refrains as in the *bugaršice*. Sometimes pentasyllabic refrains followed each octosyllable of a song, producing asymmetrical couplets, each consisting

of a hexasyllable and a pentasyllable; collectors have often interpreted these as asymmetrically divided tridecasyllables, thus:

Ranio sam / jutros rano,
Rano pred zore, [repeated]
Susreo sam / devojčicu
bregom šetaše.
Ja gu reko: / "Dobro jutro,
Dobra devojko!"
Ona mene / odgovara
Tužno, žalosno:
"Mani me se, / ludo mlado,
Ja sam žalosna,
i t. d. (Va 141)

Early in the morning I rose up,
Early before the dawn,
And met a darling little girl
Strolling along the slope.
"Good maid, good morning," I said to her.
Sad, forlorn, she answered me again:
"Silly young man, leave me alone,
For I am so forlorn,
etc.

1. Na prestolju / sultan sjedi, // Abdulah Džemil,
   A do njega / mlad vezire, // Abdul Alidah.
2. "O Boga ti, / mlade vezire, // amana ti tvog,
   Ko ti dade / zlatne ključe // od harema mog?"
3. "Dala mi je / tvoja seja, // i poljupca dva,
   A do zore / što bijaše, // ni sam ne znam ja!"
   i t. d. (PL 42 B)

The Sultan sat upon his throne, Ábdulláh Jamíl,
And next him sat a young vizier, Ábdul Álidáh.
"I conjure thee, thou young vizier, by thy most sacred faith,
Who is it hath given thee the golden keys of my harém?"
"'Twas thine own sister gave them me, and with them kisses twain,

And then til dawn what happened more I myself know
not!"
etc.

But elsewhere, the same pentasyllables follow only some of the octosyllables, and were actually repeated as true refrains:

Sinoć moma / dovedena,
malo večera,
malo večera:
četir' patke, / tri goluba,
dvije tice / jarebice,
jednu ticu / prepelicu,
ticu gospodsku,
ticu gospodsku. (Vu 708)

Last night they brought the new bride home,
And little did she sup,
And little did she sup:
Four ducks, three doves,
Two partridges,
And one small quail,
A regal little bird,
A regal little bird.

Hexasyllabic refrains relate in precisely the same way to the same kind of octosyllables:

Imam muža / velikoga,
jadna ja, sirota!
i t. d. (Va 131)

My husband, he is huge,
Oh woe is me, poor orphan
that I am!
etc.

Vino pije / Dojčin Petar,
Varadinski ban,
i t. d. (Va 89)

Peter Weanling drank his wine,
Prince of Varadin
etc.

Finally, we must note also the repeatedly documented presence in the octosyllabic melic tradition during the last two centuries of specifically dance-songs about the same Janko who appears in the fragment from Gioia del Colle. *These are uniformly short songs, epic neither in meter nor in substance*; songs of a shortness both in the meter itself and in the number of lines that is well suited to accompany the ring-dance, as the collector of the following text explicitly said was its actual function ("U Risnu pjevaju momci igrajući u kolu"):

Šator penje Ugrin Janko
ukraj Save, vode ladne,
na vilino igralište,
na junačko razbojište
i na vučje vijalište.
Dok eto ti b'jela vila,
Ugrin-Janku govorila:
"Hod' otole, Ugrin-Janko,
Ne penji mi šator tudar!
Ako zapeh str'jele moje,
ustr'jeliću tebe, Janko."
Janko vili odgovara:
"Ne bojim se tebe, vilo,
dok su mene dva sestrića:
ban Sekule s Mijailom."
U to doba ban Sekule,
b'jelu vilu ufatio,
pak je vodi ujku svome,
ujku svome Ugrin-Janku.
Bogom kumi b'jela vila,
bogom kumi ban-Sekula:
"Bogom brate, ban-Sekule,
ne vodi me ujku tvome,
ujku tvome Ugrin-Janku!
Do tri ću ti bilja kazat:
prvo ću ti bilje kazat—
da ti ljuba rodi sina;
drugo ću ti bilje kazat—

da ti sablja s'eče Turke;
treće ću ti bilje kazat—
da si stiman u družinu."
Sekul vili odgovara:
"Luda li si, b'jela vilo!
Bila zdrava glava moja,
rodiće mi ljuba sina.
Bila krepka miška moja,
sjeći će mi sablja Turke.
Bio sobom junak dobar,
biću stiman u družinu."
On odvede b'jelu vilu,
darova je ujku svome.

(Vu 266)

*

Yanko Ugrin pitched his tent
Beside the Sava's cooling stream,
Upon the *vilas'* dancing floor,
Upon the warriors' dueling ground,
Upon the howling place of wolves.
No sooner done than down there came a *vila*
all in white,
Who spoke to Yanko Ugrin thus:
"Yanko Ugrin, get thee gone!
Pitch no tent upon my ground, for fear you
anger me,
Lest I be moved to nock my shafts
And shoot thee dead, O Yanko!"
Yanko answered the *vila* thus:
"I have no fear of thee, *vila*,
Whilst my two nephews stand by me,
Prince Sekula and Michaël."
Forthwith then Prince Sekula
Captured the *vila* all in white,
And led her to his uncle,
His uncle Yanko Ugrin.
The leuconymph called God to witness
And Prince Sekula too:
"I conjure thee by God, Prince Sekula, as if
thou wert my brother,

Give me not to be thine uncle's perquisite,
Thine uncle Yanko Ugrin's thing!
Oh do but spare me this, and I'll show thee
the virtues of three herbs.
The first herb that I'll show thee
Will make thy wife bear thee a son.
The second herb that I'll show thee
Will make thy sword cut down all Turks.
The third herb that I'll show thee
Will make thee loved of all thy company."
But Sekula answered the nymph again:
"Silly creature, leuconymph!
And I be well, I do not doubt
My wife shall bear a son.
Let but my biceps keep their wonted
hardness,
My sword will cut down Turks.
And if I be, as is my wont, a goodly
warrior,
My company will honor me."
And so he took the leuconymph
And gave her to his uncle.

Having assembled the foregoing information, we are now able knowledgeably to evaluate the fragment from Gioia del Colle, together with Professor Pantić's reconstruction of it.

I proceed from my earlier observation that what were written in the manuscript collections of *bugaršice*[6] as whole lines were in reality couplets, and that the single lines of the couplets, or hemistichs of the lines as they appear in the manuscripts, represent the actual metrical bases of this poetry. For the sake of graphic clarity, I therefore systematically divide the couplets, while recognizing that undoubtedly there was no voice-pause between the two lines of each couplet in the oral *bugaršica*-tradition, just as there was no such pause either in the more recently collected oral traditional poetry when it was sung in couplets.

Pantić reconstructs the first line from Gioia del Colle as:

(4 + 3) Orao se / vijaše
An eagle circled

This is good oral traditional diction, and metrical, and I agree with

it, while making two observations. First, Pantić has had to restore almost half the vocalism of the line: three vowels out of seven, which Rogeri de Pacienza did not write. Secondly, the particular vowels which Rogeri omitted occur in precisely the weakest parts of the line from the accentual point of view. Although accent was not a metrical generator in this tradition, it did obviously play a great part in determining what a foreigner would and would not clearly hear and record of this strange language in its even stranger sung traditional poetic form. We shall accordingly be obliged to restore more than Pantić has conservatively wanted to add to Rogeri's text, but shall find when we have properly done so that in every respect—meter, diction, and meaning—the fragment from Gioia del Colle is both much more intelligible and more familiar in kind than too conservative a reconstruction makes it seem.

Pantić's second (half-) line reads

(3 + 4) na*d* grad*o*m Smederevom
over Smederevo city

This greatly improves Rogeri's writing, while incidentally restoring an accentually weak antepenultimate syllable. But the line is still not as sung either in meter or in diction. The first colon is short by one syllable, which we must no doubt also expect to have lost from an accentually weak position. What that syllable must be is shown by many lines of the true *bugaršice* from later manuscripts, as for example

Prvi glas mu dopade // od kralja od / ugarskoga
A on Djurdju despote // na Janka na / vojevodu
Pak mi podji, moj sinu, // u cara u / čestitoga
The first news he had of it was from the king of Hungary
And so he came to Despot George for Yanko Voivode's sake
Go thou, my son, to the honorable emperor

The tendency to reduplicate the preposition, and thereby to form an octosyllable, was so strong indeed as sometimes even to force an elision that need not have occurred otherwise, as for example

Kad je doš'o hrabre Marko // u slavnome u / carigradu
When that valiant Marko came to famous Tsarigrad

Consequently I restore the missing preposition and read the line

(4 + 4) na*d* grad*o*m nad Smederovom.
above the city, above Smederevo

Pantić's reading of the next line,

Nitkore n*e* ćaše
no one desired

is unmetrical because too short; *incipits* were habitually of seven, not six syllables. The tense ending of the verb is obviously *-aše*, but the Italian orthography is ambiguous as to the form of the verbal root which we should understand before the ending. With the given tense-ending, the root might linguistically be either *hte-* or *hot-*. Following the Italian orthography, I assume it to be the former, as Pantić has, with the usual closing of the open root-vowel before the intervocalic *jod* (*e* > *i*), but *without* the contraction of Pantić's reading, thus: *ćijaše*. I would also accept *hoćaše*, although less willingly in view of the Italian orthography. So I read the line as a metrically regular *incipit*

(4 + 3) Nitkore ne / ćijaše
no one desired

and I observe that the Italian text supports this metrical reading quite as well as it does Pantić's meterless one.

The next line of the reconstruction,

s nj̣ime govorit[h]i
to speak with him

is again metrical and too short. But lines ending with the verb *govoriti* are very frequent in the true *bugaršice*, and are always octosyllables (4 + 4). They show us not only *where* Rogeri omitted a word (it was, as usual, in the accentually weakest part of the line, namely the last two syllables of the first colon), but also precisely *what* the omitted word is:

Tad podjose vrli Turci // sv'jetlu caru / govoriti
Hod' otole, hurjatine, // nemoj vele / govoriti
Tere ide ovako // bracu svomu / govoriti
Pak mi podje divojka // jedno jutro / govoriti
Podje majka starica // sinu Marku / govoriti
Neću za to Lazaru // ni r'ječi / progovoriti (3 + 5)
I još mi je, djevojci, // ove r'ječi govorio
A njemu je, Milošu, // ove r'ječi / govorio
Podje ti mu žalostan // ove r'ječi / govoriti

Then came the fearsome Turks to speak with
the illustrious emperor
Blackguard! Be gone, and say no more
To her brother in this wise she made to speak
Thus upon the morningtide the maid began to speak
His aged mother began to speak to her own son, Marko
Not a word shall I say of this to Lazarus
And these were the words he spake to me, pure maid
But these were the words he said to him, to Milosh
These were the words that thou, forlorn, wert about
to say

I accordingly reconstruct the line as

(4 + 4) s njime r'ječi / govoriti
To pass words with him

I follow Pantić in his reconstruction of the next line,

(4 + 3) nego Ja*n*ko / *v*ojvoda
Save only Yanko, leader of troops

except that I am not sure but what it may be a continuative rather than an incipital line and use the form of the word found in the *bugaršti*ca proper,

A on Djurdju despote na Janka na vojevodu
He, Despot George, for Yanko, leader of troops

thus:

(4 + 4) nego Ja*n*ko / *v*oj<u>e</u>voda
Save only Yanko, leader of troops

Pantić's next line is a good reconstruction, clearly supported both by Rogeri's text and by the traditional diction:

(4 + 4) govoraše iz t<u>a</u>m<u>n</u>ice
spoke from jail

The hypothesis

Molim ti se, orle
I pray thee, eagle

however, accepts Rogeri's text in defiance of the traditional diction. This line is too short by two syllables, and it is clear where they belong, although the *bugaršti*ce themselves give us little help in determining what the particular word might have been. The most frequent epithet with *orao* (eagle) in the *bugaršti*ce is *sivi* (grey), and consequently I would prefer it thus:

(4 + 4) Molim ti se, / sivi orle
I pray thee, grey eagle

Other formulations would however be equally well within the traditional diction, including perhaps

(4 + 3) Molim ti se, / moj orle
I pray thee, eagle of mine

All that can be said with certainty is that, for whatever reason, the Italian text has omitted the epithet for *orao* and consequently falsified the meter, which is in fact perfectly regular.

Again in the next line, both Rogeri and Professor Pantić have omitted a two-syllable word, once again belonging to the accentually weakest colon of the line. What exactly the word was cannot of course be known with perfect certainty, but the context drastically narrows the possibilities to some such familiar formulation as

(4 + 4) sidi <u>meni</u> / ma[o]lo niže
descend toward me a little lower

Pantić's reading of the next couplet is straightforward transliteration from the Italian orthography, with two small exceptions. For Rogeri's *bigom*, Pantić reads *bogom*, which is probably correct if what we have at this point in the Italian text is indeed just one couplet and not merely what Rogeri was able to make out and record of something that was originally longer. For no such lines as

Da s tobome progovoru.
Bogom to brata jimaju
that I may talk with thee
I have thee for my brother

are to be found anywhere in any of the other early texts. They are metrically possible, but extremely improbable in regard to diction. Although he passes over the difficulty in silence, Pantić himself has appreciated the problem, as he shows in evading any effort to punctuate the second line. For *zimaiu* he transliterates and corrects to read *jimaju*, "have," which is presumably an initially *jod*ated dialectalism for *imaju*. I would, however, rather prefer to follow the Italian orthography exactly here, on the grounds that it better reflects the familiar oral traditional poetic diction, and so to read the word as *zimaju*, which would again be a dialectalism, but from the verb *(v)zeti*, "take." Thus, "I *take* thee for my (sworn) brother" rather than "I *have* thee for my

(sworn) brother." But as first-person singular present verbs, both *jimaju* and *zimaju* are unlikely formations that are only just sufficiently possible to prevent one's throwing them out of court altogether. The greater likelihood is that a whole line or more is absent from the text at this point, and that we have only some nonsensically conflated syllabic fragments left of whatever it was that was actually sung. We depend at this point entirely on prior knowledge of later tradition for guidance. According to the traditional story-line, the prisoner must summon a messenger to carry word of his imprisonment to those whom it affects, and to set in motion the social process that will eventually liberate him. The first step in the process is for the prisoner to swear blood-brotherhood with the messenger, but that is habitually an *invitational act*, and not a mere baldfaced declaration such as *seems* to be meant according to the very straightforward, conservative reading of the text which Pantić has preferred. In the more usual invitational manner however, the line ought to read something like

bi 1' me ti / bratom / 'zimao (3 + 2 + 3)
wouldst take me for thy brother

or something of the same general sort. But if one is nevertheless to follow what Rogeri de Pacienza wrote just as it stands, then I would prefer to be at least thoroughgoing in that tendency, and to read:

(4 + 4 da s tobome / progovoru:
Bogom te brata / 'zimaju (5 + 3)
That I may have a word with thee:
I take thee for a brother.

regarding *zimaju* as an elision of *uzimaju* after the vowel-terminating *brata*.

All doubt vanishes, however, from this point onward in Rogeri's text: its final six lines are absolutely too corrupt to be taken at anything like face value. Because it is unswervingly faithful to the Italian record, Pantić's reconstruction of the sixth line produces a monstrosity in his seventh line, which is both a metrical impossibility and hopelessly disfigured by an enjambement with line six of a kind unknown to the oral tradition (whether of the *bugaršice* or otherwise). Similarly unheard-of enjambements also disqualify both the ninth and tenth lines of the Pantić reconstruction, and the hypotactic dependency of the second

hemistich upon the first hemistich in his hypothetical eighth line is equally alien to the syntactic customs of the tradition. In his own comments on his reconstruction, Pantić called the apparent rhythm of the poem as he construed it "awkwardly heavy" (*trom*), without however offering any surmise as to how thirty Slavic émigrés in Gioia del Colle could possibly have *danced* to such a rhythm. The answer, of course, is that they danced to a song that was both rhythmically and phrasally something very unlike Rogeri de Pacienza's text, and unlike any reconstruction of that text that does not reckon with its omissions.

The crucial difficulty with the line (i.e., couplet) six, which Pantić read as

> podji do smederevske gospode da s' mole
> Get thee to the lords of Smederevo, let them beseech

is the one which Pantić has tacitly recognized as such by his boldest emendation, namely his introduction into the text of the word *gospoda* (nobles): the problem is that we cannot tell from the fifteenth-century Italian's *incomplete text* exactly *to whom* Janko Vojvoda sent the eagle. Being a deservingly eminent scholar of renaissance and baroque literature, Professor Pantić has, to the great benefit of us all, spent the best part of his long professional life thinking about courtly nobility, who were of course the proprietors and patrons of that same literature in which he is so splendidly knowledgeable; and not unnaturally for him therefore, he invokes just such a courtly nobility as the agents that are to intervene on behalf of Janko with the despotic ruler of Smederevo city. Now there are literally hundreds of texts that have been collected from all ages and all regions of the South Slavic oral tradition that treat the release of a captive from his imprisonment, but the nobility as a group (*gospoda*) are not generically the agents of that release. The oral epic tradition did not conform to renaissance prejudices in this respect. A single male or female intimate either of the captor or of the captive is commonly the agent of intercession for the captive, or else a jailer or guard who keeps the prison where the captive is held. It happens that one of the true *bugaršice* in the later manuscripts does actually narrate a captivity of Janko Vojvoda, and there it is indeed the guards whom Janko induces to intercede for him with the despot. In all likelihood the agent of the intercession in the piece from Gioia del Colle was someone else—multiformity in the oral narrative

tradition being what it is—but we shall never know for certain one way or the other. What we must do, however, is reconstruct in keeping with the traditional diction and meter, and the extant *bugaršice* provide the models. Professor Pantić especially dislikes the surviving *bugaršica* about Janko's captivity on aesthetic grounds—he dislikes precisely what is epic about it, dislikes the oral epos in general—and much prefers the aesthetic qualities of the oral melic poetry (again, scarcely unnatural in a renaissance scholar; one remembers vividly how Petrarch proudly owned the Laurentian manuscript of the *Iliad*, but never read it). We shall therefore surely disappoint him in his desire to redeem the disgustingly bloody and hard-minded epic tradition by posing such little lyrics as the piece from Gioia del Colle as sweeter antecedents to the morally and artistically corrupt epos; but that cannot be helped. For the inescapable truth is that such little dance songs, of which Pantić has not discovered the only specimen, uniformly draw their imagery and their allusions from the full-blown epos, which pre-exists and explains them, and not vice-versa.

So we recognize that, as in the epic poems (and because such melic poetry as Rogeri de Pacienza's fragment derives its diction from the epos), the imperative verb *podji* at the head of couplet six needs a vocative noun to complete the phrase in keeping with the traditional diction; and then, as in that same diction once again, we immediately specify in the selfsame incipital line of the couplet to whom the messenger is to go, thus:

(4 + 3) podji, orle, / do straže //
Get thee, eagle, to the guard

Then in the same couplet's second, continuative line, we take the poor broken sherd which Rogeri has given us, *smedersche*, and using it for all it is worth in conjunction with the extant *bugaršica* about Janko's captivity, we reconstruct about it the best semblance we can of what *smederesche* obviously belonged to, namely the definition of *where* the eagle was to find its addressee:

(4 + 4) // na miru od / Smedere[sche]va
on Smederevo's wall

The form *smederesche* in Rogeri's manuscript we explain meanwhile as a hyper-correction which he must have made after the fact by observing that form (as nearly as he understood it) where it did actually occur twice later in the poem in the only repeated whole-line formula of the entire piece, *iz tamnice smederevske* (out

of Smederevo prison).

In this way we are able to continue our reconstruction without any untraditional enjambements whatever, either in the next line or in any that follows, and our reconstruction is, not surprisingly, incidentally also entirely regular in respect of meter.

Each of the next three lines (hemistichs in Pantić's treatment) are also defective as Rogeri wrote them, each omitting at least one entire word, at which we can only guess, guided by the extant poetry in the later manuscripts. Consequently, I read:

(4 + 4)	da se mole / gospodaru, //	
	slav[o]nom*u* Djurdju / despo[s]tu,	(5 + 3)
(4 + 3)	brzo da m*e* / [s]oprosti[7] //	
	is tamnice / smederevske	(4 + 4)

Let them beseech milord
The famous Despot George
That he quickly set me free
From Smederevo jail

I agree with Pantić that a new period commences with the second word in the eighth line of the original text, *Jakomi*. I see in the initial consonant of this "word" the first of three coordinating conjunctions *i* (elided with the following vowel of *ako*), each conjunction marking the onset of a full (half-) line, thus: i . . ., // i . . ., // i . . ., // . The function of the three phrases that were thus coordinated was to enumerate the several conditions that would have to be satisfied before Janko's promise, which is introduced in the penultimate line of Rogeri's text by *Jatechui*, can be fulfilled. In other words, *the entire remainder of the poem consists of a three-part protasis followed by a correspondingly three-part apodosis to balance it*. The protasis must have three parts because the social mechanism for Janko's communication with the despot of Smederevo is tripartite: 1) the eagle must first do as Janko asks and carry Janko's message to the (human) intermediary, who in turn will 2) actually implore the despot of Smederevo to release Janko, and then 3) the famous despot must do what he will be asked to do and actually set Janko free. So what we have here is in fact a miniature chain-tale with six "links." The last three links are, in the apodosis, 4) Janko's promise to the eagle (which must be an "eagle" only in the same sense as was the γύψ in Homer) of 5) nourishing drink and 6) abundant solid meat. We know that there are three elements in

the protasis not only because the story-line clearly established in the first part of the poem requires all three, but also because only the presence of all three maintains the established metrical form of the poem and its traditional diction (free of enjambements). No trace of the second element in the tripartite protasis has survived in Rogeri de Pacienza's text, a lacuna which is not however surprising, since we have already seen how in couplet after couplet he failed to record (and probably therefore to hear) especially the words in the accentually weak third and fourth octades of the continuative lines, but sometimes also all but part of the last, most heavily accented word in those lines (as in the line already discussed) above:

na miru od / Smedereva
on Smederevo's wall

So it is again in the present instance, where Rogeri omitted an *entire* continuative line, perhaps indeed because of its very parallelism both in lexicon and in syntactic construction with the line before it. To an alien ear it must have sounded like a mere repetition or prolongation of the line before it, which in a sense it veritably was, thus:

(3 + 2 + 3) Jako mi / Bogom / pomoš'te, //
jako mi se / mole straže, (4 + 4)
(4 + 4) I slavni me / despot pusti //
is tamnice / smederevske (4 + 4)
If, in God's name, you help me,
And the guardsmen petition on my behalf,
And the famous Despot sets me free
From Smederevo jail,

(or the last line, if one prefers, as Pantić has read it, 5 + 3, with inversion of the word-order that has already been seen above in the previous occurrence of this whole-line formula,

is smederevske / tamnice
from Smederevo jail)

So we reach the end of Rogeri's text, which I read substantively just as Pantić has, with only minor differences in the phonetic interpretation of Rogeri's orthography, and of course with the proper metrical arrangement:

(4 + 4) ja ću to / napitati //
crvene krvce / tureške, (5 + 3)
(4 + 4) belog tela / viteškoga.

I shall feed thee
    Crimson Turkish blood,
White flesh of mounted warriors.

The gory *envoi* to the vulture at the end of this short dance-song must of course be taken in the spirit of the times, which was one of virtually perpetual hostilities with the Turkish infidel. That spirit was no doubt a considerable unifying influence as between the Slavic settlers who sang the song and their Italian patrons and hosts; it must have constituted one significant reason at least why the Slavic émigrés would have been accepted in Italy. The attitude expressed toward the Turks in this poem may even go some way toward explaining how they came to settle in so relatively inland a location as the district about Gioia del Colle; for, almost a century later when Montaigne travelled through a region of northern Italy contiguous with the Tyrrhenian Sea, he would still have to record in his *Journal:* "Le 22 [juillet, 1581], au point du jour, trois corsaires turcs abordérent au rivage voisin, et emmenèrent prisonniers quinze ou vingt pêcheurs et pauvres bergers." It was a dangerous age for living near the sea.

Consequently, short though it is, we may reasonably accept Rogeri's text as a true report, however imperfect, of all that he heard; for the song as he reports it is surely all the Slavic performers sang, at least of *that* song. It is a reasonable inference too that the Slavs chose their song with a certain regard for the occasion, and in keeping with the community of shared attitudes which sanctioned their presence among the Italian populace of the place. Their song amounted in all to only twenty-three verses—not too much to bore Lady del Balzo—arranged in eleven couplets, with a single cadent verse to close, all done in a manner of singing-while-dancing which could have as readily occurred almost anywhere in the Serbo-Croatian-speaking Balkans at any time within more than four centuries *after* 1497 as it did in that year itself:

Orao se vijatše
    nad gradom nad Smederevom.
Nitkore ne ćijaše
    s njime r'ječi govoriti,
Nego Janko vojvoda
    govoraše iz tamnice:
"Molim ti se, sivi orle,
    sidi meni malo niže

da s tobome progovoru.
Bogom te brata 'zimaju.
Podji, orle, do straže
na miru od Smedereva,
Da se mole gospodaru,
slavnomu Djurdju despotu,
Brzo da me oprosti
iz tamnice smederevske.
Jako mi Bogom pomož'te,
jako mi se mole straže,
I slavni me despot pusti
iz tamnice smederevske,
Ja ću te napitati
crvene krvce tureške,
belog tela viteškoga.

An eagle circled
over Smederevo city.
No one desired
to pass words with him
Save only Yanko, leader of troops,
who spoke from (where he lay in)
prison:
"I pray thee, grey eagle,
descend toward me a little lower,
So that I may talk to thee:
I take thee (as my sworn) brother.
Get thee, eagle, to the guard
upon the wall of Smederevo,
let them beseech their lord,
the famous despot Djuradj,
That he quickly grant me release
from Smederevo prison.
If, in God's name, you help me,
and the guard petition on my behalf,
And the famous despot sets me free
from Smederevo prison,
I shall feed thee
crimson Turkish blood,
White flesh of mounted warriors."

**

As I have already shown, this is a lyric song from the melic oral tradition of the South Slavs, and not an epic, although it relates to the epic in the same manner as much else in the melic tradition did also. This fact may be a disappointment for Professor Pantić, who had hoped that he had found the earliest recorded oral traditional epic of the South Slavs, a true *bugaršti*ca. It seems to me that he has nevertheless discovered something even more valuable in Rogeri de Pacienza's little text: a true forerunner of the *bugaršti*ca-*form* and a precious revelator of that form's actual prosodic origins. For this service, the field of comparative epic studies as well as scholarship on the South Slavic cultural tradition must remain permanently grateful to him.

Spread upon the written records of the South Slavic oral epic tradition are many thousands of texts, most of them numbering not tens but rather hundreds and thousands of lines each. The four greatest collections of the tradition all happen to have been made upon the Serbo-Croatian-speaking territory. The first in date was formed by the Serb Vuk Karadžic; the second by the Croat Luka Marjanović; the third by the Serb Andrija Luburić, and the fourth by the American Milman Parry. No text in any of these four huge collections of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries poses fewer problems for understanding than did Rogeri de Pacienza's twenty-three lines of lyric from 1497; and no collection has done as much to advance such understanding as that of Milman Parry, upon which even the present paper is in part dependent. But the scope and influence of these four greatest of collections is another subject for another time.

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Notes

[1]The line is starred to indicate that it is hypothetical.

[2]Vu 244 signifies that the quotation is drawn from text no. 244 in Karadžić 1953. This same method of notation is used also to show the derivation of the other texts which I have quoted from the same volume later in this paper.

[3]Va 318 signifies that the quotation is drawn from text no. 318 in Vasiljević 1950. The same method of notation is used also to show the derivation of the other texts which I have quoted from the same volume later in this paper.

[4]PL 50 signifies that the quotation is drawn from text no. 50 in Bartók and Lord 1951. The same method of notation is used also to show the

derivation of the other texts which I have quoted from the same volume later in this paper.

[5]The arrows indicate lines incapable of division other than 5/3.

[6]Throughout this paper, the references to and quotations of *bugaršice* all pertain to the texts as found in Bogišić 1878.

[7]I prefer to read the verb *oprosti* here rather than *pusti*, even though *pusti* does occur later, both because the modern epic diction uses it and because it is the expression found for the equivalent moment in verse 49 of Bogišić no. 11.

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Hispanic Oral Literature: Accomplishments and Perspectives

Ruth House Webber

Hispanic oral literature, together with the Portuguese which should not be separated from it, encompasses a great chronological as well as geographical span, since it is an integral part of the cultural heritage that has accompanied the Spanish and Portuguese people over the centuries wherever they have chanced to establish themselves. Scholarly interest has focused primarily upon two oral genres, the epic and the ballad, while the lyric and the folktale have been accorded less attention, and the proverb almost none at all.

The total amount of material published, particularly on the epic and ballad, is enormous. The last decade or so has produced a veritable explosion of critical interest in these traditional forms. After establishing the critical background, we have tried to include here studies that either make a significant contribution or are representative of a certain method or approach. This means that many fine studies are not mentioned solely because of limitations of space. It will be observed that not all of this work has been carried out by oralists. In the belief that good basic research is of value to all, no matter what a particular scholar's theoretical persuasion may be, a number of items have been cited that were destined to support other points of view.

Epic

Three surveys of scholarship on the Spanish epic were published in the mid-seventies, all different in emphasis but each valuable in its own way and worth consulting. Faulhaber (1976) reviews the history and the application of traditionalist studies to

the Spanish epic together with the opposing arguments of the individualists. It is an objective, well-reasoned assessment of the problems besetting critics of epic in both the Spanish and the French fields. Deyermond's 1977 digest, *"Mio Cid* Scholarship, 1943-1973," is more comprehensive, yet succinct, and is organized on the basis of critical issues. Although the author is an individualist and feels free to express his own opinions, his evaluations are dependable and fair, making this survey the most useful of the three. Magnotta's volume entitled *Historia y bibliografía de la crítica sobre el "Poema de Mio Cid" (1750-1971)* is a considerably more extensive chronological survey of the field. For that reason it is more cursory and has a less secure grasp of the materials covered. Magnotta concentrates on the problems of date and authorship, origins and influences, together with relations to the chronicles and the ballads, while stylistic, aesthetic, and theoretical questions are given less space.

Spanish epic studies have been extraordinarily handicapped by a dearth of texts. There are but three extant epic texts: the *Cantar de Mio Cid,* also called the *Poema de Mio Cid;* the hundred-verse fragment of the *Roncesvalles;* and a corrupt late epic on the youth of the Cid, the *Mocedades de Rodrigo,* variously named the *Mocedades del Cid, Rodrigo y el rey Fernando,* and the *Crónica rimada*. In addition to the foregoing, a large section of the *Siete Infantes de Lara* (or *Salas)* has been reconstructed from chronicle texts, and the *Poema de Fernán González,* a clerical poem, is the reworking of a *cantor de gesta,* of which it bears many traces.

The existence of several additional epic texts has been hypothesized, with more convincing evidence in some cases than in others. Chronicle accounts that display poetization, a narrative that follows the tenets of the epic canon, and continued traditional life in the ballads offer the most secure basis for inclusion in the list of lost epics. Into this category fall the *Cantar de Sancho II* together with the *Partición de los reinos* of the *Cid* cycle (Reig 1947) and *Bernardo del Carpio,* the counter-Roland (Horrent 1951a:462-83). More doubtful among those most frequently mentioned are *Rodrigo, el último godo* (Menéndez Pidal 1925:54-88), the *Infante García* (Menéndez Pidal 1934:33-98), the *Condesa traidora* (Menéndez Pidal 1934:4-27), and the *Abad don Juan de Montemayor* (Menéndez Pidal 1934:103-233).

Menéndez Pidal's three-volume edition of the *Cantar de Mio*

Cid or *CMC* (4th ed. 1964) was the standard one for many years. It comprises a paleographic edition and a critical edition together, with an initial volume of studies plus another containing a glossary. Since his death several new critical editions have come out which adhere more closely to the manuscript text. The most noteworthy are those of Colin Smith (1972), Ian Michael (1975, 1978) and Garcí-Gómez (1978). Another recent two-volume work put out by the city of Burgos includes a new facsimile edition along with the critical edition, the former of which reveals how much the manuscript has deteriorated during the last several decades *(Poema* 1982, vol. 1).

Because the *CMC* is the only remaining epic text that comes close to being complete, theoretical studies concerning the Spanish epic have perforce been based upon it. There is hardly an aspect of the poem that does not present problems that still have not been satisfactorily resolved. The hypotheses that have been proffered reflect the particular theoretical orientation of each scholar. Here we have no intention of extending the traditionalist-individualist debate, which has provoked such vigorous interchanges in recent years; rather, without arguing the case, we shall set forth these issues based on the premise that the Spanish epic originated as a product of oral tradition.

The only extant manuscript of the *CMC,* which is of relatively small format and modest appearance, dates from the fourteenth century. It is impossible to determine whether at the beginning it was written down from dictation, although Adams (1976) brings out evidence to show that that could have been possible. The nature of the errors reveals that it was recopied more than once, at which times there may well have been editorial revisions. Nor is the text complete. Therefore the date the text was put into writing for the first time cannot be deduced either by internal or by external evidence. For the individualist these dates are one and the same, but not for the traditionalist, for whom the *Cid* was gradually elaborated in successive versions into a text more or less like the one we have today. Horrent has outlined plausibly the course of such a process (1973:310-11). The prolonged discussion surrounding the question of the date and the purpose for which the *CMC* was committed to writing has been well summarized by Lomax (1977). Menéndez Pidal settled on the year 1140 for a variety of reasons, among them that it was the date of a politically important royal espousal. Aside from the

story's inappropriateness in terms of conjugal felicity, there is much other evidence to advance the date to the end of the century, if not to 1207, the date found on the manuscript itself. Some present-day scholars argue that the *CMC* was composed (not just written down) around the turn of the century for propagandistic purposes: Lacarra (1980) that it was a vehicle for political slander in a feud between the Castro and the Lara families, and Fradejas Lebrero (1982) that it served as a model to persuade Christians to renew the Reconquest.

The possibility of the recovery of epic poems prosified in late chronicles is of importance in regard to the three missing folios of the *CMC,* which have been partially restored based on the *Crónica de once (veinte) reyes* (see Dyer 1979-80 and Powell 1983). Since the chroniclers were intent upon amalgamating their sources stylistically, the legitimacy of reconstructed verses has been questioned. Nor is there agreement as to whether it is possible to distinguish different versions of an epic through the medium of chronicle prosifications as Menéndez Pidal believed (1951:lxvii). It was Diego Catalán who rejected the theory as far as the *Primera crónica general is* concerned by demonstrating that what appear to be increased discrepancies between the second part of the poetic text and the chronicle are in fact the product of a different period and style of prosification (1963:205-9, 214-15). A re-examination of this and allied questions is to be found in Deyermond's review (1984) of Powell's book. What is manifest is that the question of chronicle prosifications is far from resolved and that much work remains to be done.

Happily the era of the attempts to regularize the versification of the *CMC* with its two-hemistich line in assonating series is long past. However, Harvey's (1963) hypothesis, based on Lord, that the irregularities in verse length are the result of its being a dictated rather than a sung text has found some strong support. If his theory were true, it would mean that the *CMC* is a badly distorted text, which is not at all the case. Discussion still arises periodically concerning the principle underlying the irregular verse length. The theory of stress-timed verse had been proposed and demonstrated by Navarro Tomás (1956), among others, many years ago. Recently Adams reaffirmed the same principle (1972:118-19) as did Colin Smith (1983:113-28), but according to the latter, it was developed as an adaptation of the French epic line. Many scholars continue to accept the target-count theory of Menéndez

Pidal, according to which it can be shown that hemistichs tend to have seven syllables and verses fourteen, the frequency of deviations diminishing the further removed *they* are from the norm (1964, vol. I:83-101). What has not been realized is that any stress-timed verse would probably show a similar target-count pattern if one set about to count syllables.

Menéndez Pidal described and categorized the assonances used in the *CMC* as frequent, rare, and exceptional and indicated their relative frequency in the three *cantares* into which the *CMC* is divided (*ibid*.:113-23). Although he listed important assonating words, he did not speculate upon why certain assonances were preferred in certain parts of the poem or the possible relationship between assonance and subject matter. Questions of assonance determination, laws of assonance change, and assonance sequence were taken up many years ago by Staaff (1925) and Lahmann (1934) and more recently by Webber (1975), but the final word still has not been said on these matters. Within the assonating series, Menéndez Pidal rejected as erroneous not only single verses in a different assonance but pairs of verses as well, a phenomenon so frequent that it has now been accepted as part of the system by the *CMC's* recent editors.

Although Menéndez Pidal had set forth certain basic principles of *laisse* division (1964, vol. I:107-10), the topic as a whole did not excite much interest until the publication of Rychner's book on the French epic (1955) with its extensive treatment of the subject. In the introduction to his edition of the *CMC,* Michael studied *laisse* structure and succinctly summarized *laisse*-linking techniques (1978:27-33). The question of the narrative function of the *laisse* has only been briefly treated (Michael 1978:27-30, Webber 1973:26-27) except for Johnston (1984).

Other aspects of the verse-making of the *Cid* poet have also been the object of scholarly attention. Among them have been several attempts to analyze the acoustic properties of the poem (Smith 1976, Adams 1980, and Webber 1983). All are in agreement as to its exceptionally pleasing sound-system, the work of a poet who was a superb musician with words, even though Smith is not willing to concede that this artist was an oral poet. Since an oral poetic tradition is totally dependent upon sound, all of these directions should be pursued further.

No question concerning the *CMC* has elicited more scholarly

interest than its historicity, combined with that of its geographical precision. The Cid as a hero is unique in that his deeds were sung not long after the events themselves took place, in contrast to the several centuries that separate the activities of other historical heroes like Fernán González, Charlemagne, and Roland from the epics that were composed about them. For Menéndez Pidal the *CMC* was essentially a historical document preserving through oral transmission vestiges of the past otherwise long since forgotten. In his two-volume opus, *La España del Cid* (1929), he reconstructed the events of the critical years of the Cid's life, placing more faith, however, in the veracity of the chronicle accounts than do later scholars. Much fine historical research has appeared of late—for example, that of Chalon (1976), who has worked systematically to distinguish in the Castilian epic what is truly historical, what appears to be historical because it conforms to what is perceived as historical reality, and what is poetic invention. One of the most persistent historical researchers is Colin Smith, who has sought to prove thereby that the *CMC* was a learned product whose author, Per Abbat, had had access to historical, legal, and literary texts (1983:137-79). There is a certain irony in the fact that the argument of historicity can be made to serve quite different ends. Much the same can be said for geography, of which Michael's two studies (1976, 1977) are recent examples. Although the *CMC* displays a much greater degree of historical and geographical accuracy than the French epic, the *CMC* is replete with the names of historical people and identifiable places whose connection with the real-life hero cannot be established, and that is precisely what would have been brought about by oral transmission.

For the scholars for whom the *CMC* is not a historical document, and that represents a sizable majority, the question remains as to what were the principles upon which the narrative was formed. For the traditionalists it is easy to discern the transformation of the figure of the Cid into the heroic archetype. Despite the incompleteness of the Cidian biography in the poem, there are tell-tale signs of a traditional narrative structure well embellished with folkloric detail. Dunn (1962) finds a mythic base to the story in two fundamental patterns, that of the exile and the triumphant return of the hero interwoven with that of the good king released from evil counselors, while Aubrun (1972) isolates three other myths that operate in a more intricate relationship. For Hart (1962) what informs the poem is the portrait of the Cid

as an exemplary Christian as part of an hierarchical order leading up to God.

Obvious traditional narrative devices can be cited: pairs of people who share a single role, predilection for the number three in both figures and structure, polarization of pro- and anti-Cid elements. Deyermond and Chaplin (1972) found some forty folk motifs in the poem but did not list them. Other scholars have dwelt upon the mythic significance of the incident of the escaped lion (Olson 1962, Bandera Gómez 1966) as well as the possible religious or folkloric base of the vicious attack upon the Cid's daughters by their husbands (Walsh 1970-71, Nepaulsingh 1983, Gifford 1977). A full-scale appraisal of folkloric motifs and similar devices is still lacking.

Whether or not there is a mythic underlay to the narrative structure of the *CMC,* it is a story of two parts that conforms remarkably well to the canon of the folk tale. For those who espouse the king-vassal structural pattern, the critical role is that of the king. In this case the first part has to do with the hero's losing, then regaining the king's favor, or to state it differently, the testing of the hero and secondly the testing of the king who was responsible for the marriages of the Cid's daughters (de Chasca 1955:41-44, Dunn 1970, Walker 1976). If one accepts the biographical pattern of the hero as the structural base, the first part is the exile followed, after vicissitudes, by the triumphal return of the hero, and the second is the hero's loss of honor, which is regained twofold with the downfall of the perpetrators of the villainy and the royal marriages of his daughters. Still a third theory, developed by Dorfman (1969) for a comparative study of the French and Spanish epic, finds a common structural base in four narremes: the family quarrel, the insult, the act of treachery, and the punishment. For the *CMC* this means that the whole biographical account through the daughters' wedding is degraded to the status of prologue, and that the story proper, whose central element is the act of treachery, does not begin until the poem is almost two-thirds over.

Whatever the deep structure is conceived to be, the actual telling of the story proceeds by small, measured, remarkably regular steps in linear progression. This adding-on technique, in which each narrative unit or minor theme is complete in itself and yet forms part of a larger thematic unit, both of which, small and large, are developed according to a number of oft-repeated

patterns, is a process that deserves a great deal more elucidation not only in the *CMC* but in other traditional epics as well. The study of the themes themselves has scarcely fared better, since the narrative content of the *CMC* has most often been discussed on the basis of selected episodes.

Interest in Spanish epic style was given a much-needed impetus thanks to the impact of the Parry-Lord investigations of Serbo-Croatian song. The publication of Waltman's concordance (1972) provided the necessary tool for statistical approaches. Waltman himself used his concordance for several studies that demonstrate that there are no significant formulaic, lexical, or grammatical differences between one part of the poem and another. Whereas there has been no complete study of the formulas of the *CMC,* there are many of more limited scope. An important article by Michael (1961) illustrates the difference in the use of epithets in the *CMC* and the *Libro de Alexandre*. Hamilton (1962) and Webber (1965), among others, studied the form and function of epithets but with differing conclusions. De Chasca devoted three chapters of his *El arte juglaresco en el "Cantar de Mio Cid"* (1972) to formulas, in which he treated selected groups of formulas together with certain parallelistic procedures. Deyermond's article (1973) is also selective, while Montgomery (1975) focuses on grammatical patterns of expression. Although the monograph by Smith and Morris (1967) on physical phrases is a lexical study, much of their material is formulaic.

Concerning formula counts, de Chasca (1972:337-82), on the basis of his own register of formulas in the *CMC,* calculated that 17 per cent of the hemistichs of the poem are formulas. Given the somewhat arbitrary and incomplete character of his formula list and the fact that he had counted as formulas only expressions that were repeated at least three times, it is not surprising that Duggan's later study (1974) should produce quite different results. Duggan, employing the same criteria that he had developed for his earlier study of the formulicity of the *Chanson de Roland* and nine other old French epics (1973), found that 31.7 per cent of the hemistichs of the *CMC* are formulaic, a figure that places it somewhat above the median of the *chansons de geste* tested, for which he had set the borderline between oral and written composition at 20 per cent (1973:23-30).

In addition to formulas and formula density, de Chasca touched upon various repetitive procedures, in particular parallelism

and enumeration (1972:196-206). Dámaso Alonso (1969) examined direct discourse, as did Hart (1972). A whole series of scholars carried out a prolonged interchange about tense usage in the *CMC*. It was begun by Sandmann (1953) and continued by Gilman (1961), Myers (1966), Montgomery (1967-68), and then Gilman again (1972a), who retracted his original thinking in the face of evidence pointing to oral composition. One of the most thought-provoking studies, which came out far ahead of its time and has not been duly appreciated, is that of Louise Allen, "A Structural Analysis of the Style of the *Cid*" (1959). In undertaking to describe its style, she employs the methods (and vocabulary) of structural linguistics and divides the presentation into three parts: discourse analysis, information analysis, and sound-figure analysis. Even though her aim was rigorous description and not application of the results to Cidian problems, the methodology itself opens up new perspectives on the poem's style that merit further consideration, like the contrast established between chronicle style and poetic style, and the topics of redundancy and resonance.

Closely allied and frequently intermingled with discussions of stylistic matters are aesthetic considerations. Paeans of well-deserved praise have been showered upon the *CMC* over the years by the most distinguished literary critics (see Magnotta 1974:ch. viii). Surely the most impressive and influential of these essays is Dámaso Alonso's "Estilo y creación en el *Poema del Cid*" (1941). Yet we still have not come to terms with the most fundamental problem of all: how should the aesthetics of oral poetry be defined? What are the criteria that can legitimately be applied to traditional verse in order to pass judgment upon it? Even a professed neo-traditionalist like de Chasca fell into the fallacy of demonstrating intentionality on the poet's part in his appreciative analyses of passages of the *CMC*. More often we are left with attractive but non-productive rhetoric. Ironically it is a question of aesthetics, the opposition to what appears to be the mechanistic nature of the oral poet's art, that has been most responsible for the critical stance of the individualists.

To complicate matters still further, there are other questions tied up with aesthetic evaluation that will require extensive investigation on a broader scale than that of the *CMC* by itself before satisfactory answers can be found. The first is the significance of literacy versus illiteracy in a medieval society that was basically illiterate. What sorts of knowledge could be and

were acquired orally as opposed to those that could only be acquired through book-learning? Progress is slowly beginning to be made in these directions as more information becomes available.

Aside from Menéndez Pidal's classic study of Spanish minstrels, *Poesía juglaresca* (1957), little has been written recently about the singer except for a stimulating article by Aguirre (1968) in which he scrutinizes, in terms of what Lord discovered in Yugoslavia, the profession of the epic *juglar* and the character of his product.

Among a host of equally perplexing problems that have preoccupied the critics is the relationship between the Castilian and the French epic (see Magnotta 1974:90-106). The theory of the dependency of the *CMC* upon the latter has pervaded the work of many scholars. Among the recent adherents to this point of view is Herslund, who, in an interesting but sometimes controversial study (1974), sought to prove that the Spanish *juglares* were trained by the French whose techniques they mastered, and that for all intents and purposes the *CMC* is a *chanson de geste*. For Colin Smith, the most extreme of the current generation of individualists, the learned author of the *CMC* was well acquainted with a number of *chansons de geste* which he imitated specifically in various instances and whose metrical system, formulas, style, and even lexicon he took over (1983:186-202, 114-24).

Still another dilemma for scholars who treat the *cantares de gesta,* and one that falls strictly within the province of the oralists, is the question of memorization versus improvisation in the transmission of these songs. Lord demonstrated beyond any doubt the role of improvisation on the part of the *guslar*. Whether this was also true of the Spanish or indeed of any of the medieval European epic traditions is impossible to determine. Menéndez Pidal declared late in his career after he had come to know the Parry-Lord investigations, whose conclusions otherwise coincided strikingly with his own, that improvisation was not a feature of the oral poetry of western Europe, where there was greater textual stability (1965-66:195-207). Gilman expressed similar doubts as to whether the kind of oral composition represented by the *CMC* was the same as that found by Parry and Lord in Yugoslavia (1972a:10-11). The question arises again with the *romances* (see Beatie 1964), with the same dichotomy of opinion among the oralists. Whether oral transmission may differ in character from one tradition to another is one more issue that can only be

resolved on the basis of research undertaken throughout the whole realm of oral poetry.

The *Roncesvalles* fragment is an extraordinarily valuable document in that it confirms that there was indeed a Spanish epic tradition. Its hundred verses can be made to reveal a great amount of information about the epic from which it became separated as well as about Romance epic relations. It was initially published by Menéndez Pidal (1917) in both a paleographic and a critical edition together with a study of the language, versification, and legend, followed by a hypothetical reconstruction of the whole poem. Some years later Horrent (1951b), with the thoroughness characteristic of all his work, re-edited the *Roncesvalles* and added a two hundred fifty page study that encompasses every conceivable aspect of the poetic text, its narrative content, and its relationship with the French tradition. Formulaic and thematic studies, which might have seemed impracticable given the brevity of the piece, proved to be possible using other epic texts and the ballads as a frame of reference (Webber 1966, 1981). The results indicate that the formulas are very similar to those of the *CMC* in both form and density, while thematic correspondences are to be found in many other traditional narrative poems.

The *Mocedades de Rodrigo (MR),* published by Menéndez Pidal in *Reliquias de la poesía épica española* (1951), is a degenerate epic found in a late fourteenth-century manuscript which is both corrupt and incomplete. Deyermond included a much-needed paleographic edition in his *Epic Poetry and the Clergy: Studies on the "Mocedades de Rodrigo"* (1969). This admirable study of the text, its background, and the many problems to which it gives rise reveals how thoroughly it has been permeated by learned additions and emendations. Of particular interest to the traditionalist is what the earlier *cantar de gesta* on the Cid's youth may have been like, a topic upon which Armistead (1963) is the undisputed authority. Armistead documents at least six different traditional versions of the story, which include earlier prosifications of the lost *gesta,* the late epic text, summaries incorporated by a fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century author in their work, and various versions that emerge in the ballads (1978a:324-27).

The account of the prodigious deeds of the rebellious hero of the *MR* is very much in accord with the heroic canon, in the course of which a number of folklore motifs manifest themselves

(Deyermond 1969:177-82). The degree of non-traditional intervention can be roughly measured by a formula count. Geary (1980) calculated that formulas represent only 14 per cent of the poem in contrast to the 31 per cent tallied for the *CMC,* but its shorter length (1164 verses) makes the figure less valid for comparative purposes. There is unmistakable evidence, however, that the *MR* once had a language system possessing the features that are characteristic of oral traditional poetry and that it was broken down by later reworkings (Webber 1980b).

The *Poema de Fernán González* is the recasting of an earlier *cantar de gesta* about a historical hero in the form of a *cuaderna vía* poem, and it is in this guise that it has been most often studied. Avalle-Arce in an important essay (1972) sought to determine how the *Cantar de Fernán González* differed from the *Poema*. Its biographical pattern is a mixture of the canon of the hero and of the saint's life and abounds with folklore motifs and legendary material (see the articles of Keller). It has been re-edited several times, among them by Menéndez Pidal in the *Reliquias* (1951), where it is accompanied by versions extracted from several chronicles. The problem in this case is to determine whether it is the *Poema* or the lost *gesta* that has been prosified. Despite not being in epic meter, by Geary's count of formulas, its almost three thousand verses are 17 per cent formulaic.

The *Siete Infantes de Lara* (or *Salas)* survives only through Menéndez Pidal's reconstruction from chronicle prosifications, which produced some five hundred and fifty verses (1951:181-239). It is a brutal story of a family quarrel that leads to treachery and death followed in due time by an equally bloody vengeance, all of which fits into the epic canon in relation to heroes and their missions within a bipartite structure.

Ballad

Whereas the field of the Spanish epic is limited to a very few texts that appear to have originated in Castile from perhaps as early as the mid-twelfth to the late fourteenth centuries, that of the Hispanic ballad *(romance)* is of almost limitless extension. From its first manifestations in the fourteenth century, it has existed in oral tradition up to the present day, although ballad-singing at the present moment unfortunately is slowly dying

away. *Romances* can and have been collected wherever the Spaniards and Portuguese have settled, including the Sephardic Jews, who were expelled at the end of the fifteenth century and have spread even more widely. The resulting number of texts available for study of the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century ballad *(romances viejo)* is relatively limited, but for the *romances modernos* it is almost incalculably large.

In attempting to assess the present state of work on balladry in the Hispanic world, I owe a great debt to Samuel Armistead for having recently published two separate surveys, each with a different focus, on current *romancero* scholarship. "Current Trends in *Romancero* Research" (1984) fulfills the promise of its title, while the second, "Estudios sobre el Romancero en los Estados Unidos" (1983) goes from the nineteenth century to the present with emphasis on the work of scholars living in this country. Both are highly recommended for a more detailed overview of the field.

As in the case of the epic, during the first half of this century, Menéndez Pidal's vigorously expressed views dominated the thinking about the *romancero*. To him we owe the fragmentation theory by which ballad genesis was conceived as the product of the disintegration of the epic, the representation of the ballad as poetry that lives in variants, the nature of variants and their independent lives, and the existence of creative as well as static periods in the history of the *romance,* to name but a few. Several of his epoch-making studies have been put together in one volume, *Estudios sobre el romancero* (1973), and his two-volume work titled *El romancero hispánico (1953)* represents the culmination of a lifetime of work in the field. During this period scholars occupied themselves with the most basic problems: searching for and dating printed ballad texts, historical matters, questions of origins, versification, and ballad classification, as well as studies of individual ballads. It was, in short, the *romancero viejo* upon which scholarly attention was centered. Ballad-collecting from living practioners of the art, which had come about as an offshoot of the Romantic movement, was sporadic in the nineteenth century but became more widespread throughout the Hispanic world in the early decades of this century.

At the time of Menéndez Pidal's death, a new era had begun to open up in Hispanic ballad studies. His grandson, Diego Catalán, had embarked upon a long-range, ambitious program to publish all available *romance* texts starting with those stored in the

Archivo Menéndez Pidal, to step up ballad-collecting efforts before their disappearance, to make catalogs and prepare bibliographical tools for the use of all scholars, and to put all of this material into machine-readable form in such a way as to make possible a great variety of linguistic, stylistic, thematic, and structural studies of a comprehensive nature. The Cátedra Seminario Menéndez Pidal (CSMP), with a permanent staff headed by Diego Catalán, assumed the organization and direction of these vast projects.

Among its multifarious activities, the CSMP has sponsored three international colloquia, each of which has been a stimulus to *romancero* studies. The first, held in Madrid in 1971, provided Catalán with the opportunity to review what the CSMP had already accomplished and to announce his new program. The *actas* of this colloquium were published under the title of *El romancero en la tradición oral moderna* (1972). The second meeting took place in 1977 at the University of California, Davis with a much expanded program. These *actas* came to three volumes under the general heading of *El romancero hoy* (1979). In 1982 the third colloquium was again held in Madrid with an even more extensive program; its *actas* are in press.

The first edition of the ongoing bibliographical project of the CSMP, the *Bibliografía del romancero oral (BRO),* came out in 1980. Its more than 1600 items comprise both texts and studies of the *romancero* from the end of the eighteenth century to the year 1980. Organized by author, with individuals' listings in chronological order, it gives complete bibliographical data, categorizes the work in question according to the geographic or linguistic area to which it relates, and indicates where the publication is to be found. The several indices that follow facilitate access to this information. There is an adjunct projected to this volume, the *Bibliografía descriptiva del romancero oral,* which will describe the specific content of the works listed. In the meantime Armistead's "A Critical Bibliography of the Hispanic Ballad in Oral Tradition (1971-1979)," published in 1979, continues to be indispensable for its brief analyses of individual works, together with the inclusion of a number of items not found in the *BRO,* based on slightly different criteria.

Even though the *BRO* has absorbed all that is pertinent from previous bibliographical sources, it has not necessarily deprived them of their utility since each has its own specific focus and purpose. Of great value are the bibliographies attached to the

Judeo-Spanish ballad collections of Armistead and Silverman, or those of the *El Romancero hoy* volumes, Simmons' *A Bibliography of the "Romance" and Related Forms in Spanish America* (1983), and Nascimento's *Bibliografía do folclore brasileiro* (1971).

Since ballad texts have been culled from widespread sources, complete, dependable catalogs are a prime necessity for the *romancero* scholar interested in either the *romances viejos* or the *modernos*. The *Diccionario de pliegos sueltos poéticos (siglo XVI)* of Rodríguez-Moñino (1970) solved the problem of locating ballads contained in early broadsides. Similarly his four-volume *Manual bibliográfico de cancioneros y romanceros* (1973), completed by Askins, does the same for early printed collections.

The first catalog published under the auspices of the CSMP was Armistead's *El romancero judeo-español en el archivo Menéndez Pidal* (1978b). It is a listing of all of the Judeo-Spanish ballads Menéndez Pidal had assembled over the years, with full bibliographical detail and musical transcriptions edited by Katz. The ballads are organized according to thematic categories. After a summary of the ballad story, the versions are listed chronologically and identified by assonance, first and last verses, place of origin, informant, collector, date collected, printed versions. In addition to a series of indices, among which is a motif index, the third volume contains an anthology of rare ballads from the collection.

The great *Catálogo general descriptivo del Romancero panhispánico (CGR),* which is the project to which the CSMP has given priority since 1977, is the ultimate tool for the researcher in Hispanic balladry. To date, the first three volumes have appeared. The catalog proper is a listing of all of the known ballads in any one of the Hispanic languages thematically classified and described in the following way: identifying code, title(s) by which it is known, geographical spread, common incipits from both old and modern versions, and narrative content with regional variants. This is followed by a bibliography of all published versions of each ballad. This information is transcribed in machine-readable form and stored in an electronic data bank as the permanent base of the *CGR*.

The final goal is not only to provide the scholar with complete information concerning extant texts and where they are to be found, but to put all of those texts properly categorized within the researcher's reach. For this purpose there has been created the

Archivo Internacional Electrónico del Romancero (AIER), which will consist of the complete transcription in machine-readable form of all known Hispanic ballad texts, codified for linguistic, poetic, and narrative elements and classified as indicated above. Ultimately this will lead to the publication of the entire corpus of ballads by a magnetic tape photocomposition system. (See *El Romancero hoy* 1979c:335-63 for further details and a demonstration of the cataloging system.)

As far as the *romances viejos* are concerned, the publication of archival materials has been slow but constant. Facsimile editions of miscellaneous groups of *pliegos sueltos* were later supplemented in the series of Joyas Bibliográficas by handsome facsimiles of *pliegos* residing in important libraries. These in turn are being followed by critical editions. Editions of the rare sixteenth-century *romanceros* have also gradually been put out, sometimes in facsimile, other times in critical editions. Rodríguez-Moñino initiated many of these projects, which are now being continued by Askins (e.g., 1981). Di Stefano has promised a much-needed edition of all of the sixteenth-century *romances*.

Another one of the continuing CSMP projects has been the editing and publication of the volumes of the series *Romancero tradicional de las lenguas hispánicas,* which are compilations, starting from the Menéndez Pidal archives, of all of the known versions, old and modern, of individual ballads or of thematically related groups of ballads. The first two volumes present ballads on epic themes, while the succeeding ones, for a total of twelve to date, all have to do with ballads on folklore themes. Of particular interest are the three volumes (vi, vii, viii) titled *Gerineldo, el paje y la infanta,* which contain five hundred and fifty-one versions of *Gerineldo* alone followed by two hundred and sixty-eight more in which it is combined with *La condesita*. The possibilities for linguistic, stylistic, and thematic studies with this wealth of textual material can readily be appreciated.

Ballad collecting of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century produced some very uneven collections, the quality and usefulness depending upon the skill of the collectors and the editorial criteria applied upon their publication. The best of them are invaluable documents today. The emphasis on field collecting in recent years is due in large measure to the concentrated efforts of Catalán and of the eminent scholars associated with the CSMP.

Among the present-day scholar/collectors, the accom-

plishments of Armistead and Silverman on the Judeo-Spanish tradition stand out. Not only have they collected with success in far-flung corners, but their work, which makes use of both field and archival materials, is always presented in such a form as to be of maximum usefulness to the scholar. The distinguished musicologist Israel Katz joins the team whenever music is involved. An example is *The Judeo-Spanish Ballad Chapbooks of Yacob Abraham Yoná* (Armistead and Silverman 1971), with transcriptions, translations, full bibliography, and extensive commentary concerning motifs, narrative structure, contamination and fusion, formulas, and lexicon, all enriched with pan-European analogs. Another valuable collection using similar materials is that of Bénichou, *Romancero judeo-español de Marruecos* (1968b).

Recent fieldwork throughout the Hispano-Portuguese domain has been so extensive that only a summary account of it can be given here. The model for much of this work was Catalán's two-volume collection from the Canary Islands, *La flor de la marañuela* (1969a). His efforts have been continued by Trapero, the first volume of whose collection, *Romancero de Gran Canaria,* appeared in 1982. Work continues throughout the Peninsula. Recent publications include *Romances de Castilla y León* of Joaquín and Luis Díaz (1982) and *Los corridos o romances andaluces* of José Bias Vega (1982). In Spanish America recent work has been done in Colombia, Chile, Venezuela, and Costa Rica. Paredes continues to work actively in Mexico and on the frontier. Work carried out many years ago by Espinosa (1946-47, 1953) in New Mexico has been supplemented by Robb's *Hispanic Folk Music in New Mexico* (1980). Armistead has had considerable success ballad-hunting in Louisiana (1978c). Additions to the Sephardic collection have come from such places as Romania, Yugoslavia, Israel, Rhodes, Tangier, Argentina, Uruguay, Colombia, Venezuela, Canada, New York, Pennsylvania, California, and Washington.

The Portuguese ballad tradition has proved to be especially copious and rich. The great ballad collection of the Portuguese folklorist, Leite de Vasconcellos, *Romanceiro português,* came out between 1958 and 1960. There appears to have been little active collecting recently in Portugal itself except in Tras-os-Montes. On the other hand, one of the most extraordinarily successful examples of fieldwork is that of Joanne Purcell, who between 1969 and 1970 in the Azores and Madeira recorded some 1400 ballad versions

representing seventy traditional ballad themes. The first volume of her collection will soon be coming out under the title of *Romanceiro Portugués das Ilhas Atlánticas*. Another equally indefatigable investigator has been da Costa Fontes. He has now either published or has in press collections of Portuguese ballads from Canada, New England, California, São Jorge, and Tras-os-Montes in northern Portugal (see, e.g., 1979 and 1980). Ballad collecting in Brazil has been less rewarding, where the most extensive collection to date is that of da Silva Lima (1977). The rich store of Galician ballad texts in the Archivo Menéndez Pidal remains unpublished.

Catalonia also has a long ballad tradition, of which the *Romancerillo catalán* of Milá y Fontanals (1882) was the first edited collection. A recent important contribution many years in the making is Bohigas' *Cançoner popular català* (1983). Since there has been considerable recent fieldwork in that region, some interesting results should be forthcoming.

A few years ago Catalán reviewed the contents of the Archivo Menéndez Pidal to assess its riches and its gaps and underscored the need for systematic exploration in the Peninsula to supply what was lacking (1972b). This is precisely what the CSMP has been trying to do in organizing training seminars every summer to go on ballad-collecting expeditions in promising regions of Spain. The fifty days of fieldwork of the *encuesta* of the summer of 1977 produced recordings of three thousand ballad versions, many with music. The two volumes of *Voces nuevas del romancero castellano-leonés* are the result, which contain versions of one hundred and fifty-four different *romances*. The value of these *encuestas* as well as those carried out through individual initiative is obvious. There are still *romances* to be found, even though every year it becomes more difficult and the harvest more sparse.

Many large-scale studies of the *romancero* will be possible once the massive effort to put all available ballad texts into machine-readable form is completed, but that is still a long way in the future. In the meantime there is no dearth of ballad studies. In fact, they are so numerous and so varied that it is not easy to present a synthetic overview. The studies in the *actas* of the three international symposia already mentioned probably offer the most valid cross-section of work being carried out on the *romancero*.

Studies of individual ballads have always been and continue to be an important part of *romancero* criticism. The work of

Armistead and Silverman contains many admirable studies of this sort, as does that of Bénichou. Diego Catalán himself has published two volumes of essays in which single or related ballads are analyzed and their history traced (1969b, 1970). Others who have carried out commendable work in the same mode include de Chasca, Avalle-Arce, Alvar, and da Costa Fontes.

One of the more innovative areas of research is that of ballad geography, by which is meant ballad diffusion. An essay by Menéndez Pidal (1920) on the geographic spread of *Gerineldo* and *El conde Sol,* both separate and combined, formed the starting point of an expanded study by Catalán and Galmés more than thirty years later (1954). They concluded that propagation proceeds not only by variants but also by versions, which in turn lead to regional types, and that certain types have greater expansive force than others. More recently Suzanne Petersen has succeeded in generating maps by computer that illuminate this process in greater detail (1979).

The process of creation and transmission has been the subject of several stimulating studies. Bénichou (1968a) attempted to move away from a backward-looking historical perspective to a new focus on the creative potential of the oral poetic process. Di Stefano (1967) goes further in considering each version an autonomous structure that reflects the environment from which it emerged. Catalán (1972a) refuted this concept and argued that the *romance* is an open system which keeps adapting itself to the human environment. Closely tied up with the foregoing is the question of memory and invention, on which Catalán based a long study (1970-71). His conclusion is that there is a continual struggle between inherited material and creative initiative that leads to some kind of a compromise.

With the hope of being able to analyze the poetic process in concrete terms, Braulio do Nascimento (1964) undertook to measure mathematically both verbal and thematic variation in the ballad. He tallied semantemes in forty-seven versions of a single Brazilian ballad and demonstrated that while the vocabulary in common represented less than one per cent of the total, the proportion of verbal, substantival, and adjectival semantemes remained virtually the same. In the case of thematic variation, he compared thematic segments from ballad to ballad and charted variation in terms of increase or decrease in the number of thematic segments and by both ordering and substitution of their constituent elements. He

was able to establish the semantic areas within which variation tended to fall and to show in this way that it was not arbitrary, but rather obeyed a kind of internal discipline that set its own limits (1966).

Braulio's work influenced Catalán, who incorporated several of its features into the computerized program of the Archivo Internacional Electrónico del Romancero (AIER) for the development of a poetics of the *romancero*. In a pilot project of his own (1972a), Catalán compared sixteenth-century and modern versions of a single ballad. His results indicated that the old and modern versions coincide in forty per cent of their thematic elements but in only a little over twenty per cent of their verses. At the same time forty-two per cent of their verses are related on a verbal level, which led him to conclude that singers retain in their memories both the thematic and the verbal structure of a song, thus confirming Menéndez Pidal's theory that textual memorization is an essential part of oral transmission. Taking a different tack, Petersen (1972) examined structural differences between the *romances viejos* and *modernos* and discovered that the proportion of dialogue is significantly higher in the modern ballads, and among them that the greatest percentage of verses in direct discourse is to be found in the Portuguese ballads.

In relation to narratological questions, Catalán has continued to move toward a form of semiotic analysis (1975), which has been carried forward by Mariscal de Rhett (1982). Another new direction to emerge is that of the sociological approach, which is bringing back a concern for the context from which the ballad emerges (e.g., Benmayor 1979 and Cantarella 1982).

At the same time, some of the older approaches to ballad study have been somewhat neglected, among them matters of style and language. A very sensitive essay by Gilman (1972b) represented a kind of landmark in *romancero* studies. Comparisons of epic and ballad language were undertaken by both Lapesa (1967) and Webber (1980a), while the study of formulas, initiated by the latter (1951) and taken up by Beatie (1964), has also entered into the work of González (1981) and Ochrymowycz (1975). Miletich (1975) has studied repetition in a number of forms, tense use has been investigated by Szertics (1967) and Sandmann (1953), but purely linguistic studies are missing.

Even though ballad is song, poetics have taken precedence over music, although a hopeful sign is that new ballad collections

are including more musical transcriptions than ever before. The comparative approach has also been overlooked in the majority of ballad studies, since few researchers choose to view the *romance* within the framework of the pan-European ballad, notable exceptions being the work of Armistead and Silverman and that of Rogers (1980). Miletich (1975) has compared Spanish and Serbo-Croatian balladry and Rechnitz (1979) Spanish and Romanian.

One final problem that arises, one which is fundamental to ballad classification on an international scale, is the establishing of text types. The lack of a uniform system is at present a major obstacle to pan-European ballad studies. The first step is the setting up within a given ballad tradition of a standard set of ballad titles that are indicative of thematic content, a task which still has not been accomplished for Spanish and Portuguese balladry (see Armistead 1976:188).

Lyric

It is common knowledge that all peoples have a narrative song tradition and a lyric song tradition, and in many instances one blends into the other. In the Hispanic tradition we speak of the category of lyric ballads, and the Mexican *corrido,* derived from the *romance,* is sometimes classified under *romance,* other times under lyric. In recent years a great deal more attention has been paid to the *romance* than to the lyric, perhaps because of the recent impetus given to *romancero* studies.

The Iberian Peninsula has played a vital role in the history of the lyric in that from there have come the earliest extant lyric forms in a Romance tongue, forms which offer persuasive evidence of the existence of a popular lyric tradition common to all of Romania in the early Middle Ages. The Romance *kharja* used by Hispano-Arabic poets as the final verses of the *muwaššaḥa* attests to a Hispanic lyric tradition which can be dated as early as the first half of the eleventh century, and perhaps even a century earlier if the testimony of the Arabic literary historians is to be believed. Of great interest for the student of oral poetry is the work of García Gómez (1975), who studied these little songs in relation to the refrains of the popular *villancico*. The similarities between the *kharja* and the *cantiga de amigo* of the medieval

Galician-Portuguese lyric—in content (both are women's love laments) as well as in form—and in turn with the *villancico*, are probably not the result of direct influence, but rather of a common lyric tradition (in this regard see Monroe 1975).

Like the *kharja* and the *cantiga de amigo,* the texts came to be written down only when the genre captured the interest of professional poets. The earliest *villancico* texts appear in the fifteenth century about the same time as the *romances*. Foremost among the studies on the *villancico* are those of Sánchez Romeralo (1969), who as a distinguished member of the CSMP team has also made many fine contributions to *romance* studies. In *El villancico* he determined the stylistic features of the lyric and compared them with the help of a computer to those of the *romance*. Just as the *romance* was preserved and cultivated among the exiled Spanish Jews, so also was the lyric, as can be seen in Alvar (1966) and the lyric songs listed in Armistead's *Romancero judeo-español* (1978b). As for other critical studies of the lyric, highly recommended are Le Gentil's two volumes on the Spanish and Portuguese lyric (1949-53), as well as the studies of Frenk Alatorre (1968-69, 1978) and of Asensio (1970).

With the upsurge in interest in oral traditional poetry, many sizable collections of the popular lyric have been assembled from various parts of the Hispanic world (for example, those of Alin 1968 and Magis 1969). But these are only bits and pieces in terms of what remains to be collected. It would take a massive effort comparable to the one organized by Diego Catalán for the *romance* to make inroads in the field. Mexico has fared better where, under the direction of Margit Frenk Alatorre, the *Cancionero folklórico de México* has been coming out volume by volume.

Folk Tale

Many assiduous collectors who set out to find *romances* have ended up recording lyric songs and folk tales as well. The fate of the folk tale in recent times has not been very much different from that of the lyric, despite the fact that there is considerable testimony as to the vitality of the story-telling tradition. Studies of the Hispanic folk tale have often been carried out for nationalistic (or regionalistic) reasons or have been identified exclusively with folklore research and thus have not found a place

within the framework of Spanish oral literature studies.

Spanish medieval literature is particularly rich in collections of stories of varied and remote origin culled from both oral and written sources. The first European author to turn such a collection into a literary masterpiece was Don Juan Manuel in his *El conde Lucanor* (or *Libro de Patronio,* 1969). Throughout Spanish literature story collections appear in one guise or another among the works of the most important authors of prose fiction. It was not until the Romantic period that the folk tale was sought out and valued for its own sake.

The classic folk tale collection is that of Espinosa, *Cuentos populares españoles* (1946-47). Collections are quite numerous, but, like those of *romances,* they are uneven in value. Some have been put out as children's literature. Among the field collectors is da Costa Fontes, who, after completing a series of *romance* collections, is now working on the Portuguese folk tales he has recorded. Recently Slater published *Stories on a String: The Brazilian "Literatura de Corde"* (1982), the product of a collecting expedition. Judith Seeger (1982) also found in Brazil a richer fund of stories than of ballads. In short, this is a fertile field that has barely begun to be explored. The folk tale, as we also know, is an excellent vehicle for the study of narratology. It is even possible that a comparative study of ballad and folk tale narrative might help to illuminate the structure of one or the other.

Proverb

Although proverbs *(refranes)* are a minor genre, they form an important segment of Hispanic oral tradition. Every Spaniard prides himself on his use of *refranes,* and in some it has been developed into a fine art. There have been numerous supplements over the centuries to the famous seventeenth-century *Vocabulario de refranes y frases proverbiales* of Correas (1924). The production of *refraneros* has been a favorite exercise for many men of letters. There is a fundamental difficulty, however, in proverb-hunting. It takes a special sensibility to distinguish between a genuinely popular proverb and what sounds as if it should be one, which means that proverb collections have to be used with great care. At the same time, the proverb offers a special opportunity, because of its brevity, to study certain syntactic structures, ellipsis in

particular, together with variation under strictly controlled conditions.

* * *

It should be manifest from all of the foregoing that studies in Hispanic oral literature have tended to be self-contained and to go their own way. The recent emphasis on text-collecting will continue to bring forth new materials. Equally worthy of praise are innovative forms of research, particularly those carried out with the aid of the computer. All too infrequently have scholars taken the comparative approach and sought in other oral literatures confirmation or refutation of conclusions reached on the basis of the Hispanic scene. Yet there is in the Hispanic world, perhaps more than anywhere else, an awareness of and pride in oral traditional forms, which bodes well for maintaining these traditions in the future and for continuing organized scholarly investigation concerning them.

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Exploring the Literate Blindspot: Alexander Pope's *Homer* In Light of Milman Parry

Elizabeth A. Hoffman

I.

The lasting popularity of Alexander Pope's *Homer* testifies to the poetic genius he brought to his role as translator. In his introduction to the Twickenham Edition texts, Maynard Mack cites the "demand for new editions throughout Pope's lifetime and for a century after" as evidence of popular acclaim, despite less consistently positive critical response (*Twickenham* 7:xlii). The same genius which guaranteed the success of Pope's translation also informed his keen powers of observation as critic, and his prolonged contact with the Greek text during the translation process, from 1713 to 1726, produced insights that have yet to be fully explored.

The modern clarification of the distinctions between orality and literacy has provided a retrospective vantage point from which to observe the conceptual limitations of the literate mind throughout the age of literacy. A reading of Pope's preface to his 1715 edition of the *Iliad* shows him making a series of distinctions between oral and literate modes of composition hardly to be found wanting by twentieth-century standards. Even as he delineates the two categories, however, he remains unable to put a name to them: one involves active, participatory communication for "Hearers," the other passive, impersonal composition for readers. Standing on the brink of discoveries first clearly articulated by Milman Parry and Albert Lord in the early decades of this century, Pope, as well as the two centuries of Homeric scholars who followed him, remained unable to penetrate to the heart of the Homeric Question.

Why it became possible to overcome the literate fixation on the text only in the "electronic age" of the twentieth century (McLuhan 1962:1), after the advent of what Walter Ong has termed "secondary orality" (1982:135-38), is a question currently receiving considerable scholarly attention. Pope's case serves to define further the historical dimensions of this literate blindspot, as well as to shed light on some of the problems facing students of orality-literacy today.

II.

Pope is at one with his age in assuming the existence of an original text of Homer's work. Among the illustrations for his subscribers' quarto edition of the *Iliad* is an engraving of a third century B.C. relief, "The Apotheosis of Homer," by Archelaus of Prienne (Pinkwart 1965:15-18). In describing this engraving, "that which of all the Remains [of Homer] has been of late the chief amusement of the Learned," Pope pays meticulous attention to detail:

> We see there a Temple hung with its Veil where Homer is placed on a Seat . . . supported on each side with figures representing the *Iliad* and the *Odysses* . . . . Behind, is Time waiting upon him, and a Figure with Turrets on his Head, which signifies the World, crowning him with the Laurel. Before him is an Altar, at which all the Arts are sacrificing to him as their Deity. On one side of the Altar stands a Boy, representing Mythology, on the other, a Woman, representing History; after her is Poetry bringing the Sacred Fire; and in a long following Train, Tragedy, Comedy, Nature, Virtue, Memory, Rhetorick and Wisdom, in all their proper Attitudes.
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:55)

Pope overlooks neither the footstool under Homer's feet "as he has described in the seats of his Gods," nor the little mice beside it "in Allusion to the *Batrachomyomachia*" (*Twickenham* 7:55). Only the furled manuscript clasped in Homer's right hand escapes his notice. Today, it is impossible to ignore a text in the hand of an oral poet, but for Pope and his contemporaries this manuscript was intrinsic to the creative process and no more worthy of comment

Archelaus of Prienne, "The Apotheosis of Homer"
(Pinkwart 1965, reproduced by permission)

than the hand that held it. Made conspicuous by its absence in this otherwise exhaustive description, the manuscript testifies to the rigidity with which the literate mind, for well over two thousand years after the initial spread of alphabetic literacy, identified the writing surface as the definitive expression of all creative thought.

There were, of course, glimmerings of the truth. Pope himself, drawing on the work of ancient historians, refers to an age before Homer when "History was transmitted by Oral Tradition" (*Twickenham* 7:75), and Robert Wood, later in the eighteenth century, talked of the "power of unlettered memory" in his *Essay on the Original Genius of Homer* (Wood 1775:259; described in A. Parry 1971b:xiii). But not for another century and a half would these moments of insight coalesce into a comprehensive picture of composition-in-performance.

To a certain extent, the limitations of the "pre-Parry" literate mind were counterbalanced for the Augustans by surviving remnants of earlier, more heavily oral times. Living at the highpoint of a rhetorical tradition with roots stretching back to the days of the ancient Greek *rhētor*, Pope approached the task of translation still able to "hear" Homer's poetry. The technology of print, which would tremendously reinforce the centrality of the written text already fostered by the manuscript age, was not completely internalized in the early eighteenth century, and, as Pope's own work will show, it was still encountering opposition. H. J. Chaytor has defined the dynamic between medieval and modern man in relation to the faculties of hearing and seeing:

> Of the few [in medieval times] who could read, few were habitual readers; in any case, the ordinary man of our own times probably sees more printed and written matter in a week than the medieval scholar saw in a year. Nothing is more alien to medievalism than the modern reader . . . pausing to gather the argument of a page in a few swift glances. Nor is anything more alien to modernity than the capacious medieval memory which, untrammelled by the associations of print, could . . . retain in memory and reproduce lengthy epic and elaborate lyric poems . . . . Literature in its early days was produced very largely for public recitation; hence, it was rhetorical rather than literary in character, and rules of rhetoric governed its composition.
>
> (1945:10)

The practice of reading aloud to groups would continue well into the eighteenth century and beyond, but the silent reading that ultimately took precedence made steady headway (Saenger 1982:383-88). Today, "hearing and sight, once disconnected, have become inseparable; when we hear a speaker, the effect of his words is transmitted from the auditory to the visualizing capacity" (Chaytor 1945:7).

The Augustans were somewhat at the midpoint of this process in which audial and visual ultimately became merged. Pope's ability to "hear" Homer, something twentieth-century Homeric scholars are painstakingly trying to approximate, was his birthright as the last major proponent of the English heroic epic. Had he approached the task of translation in the latter half of the eighteenth century, Pope's "hearing" might have been seriously impaired; almost certainly, to our loss, he would have chosen some format other than the heroic couplet, with its medieval echoes. While the closed heroic couplet imposed certain limitations on Pope, as Mack enumerates, it also conferred significant benefits:

> the pentameter couplet bristled with oral and metrical conventions, as did the Homeric hexameter, and in its "epic" formulations had grown used to bearing on its back a whole thesaurus of special figures and locutions. Though neither the conventions nor the locutions were very close to Homer's, they did, and still do, convey a sense of a "made" language, a cunning artifice of meaning and sound, sound often tailored to fortify meaning, which is at its best a possible counterpart to, even if it is not an accurate reflection of, the "made" language of Homer.
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:1xiii)

The Romantic Movement, in its search for Homeric simplicity, would later attack Pope's poetic diction as symptomatic of the new and complex, but during his lifetime an elevated style was still to be admired. Parry called the Augustan age "the one time in English literature when poets used a diction which was at all fixed," and compared it with the traditional language of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The example of fixed diction in English poetry, he explains, shows that "what [Homer's] words and phrases lost in meaning they gained in a kind of charm which pleased the poet and his hearers":

> The making of this diction was due to countless poets and to many generations who in time had found the heroic word and phrase for every thought . . . . And those parts of the diction which did not carry the story itself, since their meaning was not needed for understanding, lost that meaning, but became, as it were, a familiar music of which the mind is pleasantly aware, but which it knows so well that it makes no effort to follow it.
>
> (M. Parry 1933:41-42).

Mack's assessment of the traditional aspects of Pope's translation complements Parry's views:

> Pope's two translations at their best become echo chambers, wherein . . . one may hear reverberations from the whole literary culture of the West . . . . we confront a method of generalization via metaphorical allusion that is both Pope's greatest difference from Homer and a paramount factor in the success with which he often truly makes one feel timeless. . . .
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:1xiii-1ix)

Pope was neither to benefit from nor to contend with the upsurge of classical scholarship or the changing attitudes towards poetic diction after his death. In his preface to the *Iliad* and in related documents, therefore, we possess an expression of direct empathic response, from giant of the residually oral Augustan epic to giant of the oral epic past (Brower and Bond 1965:13).

III.

As noted above, although Pope talks of an age in which history was transmitted by "Oral Tradition," he believed that period to have greatly preceded Homer. For the purposes of the modern student of oral tradition, however, he generously mitigates this misapprehension by contrasting Homer with Virgil, whose hexameters reflect two hundred years of Roman literacy. While Pope acknowledges that both poets share the ability to bring about "the Correspondence of their Sounds to what they signify'd," he also states unequivocally that Homer has "not only the richest Head but the finest Ear in the World," something discernible by "whoever will but consult the Tune of his Verses even without

understanding them" (*Twickenham* 7:11). In his comparisons of the *Iliad* and the *Aeneid*, he calls attention to characteristics of oral poetry now known to hold true across geographical, cultural, and historical boundaries: it is participatory for both narrator and audience; it focuses on actions rather than analysis; its subject matter, largely agonistic, comes from the human life world (Ong 1982:36-49; Foley 1985). "What he writes," Pope says of Homer,

> is of the most animated Nature imaginable; everything moves, everything lives, and is put in Action. If a Council be call'd, or a Battle fought, you are not coldly inform'd of what was said or done as from a third Person; the Reader is hurried out of himself by the Force of the Poet's imagination, and turns in one place to a *Hearer*, in another to a Spectator .. .
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:4; emphasis added)

On the other hand, in Virgil,

> the dramatic part is less in proportion to the Narrative; and the Speeches often consist of general Reflections or Thoughts, which might be equally just in any Person's Mouth upon the same Occasion . . . . we oft'ner think of the Author himself when *we read Virgil*, than when *we are engag'd in Homer*: all of which are the effects of a colder Invention, that interests us less in the Action describ'd: *Homer makes us hearers*, and *Virgil leaves us readers*.
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:8; emphasis added)

The stress placed on the role of the "Hearer" in relation to Homer's work, while never more explicit than here, indicates that Pope's insight into the nature of Greek epic far exceeded the received views of his time. The transcribed words of the oral poet retain the ability to "make" even eighteenth-century readers, Pope and his peers, into hearers. Both the poet and his audience participate in each performance, a direct, interpersonal, and active process which "hurries" the reader "out of himself." The reader of Virgil, on the other hand, is "left" in that condition: passive recipient of a one-way communication facilitated only by the writing surface.

Pope was well aware that his ability to appreciate the sound of Homer was rapidly becoming a lost art, and he indicates as much in his preface: "Homer (as has been said) is perpetually

applying the Sound to the Sense, and varying it on every new Subject. Few Readers have the Ear to be Judges of it, but those who have will see I have endeavor'd at this Beauty.'' (*Twickenham* 7:20-21). While his concern with the relation between sound and sense considerably predates his work on Homer, Pope does not expand it to encompass the active role of the "Hearer" until he is well advanced in the work of translating the *Iliad*. Earlier, in a 1710 letter to Henry Cromwell, and possibly as early as 1706 (Sherburn 1956, vol. 1:106n), he outlines his views:

> It is not enough that nothing offends the Ear . . . but a good Poet will adapt the very Sounds, as well as Words, to the Things he treats of . . . . This is evident ev'ry where in Homer and Virgill, and no where else that I know of to any observable degree . . . . [This] is what very few observe in Practise, and is undoubtedly a wonderful force in imprinting the Image on the Reader.
>
> (*Ibid*.:107-8)

In 1711, we encounter the same doctrine, in verse, in the "Essay on Criticism":

> 'Tis not enough no Harshness gives Offence,
> The *Sound* must seem an *Eccho* to the *Sense* (364-65).

But only as he prepares a preface for the first four books of the *Iliad*, after experiencing the intimacy with his author consequent on the long and intense process of translation, does Pope replace the earlier, more passive view of readers—on whom the poet's successful linking of sound and sense is a "force in imprinting the Image" —with the phrase in his preface implying, for at least some readers, active participation as "Hearers": "Few Readers have the Ear to be Judges of it, but those who have will see that I have endeavor'd . . . ." Whether or not Pope achieved an increased sensitivity to the auditory aspects of Homer's poetry as a direct result of his work as translator, he clearly made a conscious decision to consider the reader as "Hearer" in the "sound and sense" passage of the preface, a passage which in all other respects parallels the earlier treatments of "sound and sense" in his correspondence and the "Essay on Criticism."

It is fascinating, in this context, to consider how tightly bound to his production the oral performer becomes: Homer is so inextricably present in his work that Pope, analyzing a printed version of the poem two thousand years after its composition, can

be exquisitely aware of the active presence of the poet. The verses, he says, "flow with so much ease, as to make one imagine *Homer* had no other care than to transcribe as fast as the *Muses* dictated," whereas Virgil was forced to use "the utmost Diligence in working up a more intractable Language to whatsoever Graces it was capable of" (*Twickenham* 7:11). As Albert Lord has defined it, oral composition is a fluid process of "creation and recreation in performance" (1960:9), a direct expression of the creative act unhindered by intermediate translation to textual form—a process easily compatible, in effect, with Pope's fanciful reference to "dictating Muses." For the literate poet, on the other hand, composition is laborious, and no one who has ever put pen to paper (or finger to key) can avoid identifying with Pope's image of Virgil "working up" his "more intractable language"—language as broken up into arbitrarily designated component parts and attached by means of an implement to the writing surface. Through his choice of images, Pope attributes to Virgil a mode of composition similar to his own, while remaining baffled by the nature of the corresponding process in Homer.

The catch-all metaphor of the "dictating Muses" complements the contextual setting for the manuscript which remained unnoticed in Pope's description of "The Apotheosis of Homer." Both Archelaus' semi-divinity and Pope's frenzied transcriber presuppose an ultimate textual form for their creative effusions, but in each case the very profusion and variety of creative output defies any attempt to explain the technical aspects of this implied conversion to text. Reflected in these images is the long-standing bewilderment with which Homeric scholars, long before and after Pope, attempted to explain the difference between Homer and later poets. They inevitably confronted their inability to do very little more than state the obvious: there was "something different" about Homer (A. Parry 1971b:xix).

Parry and Lord would later provide the definitive explanation for such extremes of difference in the work of the two classical giants, by showing that all distinctive features of Homeric poetry can be traced to the traditional, cumulative nature of oral poetry and its economy of composition: "the dependence of the choice of words and word-forms on the shape of the hexameter line" (A. Parry 1971b:xix). Even in the absence of any such epistemological tools with which to distinguish the oral world of Homer from the later literate age, however, Pope successfully contrasts the

immediacy of composition-in-performance with the distancing effect of composition-in-writing:

> *Homer* seems like his own *Jupiter* in his Terrors, shaking *Olympus,* scattering the Lightnings, and firing the Heavens; *Virgil* like the same Power in his Benevolence, counselling with the Gods, laying Plans for Empires, and regularly ordering his whole Creation.
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:12)

Another aspect of oral poetry that rises near the surface in Pope's preface to the *Iliad* concerns its role as compendium for the accumulated knowledge of a culture. The song of the oral poet is not limited by his own store of personal wisdom, however great, but represents the wisdom of society as refined, developed, and handed down over centuries. In a 1708 letter, written well before he could have conceived any practical plan for translating Homer, Pope puzzles over "that noble simplicity, which runs through all [Homer's] works; (and yet his diction, contrary to what one would imagine consistent with simplicity, is at the same time very copious) . . ." (Sherburn 1956, vol. 1:44). When this thought is reformulated for Pope's postscript to the *Odyssey*, in 1725, it displays a considerable advance in understanding, and yet a certain note of puzzlement over the many ways in which Homer seems to step outside his role as poet remains:

> *Homer* seems to have taken upon him the character of an Historian, Antiquary, Divine, and Professor of Arts and Sciences; as well as a Poet. In one or other of these characters he descends into many particularities, which as a Poet only perhaps he would have avoided.
>
> (*Twickenham* 10:390)

All subsequent attempts to approximate this scope, Pope asserts in the *Iliad* preface, fall far short of the mark:

> It is certain there is not near that Number of Images and Descriptions in any Epic Poet; tho every one has assisted himself with a great Quantity out of him: And it is evident of Virgil especially, that he has scarce any Comparisons which are not drawn from his Master.
>
> (*Twickenham* 10:390)

Virgil is shown to possess further limitations:

> for want of so warm a Genius, [he] aided himself by taking in a more extensive Subject, as well as a greater

> Length of Time, and contracting the Design of both Homer's Poems into one, which is yet but a fourth part as large as his.
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:5-6)

While some of Pope's views on the primacy of Homer can be attributed to the doctrine of primitivism, which assumed a progressive loss of perfection following Adam's fall, he also attributes epic poetry's severe diminution in scope after Homer to a more immediate cause, which he characterizes as a change in the "Mode of Learning":

> For when the Mode of Learning chang'd in the following Ages and Science was deliver'd in a plainer manner, it then became as reasonable in the more modern Poets to lay it (Invention) aside, as it was in Homer to make use of it. And perhaps it was no unhappy Circumstance for Virgil that *there was not in his Time that Demand upon him* of so great an Invention ... .
>
> (*Twickenham* 17:6-7; emphasis added)

In fact, a major intellectual reorientation had taken place between the ages of Homer and Virgil, coincident with the rise of alphabetic literacy. Ong characterizes this shift as a process through which "deeply interiorized alphabetic literacy first clashed head-on with orality" (1983:79), and even Plato reacted to the new technology of writing in much the same way as many people today react to computers, by warning that it would be destructive of memory. Discussing the "propriety and impropriety" of writing, Plato recounts a story of Socrates about an Egyptian king who rejected the new invention of letters, telling their inventor that

> . . . this invention will produce forgetfulness in the minds of those who learn to use it, because they will not practise their memory. Their trust in writing, produced by external characters which are no part of themselves, will discourage the use of their own memory within them.
>
> (*Phaedrus* 274c-75a)

Plato recognized the latent power of the written word, but could hardly have foreseen the ruthless efficiency with which the spread of alphabetic literacy would displace the previous means of storing and transmitting ideas, even to the point of eliminating it from popular memory. Pope's description of "The Apotheosis of Homer"

brings this efficiency into striking relief: the set of assumptions informing his discussion of the sculpture, preventing him from "seeing" the manuscript, had already become entrenched over two thousand years earlier, long enough before the lifetime of the sculptor Archelaus—who lived not two centuries after Plato—for the artist to consider a manuscript as highly appropriate to his composition. In the mind of Archelaus, Homer was literate.

Plato stated the dangers to memory inherent in the new technology, and Pope, deriving from his study of Homer an intuitive sensitivity to the nature of oral poetry, seizes upon the result: the age of literacy no longer demanded of the poet the kind of "invention" out of which he could produce that

> vast Comprehension of Images of every sort, where we see each Circumstance of art and Individual of Nature summoned together by the Extent and Fecundity of his Imagination, to which all things, in their various Views, presented themselves in an Instant, and had their Impressions taken off to Perfection at a Heat ...
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:9)

An imagination capable of taking in the world "in an instant," and of bringing its impressions to perfection "at a heat," is once again consistent with the fanciful "dictating Muses" while remaining quite at odds with a poet laboriously "working up" his material—a poet no longer able to draw on a memorized store of epic formulas developed and passed on over generations.

IV.

As Chaytor's analysis of differences between medieval and modern readers illustrates, responses to auditory and visual stimuli were separate functions in the Augustan age to a much greater extent than they are today. Pope stood not only at the end of the long tradition of the *rhētor*, but at the beginning of one in which the reader—the silent reader—would become a significant factor in Western literary life. How else are we to explain his sensitivity not only to the active and participatory nature of orality, but to its opposite as well: the passive and minimally participatory nature of full-blown literacy. Even Pope's comments on "Homer's Repetitions" belie to some extent these divided sympathies: while his insights are applauded today (*Twickenham*

7:lxii-lxiv; Brower and Bond 1965:25ff), his tone is simultaneously defensive and apologetic as he strives to preserve the beauty of the original without striking too sour a note in the ears of his readers:

> Upon the whole, it will be necessary to avoid that perpetual Repetition of the same Epithets . . . . I hope it is not impossible to have such a Regard to these, as neither to lose so known a Mark of the Author on the one hand, nor to offend the Reader too much on the other.
>
> (*Twickenham* 7:20)

Pope's overriding concern to do no disservice to Homer as he recasts him in a form acceptable to contemporary tastes is evident throughout his correspondence and critical commentary. He "did not court the candor, but dared the judgement of his reader," says Samuel Johnson:

> he examined lines and words with minute and punctilious observation, and retouched every part with indefatiguable diligence, till he had nothing left to be forgiven.
>
> (1905, vol. 3:221)

Such exhaustive attention to detail, while productive of remarkable depth of understanding, inevitably placed him under great pressure. "What terrible moments does one feel after one has engaged for a long work," Pope said to Joseph Spence in 1739,

> I wished anybody would hang me, a hundred times. It sat so heavily on my mind at first that I often used to dream of it, and so do sometimes still.
>
> (Spence 1966, vol. 1:84)

As late as the year before his death he continued to dream "of being engaged in that translation and got about halfway through it, and being embarrassed and under dreads of never completing it" (*Ibid*., vol. 1:83). In November of 1725, with the long-awaited end of the project in sight (the final volumes appeared in the following June), Pope wrote in reaction to negative responses from critics he had worked so hard to please:

> When I translate again I will be hanged; nay I will do something to deserve to be hanged . . . rather than drudge for such a world as is no judge of your labour. I'll sooner write something to anger it, than to please it.
>
> (Sherburn 1956, vol. 2:341)

"The Dunciad Variorum," published in 1727, was an apparent fulfillment of this threat, with its iconoclastic opening couplet:

> Books and the man I sing, the first who brings
> The Smithfield Muses to the ears of Kings.

These lines were changed in the later version, "The Dunciad, in Four Books," but the poem retained its focus on printed matter as an intrusive and levelling force. In *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, McLuhan interprets Pope's "Dunciad" not only as a parody expressing generalized anger, but as a very specific comment on the effects of the expansion of printing, and he cites Pope's notes to the poem, written in the persona of Martinus Scriblerus:

> We shall next declare the occasion and the cause which moved our poet to this particular work. He lived in those days when (after providence had permitted the Invention of Printing as a scourge for the Sins of the learned) Paper also became so cheap, and printers so numerous, that the deluge of authors cover'd the land: Whereby not only the peace of the honest unwriting subject was daily molested, but unmerciful demands were made of his applause, yea of his money, by such as would neither earn the one, or deserve the other; At the same time, the Liberty of the Press was so unlimited that it grew dangerous to refuse them either: For they would forthwith publish slanders unpunish'd... sculking under the wings of an Act of Parliament . . . .
>
> (*Twickenham* 5:49)

On emerging from the world of Homer which he had inhabited for over twelve years as translator, Pope perceives his own world threatened by the inroads of print technology. "I mean no more translations," he wrote to Swift in 1725, "but something domestic, fit for my own country, and for my own time" (Sherburn 1956, vol. 2:321-22). Abandoning, for the moment, the banner of "unity of sound and sense" so integral to his outlook as translator, he now decries in the "Dunciad" the "separation of words from their functions" (McLuhan 1962:258). His heroine, Dulness, proposes an exercise "in hearing." The works of two "voluminous Authors" are to be read without stop, "one in verse, and the other in prose," and the inevitable result is that the audience falls fast asleep (*Twickenham* 5:295). "Pope is telling the English world what Cervantes had told the Spanish world and Rabelais the French

world concerning print," says McLuhan. "It is delirium. It is a transforming and metamorphosing drug that has the power of imposing its assumptions upon every level of consciousness" (1962:259-60).

Pope's objections to the new technology of print are similar in focus to Plato's objections to writing. The printing press, in Pope's view, has brought chaos to the land, and by the time he adds Book IV to the second "Dunciad," the harmonious and balanced tableau we recall from "The Apotheosis of Homer" is in ruins: Dulness now occupies the throne, while

> Beneath her foot-stool *Science* groans in Chains,
> And *Wit* dreads Exile, Penalties and Pains.
> There foam'd rebellious *Logic gagg*'d and bound,
> There, stript fair *Rhet'ric* languish'd on the ground;
> His blunted Arms by *Sophistry* are born,
> And shameless *Billingsgate* her Robes adorn.
>
> (IV:21-26)

The speaking arts, along with the intelligence that informed them, are vanquished and enslaved: logic is voiceless and disarmed, rhetoric reduced to the level of a screaming fishwife. When the readers whom the transcribed text of Homer could "hurry out of themselves" and make into "Hearers" are forced to listen to a modern printed work read aloud, they lose consciousness: the Muses are dead. In the revised "Dunciad," Pope's last work, the poet who did so much to bring his world, and ours, in contact with a former way of being, now bends his genius to the task of holding off the damaging onslaughts of a new one.

V.

If Parry's assessment of Augustan diction is correct, one reason why Pope's *Homer* continues to command an audience—even though demand has considerably declined since the first triumphant century—rests in its being the last retelling of Homer in English able to echo something of the form and music of the original. We stand on the brink of the electronic age as Pope stood on the brink of the typographic, and whereas his sensitivity to the auditory came from the past ours comes from the future—the secondary orality which once again, like the primary orality of Homer, allows the storing and transmission of ideas

without intermediate translation to text.

Further study of the opposing pressures of audial and visual in Pope's age may well provide continuing insights into the corresponding pressures of our own. During the more single-mindedly visual nineteenth century, the manuscript in Homer's hand, figuratively speaking, attracted enough attention to become the subject of considerable speculation. By the early twentieth century, the intuitive recognition of the obvious, after trembling on the brink of conscious expression for centuries (in statements such as Pope's "Homer had no other care than to transcribe as fast as the Muses dictated"), virtually burst into public awareness. Science had spearheaded an assault on the fixed text, and Parry's exhaustive research into the formulaic nature of Homeric poetry, which Pope could do no more than touch on, had prepared him more than anyone else to carry the battle through to its conclusion. As Ong summarizes, "although Parry's work has been attacked and revised in some of its details, the few totally unreceptive reactions to his work have mostly by now simply been put aside as products of the unreflective chirographic-typographic mentality which at first blocked any real comprehension of what Parry was saying and which his work itself has now rendered obsolete" (1983:27).

If the key to the Homeric Question was lost in the transition from orality to literacy in the fourth century, as "The Apotheosis of Homer" testifies, and if Pope made his insightful statements at the close of the rhetorical tradition and amidst the initial inroads of print technology, then it follows logically that its resolution should occur during a third cognitive transition: the initial clash between typographic culture and the secondary orality of the new electronic age, which has brought with it a technology able to record any number of "dictating Muses."

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The Oral Tradition and Middle High German Literature

Franz H. Bäuml

Serious concern with the oral tradition as it existed before and side by side with Middle High German written literature is linked in Middle High German studies to the introduction of the theory of oral-formulaic composition (henceforth referred to as the Theory).[1] True, the existence of an oral tradition has never seriously been doubted, but, beyond rather general notions of recurrent structural elements and hypotheses of a development of oral narrative texts in verse from song to epic,[2] hypotheses which saw the oral text for the most part through the spectacles of literacy as a basically stable unit subject to alteration and adulteration, the mechanics of an oral tradition played no role in research concerned with Middle High German literature. And to this day we know practically nothing about the oral performances of the vernacular lyric of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.[3] Research on the oral tradition of epic poetry and its relationship to the written transmission, however, received more than a negligible impetus from the Theory, despite its general rejection, particularly on the part of German germanists.[4] In this survey of the impact of the Theory on Middle High German studies, I shall therefore neither pass over the sins of the representatives of the Theory in silence, nor suppress my own view that the application of the Theory, amended and stripped of its early enthusiasms, has set in motion a current of research on the interrelationships between literacy and orality which promises to illuminate more than one dark corner of literary and social history.[5]

The initial approaches to Middle High German texts with the concepts of the Theory were rather scattered. One of the earliest was Alain Renoir's essay, "Oral-Formulaic Theme Survival. A Possible Instance in the '*Nibelungenlied*'" (1964), which identifies

the theme of "the hero on the beach," a fairly frequent occurrence in Anglo-Saxon poetry, in stanza 1837, 1-3 of the *Nibelungenlied*. Renoir considers the "point-to-point correspondence between the Anglo-Saxon oral-formulaic theme . . . and the occurrence in that poem a survival rather than a mere coincidence" (75). If this is so, then, as Renoir suggests, "that theme must necessarily go back to a time antedating the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain" (*idem*). This argument would be unassailable, were there not one weakness in it: the "point-to-point correspondence" of the theme's formulation in the *Nibelungenlied* to its Anglo-Saxon formulations is less than perfect. Crowne (1960) describes the theme as involving (1) a hero on the beach, (2) with his retainers, (3) in the presence of a flashing light, (4) at the beginning or end of a journey. All of this fits the passage of the *Nibelungenlied*, except point (1): Volker is not on a beach, but standing at a door. Whether Renoir's suggestion that he therefore "stands at the junction between two worlds exactly like the 'hero on the beach'" is sufficient to establish a correspondence capable of carrying the rest of the argument must be left to the individual judgment.

Michael J. Capek's aim, in "A Note on Oral Formulism in the *Nibelungenlied*" (1965) is modest. Suspecting that "at least one of the epic poems of the Middle High German period, the *Nibelungenlied*, may . . . reflect an oral tradition" (487), Capek shows how an A-line frame may consist of a variety of forms of a formulaic system, and cites numerous examples of A-lines containing "mære" -all of them representing one or another of three types of syntactic patterns. The stress on the syntactic pattern as the essence of the oral formula is noteworthy.

In the same year there appeared "Notes on Formulaic Expressions in Middle High German Poetry" by W. Schwarz.[6] The author's purpose is "to enquire into the history of individual formulae and to observe how variants are introduced into the word pattern and how, in spite of these changes, the essential idea of the formula is preserved and how its traditional language fits in with the tenor of the new literary work."[7] The basis for his investigation is the formula "liep als der lîp" with its variation "lieber dan der lîp." The evidence suggests that, with few exceptions, the phrase (1) "implies man's superiority" (65) and "indicates man's attitude toward his wife" (63); or (2) refers "to a person's nearest relations or to friends" (66). Schwarz concludes that the formula was generally "known to the poets and to the

public," and that its meaning "was modified under the impact of courtly poetry" (68), when its use diminished and where it could refer to intensity of feeling, only to revive later in its older sense.

In 1967 Michael Curschmann published one of the most important essays on the Theory. A critical review of research, the article expands the area of discussion to include several theoretical issues. Noteworthy, in this respect, is Curschmann's introduction of the work of Maximilian Braun and Theodor Frings on Serbo-Croatian heroic song and the Russian *bylina* into the discussion of the Theory. His suggestion that Frings' and Braun's terminology "enables us to arrive at a clearer picture of the manner in which oral poetry is composed," that is, "back and forth between the spheres of content and form" (40), has unfortunately not been heeded; an investigation of orally composed medieval texts in the light of Frings' and Braun's concepts of "theme" (*Thema*), "pattern of action" (*Handlungsschema*), "motifs" (*Motive*), and "formulas of action" (*Handlungsformeln*) might have benefitted some structural analyses of texts presumed to have been orally composed.

Of particular significance is Curschmann's rhetorical question: "Is it really possible to make a strict and methodologically valid distinction between written and oral poetry on the basis of composition by motif and pattern, and consequently, by formula?" (44). The distinction between oral and written composition as "contradictory and mutually exclusive" (Lord 1960:129) is peculiar to the Theory, and is obviously of the greatest consequence for medieval texts, some of which exhibit evidence of oral composition, but all of which are transmitted in writing. Therefore a comparison "between twentieth-century Yugoslavian singers and . . . Caedmon or Cynewulf would be purely hypothetical;" hence also the difficulty of generalizing the observation of Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord that Yugoslavian singers "find it difficult either to recite slowly enough for someone to follow in long-hand or (if they are literate) to write their songs down themselves (Curschmann 1967:45). If one assumes with Francis P. Magoun that certain Anglo-Saxon poems are written recordings of oral performances, "the singer would have had to recite very slowly, much slower in fact than he would have to in our days of better transcribing techniques . . . . Can we expect him to have tried carefully to preserve in this process the oral nature of his composition? The same reservations apply if we assume that he

dictated to himself . . . . In either case, for the finished product to be strictly oral, the singer would have had to possess the modern scholar's awareness of an absolute difference between written and oral. And if the singer had simply sung, without paying attention to the scribe's capacity, these texts would be even more garbled than we think they are" (*idem*).

As a consequence of these difficulties, Curschmann appears at one point to favor the notion of "transitional texts," by which he understands texts showing "the characteristics of oral composition, although they might have been composed pen in hand and subject to overall planning which the process of additive oral composition does not permit" (*idem*). An example is J. Rychner's view of the conditions of diffusion of the *chansons de geste*, the texts of which are written down "par des jongleurs pour des jongleurs, heureux de soulager leur mémoire et d'assurer la conservation de leur répertoire, dans d'authentiques manuscrits de jongleurs" —though Rychner makes no use of the term "transitional" (1955:36; see also Pàroli 1975a:147-68). Curschmann notes the difference in stress between Rychner's study and the work of Parry and Lord: Rychner is concerned mainly with the diffusion of the *chansons de geste*; Parry and Lord concentrate on the process of composition. But of course to the extent that for Rychner the *chansons de geste* are oral compositions recreated in individual performances, these re-compositions in performance are part of their diffusion, and to the extent that for Parry and Lord the process of oral-formulaic composition is traditional, it is likewise part of the diffusion of oral texts.

Here an issue emerges, which, though largely unrecognized, was to become ever more pressing in the years to come: the necessity of a more precise definition of the processes involved in the oral transmission of texts. Curschmann's recognition of this need becomes obvious in his brief discussion of the functions of the Old French *laisse* and the Old English and Old Saxon *fit* as both a text-internal and an external (recitative) organizing element (Rychner), not only as part of the process of oral composition and performance but also as a characteristic of "literary" texts. For

> even a "writer" would do well to organize his material in the same way for easy consumption . . . . He may then try to copy as faithfully as possible the version of a given poem existing in his mind or accessible to him during someone else's performance. This is the

> scribe-poet as opposed to the singer-poet and the writer-poet. As has been said before, he is likely to produce a garbled "oral" text. The *Hildebrandslied* is a good example. The writer-poet, on the other hand, uses the same method of adopting oral characteristics of style for compositional purposes beyond the scope of oral poetry. How do we distinguish between their works? At worst they will show no significant difference; at best the writer-poet's deliberate use of formulaic language, composition by motifs, and standard patterns, etc., will be recognizable as such, . . . Most Anglo-Saxon poetic texts would in one way or another fall into this group. Perhaps we should not speak of transitional texts at all.[8]

Since the view that the Old Saxon *Heliand* is orally composed is untenable in light of its numerical-symbolic structure (Rathofer 1962), it serves Curschmann as example of a "case in which formulaic diction, lack of enjambement, etc., are clearly not indicative of the mode of composition" (50-51), and as a clear illustration of the importance of Claes Schaar's (1956) often ignored dictum, that the formulicity of oral poetry does not imply the orality of formulaic poetry. The complexity of this issue is further illustrated by the examples of the *Orendel* and of *Salman und Morolf*: formulaic diction combined with literal repetition of passages of considerable length and cross-references of motifs and symbols, making "ad hoc oral composition . . . almost out of the question" (51). Curschmann's explanation of instances in which "many of the formulas are coined by this particular author for this particular poem and then constantly repeated" (*idem*) by reference to M. Delbouille's (1959) findings in the *chansons de geste*, however, has the weakness of resting on a very limited total fund of transmitted formulae. It is therefore entirely hypothetical to conclude that "some are adaptations of more widely-known ones, others are known from this poem only" (*idem*). To some degree, of course, such a statement is necessarily hypothetical, no matter how plentiful our bases of comparison are, since we can never be sure of untransmitted evidence. The limitations of the evidence from Middle High German sources render such a conclusion exceedingly insecure. But be this as it may, Curschmann's illustrations of the complexity of the questions posed by the theory of oral-formulaic composition—a considerable complexity even if

the questions were limited to the process of composition and not extended to other facets of transmission—serves as a warning, not always heeded, against oversimplification.

Also in 1967 the first extensive application of the Theory to the text of the *Nibelungenlied* appeared in an article by Franz H. Bäuml and Donald J. Ward. It is the primary purpose of this essay to aim the concepts of the Theory at the various theories of the transmission of the *Nibelungenlied* in developmental layers, represented by the once all but monolithic theory advanced by Andreas Heusler (1929). The concept used for this purpose is primarily the formula, aside from some remarks about narrative themes and the use of enjambement.

Since a formula is recognizable as such only on the basis of its recurrence, the formulaic analysis of any text requires a basis of comparison. Two such bases are possible: either the text as a whole, or the entire tradition as far as it is transmitted in the form of the genre of the text to be analyzed. The choice will be determined by the purpose of the analysis and the sufficiency of the text. Bäuml and Ward limit their basis of comparison to the Bd-text of the *Nibelungenlied*, which, with its 9,516 verses, is ample for the purpose (cp. 365, n. 42). Had their purpose been to analyze the formulaic content of the *Nibelungenlied* as a whole, rather than merely a selection of stanzas of particular significance to Heusler's theory, a more comprehensive basis of comparison would have been desirable. The more limited choice, however, appears suitable for the purpose of pointing out the untenability of Heusler's theory, since it necessarily results in an underestimation of the formulaic content of the text.[9]

Since the essay is designed to cast doubt upon Heusler's theory by demonstrating the role of oral-formulaic composition in the transmission of passages regarded by Heusler as "late," "written," and textually stable, establishment of sufficient formulaic densities (which, moreover, are underestimated) for those passages was thought to accomplish the purpose. But its fundamental mistake is that it identifies a high density of oral formulae with oral composition (363-364 and n. 37). Nevertheless, the formulicity of the *Nibelungen*-text, even if it must be considered-as now appears to be the case-a written stylistic device, is a reflection of oral formulism. If this oral formulism characterized the oral tradition, the Heuslerian theory is untenable, even though one cannot establish its untenability by a line-by-line formulaic

analysis; the mechanics of oral-formulaic composition negate the possibilities of textual stability so necessary to Heusler's theory.

In view of the misunderstandings it has generated, it should be noted that this essay is not guilty of maintaining that the *Nibelungenlied* is an oral poem or a record of one; nor does it show the *Nibelungenlied* to be an oral poem while maintaining that it is written; nor is it the first essay on the *Nibelungenlied* to claim its descent from oral transmission: this last assumption has been common since the beginning of *Nibelungen*-studies with Karl Lachmann, and Andreas Heusler is no exception (353). And nowhere does the essay claim that the extant texts of the *Nibelungenlied* are written records of oral performances (cf. 363, 382). It merely claims that the *Nibelungenlied*, as we have it, is the work of a writing poet (362, 363) with an oral past (which probably extended into contemporaneity with written transmission) in the sense of the Theory.

In 1970 Edward R. Haymes' dissertation (Erlangen) was published under the title *Mündliches Epos in mittelhochdeutscher Zeit*.[10] The first part of the book is essentially a summary of the theory of oral-formulaic composition with brief glances at the work of Maximilian Braun, Alois Schmaus (1953, 1956, 1960), and the early studies devoted to the application of the theory to Old English texts. The discussion turns around the definition and function of the formula, formulaic density as indicator of oral composition, the definition of the narrative theme, and transitionality, without a critical analysis of the problems posed by these topics. At the same time a certain amount of conceptual inaccuracy, particularly in the definitions of "oral" and "written," confuses the issues here and throughout the work.

The second part of Haymes' study is devoted to a comparison of the formula "liute unde lant" in the *Nibelungenlied* and in Gottfried's *Tristan*, and to the fact that the use of this formula in the *Nibelungenlied* is metrically bound, that is, recurrent in three metrical patterns, whereas in *Tristan* "the poet had to work the formula into a line specifically designed for the purpose in every instance" (46). The question which has subsequently become increasingly important, namely why a writing poet should do this, does not arise. Instead, Haymes extends his illustration of formulism by comparing examples of "sprach," "-lîche," and "-lîch" in the *Nibelungenlied, Kudrun, Tristan,* and one hundred stanzas each of *Wolfdietrich A* and *Ortnit A*, with similar results.

The discussion of themes is devoted to brief analyses of the courtly festival, the action surrounding the delivery of a message (arrival and departure of the messenger and the delivery of his message), the arrival of a stranger, the council, the journey up and down the Danube, the theme of battle, and the war against the Saxons and Danes.

In his discussion of the formula and its function in oral composition, Haymes, following A. Schmaus, represents the view of the formula as "metrical-syntactic system," as distinct from a lexical-semantic definition of the formula. Of course, the formula serves the function of providing a rhythmical/metrical/syntactic organization for an utterance which is to be part of a rhythmically/metrically organized (oral) text. But a recurrence of a limited number of such systems is to be expected in a rhythmically/metrically organized text. And this, of course, is precisely the reason for the organizing function of the formula. An exclusion of meaning from the constitution of a formula, however, is neither required nor made possible by its function as metrical/syntactic system (cp. Minton 1965). A short concluding chapter is devoted to a discussion of the essay by Bäuml and Ward (1967), which, however, is again marred by a lack of conceptual clarity (see Bäuml 1978b).

In an augmentation (1968) of his critical review of research on the *Spielmannsepen* of 1966, M. Curschmann criticizes some of the weaknesses of Bäuml and Ward (1967), particularly the uncritical application of a method abstracted from a living oral tradition to a written medieval text, and the equally uncritical identification of formulaic usage with the oral tradition. In connection with the latter, Curschmann correctly refers to the existence of formulae in written poetry-an existence not denied, but for the *Nibelungen*-text mistakenly discounted by Bäuml and Ward (363). Such formulae can be assimilated by oral-formulaic style. Curschmann lists as examples (1) formulations of social norms, e.g., alliterating duplexes of legal terminology; (2) formulae of Latin rhetoric, often difficult to recognize in the vernacular; (3) short-lived formulae belonging to a certain literary sphere, such as the courtly lyric, and formulaic expressions reflecting the courtly lexicon, which Bäuml and Ward include in their concept of oral-formulaic diction; (4) formulae of daily speech used orally and in writing; (5) formulations determined at least to some extent by rhyme; and (6) formulae which are characteristic of a single author.

Any statistical survey concerned with establishing the orality of a text on the basis of its formulaic density should include such formulae in its count only with reservations (106).

Certainly Curschmann is correct in this contention, but all of these formulations, though perhaps not in their origin part of the oral tradition, can enter that tradition by being converted into oral formulae. This is precisely the reason which led Bäuml and Ward to include formulae of "courtly" origin in their count: if relatively dense formulicity (whatever its origin) in an epic text is (rightly or wrongly) identified with oral transmission, then its occurrence in passages previously thought to be composed "late," "in writing," or by "the last poet" shows these passages to emanate from, or reflect, a process of composition that is at variance with the traditional view. Even if a close identification of formulicity and oral composition is, as it has been shown to be, quite untenable, densely formulaic passages in such a text raise the question of its relationship to the oral tradition; for, whether a text was orally composed or not, dense formulicity links that text to the oral tradition from which its formulae, their structure and their density, come. The fact remains, however, that these are texts that are statistically scarcely distinguishable from oral texts, and for which the oral-formulaic style is not an exclusive determinant of existence but in which it fulfills a "literary" function-such as the *Nibelungenlied* and the *Spielmannsepen*.

The vexing notions of the mutual exclusivity of oral-formulaic and written composition and of the transitional text are the primary concern of Bäuml's "Der Übergang mündlicher zur artes-bestimmten Literatur des Mittelalters: Gedanken and Bedenken" (1968). The problems raised by Lord's (and Parry's) view of the contradictory nature of oral and written composition, and Lord's denial of the possibility of transitional texts (but see Lord 1975:23), are most concisely expressed in the following passage from the *The Singer of Tales* (129):

> . . . the question we have asked ourselves is whether there can be such a thing as a transitional *text*; not a *period* of transition between oral and written style, . . . but a *text*, product of the creative brain of a single individual. When this emphasis is clear, it becomes possible to turn the question into whether there can be a single individual who in composing an epic would think now in one way and now in another, or, perhaps,

> in a manner that is a combination of two techniques. I believe that the answer must be in the negative, because the two techniques are . . . contradictory and mutually exclusive. Once the oral technique is lost, it is never regained. The written technique, on the other hand, is not compatible with the oral technique. . . .

What, then, of texts with high formulaic density composed in writing, like the *Heliand* or *Orendel*? Bäuml seeks to resolve the apparent contradiction between Lord's statement and the undeniable existence of formulaic epic texts composed in writing by distinguishing between "text" and the "process of composition." The process of composition is necessarily either oral in the sense of the Theory, or written; the text, however, may be written and yet belong to the oral tradition if it consists of the elements constituting that tradition, that is, lexical and thematic stereotypes. For the oral tradition not only serves the process of composition by providing a fund of formulae and themes, it also conditions the process of text-reception by the same means. And although the use of formulae by a writing poet can generally be distinguished from that of an oral poet (*Orendel* is a good example), the reason for such use by a writing poet is to be sought in the process of reception. An "oral public" is as dependent on formulism for its understanding of an epic text as an oral poet is for composing one. The introduction of the process of text-reception into the discussion of orality vs. literacy is extended in Bäuml's postscript to the reprint of 1979. Here he advocates increased terminological precision and the consideration of performance, reception, the public's "horizons of expectation" (after Hans Robert Jauss), and the social functions of the types of transmission arising from such considerations, in order to approach medieval literature—both oral and written—in terms of the linguistic manipulation inherent in communication.

In agreement with Curschmann's caution "to begin any further experimentation with a criticism of method" (1968:104), Bäuml and Agnes M. Bruno turn to a number of methodological problems in "Weiteres zur mündlichen Überlieferung des *Nibelungenliedes*" (1972). Among the areas discussed are primarily (1) the social implications of the distinction between preliteracy (e.g. that of Homeric Greece) and illiteracy within a literate society (e.g. medieval and modern Yugoslav illiteracy), (2) the transference of the Theory from its empirical basis in modern South Slavic oral

poetry to an application to medieval texts, (3) the "transitional text" and the existence of written formulaic composition, and (4) the problem of identifying formulae as such on the basis of an inevitably incomplete transmission of recurrences, and a computer-based method of arriving at a hypothetical solution.

The distinction between preliteracy and illiteracy is characterized in its social effects as a distinction between a condition to which all members of a preliterate society are subject, and one which affects only those members of a literate society who are not dependent on the written word for the performance of their social function. And within a literate society, that is, within a society whose myths and rules of conduct are transmitted in writing, the latter are disadvantaged (481). The dependence on literacy of the "privileged" in a literate society does not imply their literacy as individuals: one does not have to be able to read in order to make use of a document, provided one can rely on someone else who can read (488). The notion of illiteracy as linked to a socially disadvantaged condition within a literate society such as that of post-tribal medieval Europe (as distinct from the condition of preliteracy in a preliterate tribal society) is therefore not anachronistic: certainly many in a position to make social decisions of consequence in medieval society around 1200 were individually illiterate, but they all had to have access to the written word. It is one of the consequences of this notion of literacy and illiteracy that it transforms the relationship between orality and writtenness into a social relationship; the transmutation of an orally performed text into writing is accompanied by a new form of reception conditioned by different conventions, and hence by a change in function—a transformation that the notion of a "transitional text" does nothing to define.

The application of the Theory to medieval texts, that is, to texts beyond the contemporary empirical basis on which the theory is based, is still occasionally regarded as methodologically problematic. With the *Nibelungenlied* as point of reference, Bäuml and Bruno see three positions which could be maintained regarding a medieval text exhibiting the characteristics of oral-formulaic composition observed in the South Slavic oral epic: (1) the medieval text was transmitted orally before (and probably also after) its fixation in writing in the manner posited by the Theory; it has always been transmitted in writing and not orally; and it was transmitted orally before (and probably after) its fixation

in writing, but in a manner different from that posited by the Theory. The first position follows logically from the observation that a given medieval epic (in this case the *Nibelungenlied*) (a) exhibits the symptoms of oral composition as stated by the Theory on an empirical basis, (b) is likely to have been transmitted orally for socio-historical reasons, given the illiteracy of the bulk of the population during the period of the transmission of its content from the migrations to the twelfth century, and (c) suddenly appears in written form around 1200 without any evidence of having existed in writing previously. The second position requires the task of making the writtenness of such an epic probable from the period of the migrations to the twelfth century, in defiance of everything we know of medieval culture of that period, as well as of explaining the total loss of such evidence from the period before 1200, after which a relatively plentiful transmission develops. And, of course, the presence of the symptoms of oral transmission in a text transmitted exclusively in writing would have to be explained. The third position, exemplified by Heusler's theory, likewise requires that the function of the symptoms of oral transmission in the sense of the Theory be explained as serving an entirely different function in the service of a different theory of transmission, which, moreover, would be supported rather than negated by empirical evidence. It is true that Bäuml and Bruno neglect to consider the possibility of written formulaic composition and its implications for the existence of an oral tradition as described by the Theory. But the objections to the application of that Theory to medieval texts because it is contemporary and rests on an empirical basis (and they are medieval) raise the question of the legitimacy of employing the modern process of reading, with all its post-medieval, print-derived conventions, on medieval texts. Surely one does not have to be a medieval exegete, dead for seven centuries, to analyze a thirteenth-century text. And surely the applicability of a theory is to be judged in accordance with its explanatory capability.

Bäuml and Bruno deal with the existence of formulaic texts of written origin and the notion of transitionality in the same manner as Bäuml (1968), as basically a matter of definition. In this connection they point out the irrelevance of the examples of written formulaic non-epic texts cited by some critics in opposition to the Theory: the Theory and its criteria of orality are derived from the observation of the composition and performance of epics;

they can therefore be considered as valid only for narrative poetry, no matter how suggestive they may be for other genres.[11]

The problem posed by inevitably incomplete transmission for an identification of formulae was addressed by Bruno's (1974) design and use of a computer program capable of first and second degree statistical analyses, and the employment of multivariate techniques on an input of 19 sample stanzas of the *Nibelungenlied*. Bruno's investigation was designed to distinguish between two stylistic categories, not between oral and written origin of the analyzed texts. Bäuml and Bruno (1972) summarize the results of the investigation, which indicates that a stepwise discriminant analysis and a cluster analysis according to Bruno's model can indeed lead to significant stylistic distinctions and therefore aid in establishing a probability that a given segment of text is or is not formulaically dense.

At present, the concern with the Theory in Middle High German studies can be described diachronically as consisting of two overlapping phases: (1) an introduction of the Theory and attempts at its application to Middle High German texts, primarily the *Nibelungenlied*, and (2) a clarification of concepts and an increasing concentration on the functions of literacy and orality in the Middle Ages in general as well as in specific texts. In this connection the *Nibelungenlied* itself may still, on occasion, play an exemplary role, but it is now subordinated to the more general, and methodologically far more significant, historical and critical concerns with medieval literacy and illiteracy. At the juncture of these two phases stands an article by Hans Fromm (1974).

Fromm devotes himself to a discussion of two challenges to the accepted notion of one poet who was "responsible" for the *Nibelungenlied*, and to a closed, written transmission following a reconstructable oral tradition consisting of stable, memorized texts: the challenge emanating from the criticism by Helmut Brackert (1963) of the assumptions underlying the accepted notions of the written transmission,[12] and that posed by the Theory, represented primarily by the work of Bäuml. The two are not unrelated, for Brackert sees the written transmission of the *Nibelungenlied* neither as emanating from an original and an archetype, nor as closed, but open to interference from the oral tradition at every point. Fromm's criticism of Bäuml's studies is, apart from some possible as well as unquestionable misunderstandings, not only constructive, but it indicates a position toward which Bäuml, not least under

the influence of the work of Curschmann, has moved steadily in the course of time.

First the misunderstandings, both possible and certain. First, in reference to Bäuml and Ward (1967), Fromm describes their position as including the assumption, on the basis of formulaic density, that the written text of the *Nibelungenlied* originated as dictation from orality (54). This is a possible, though not unquestionable, misreading of their position. If Fromm means by "the written text" the transmitted text(s), he misunderstands Bäuml, who sees the transmitted text(s) as the product of an adapting, literate poet. If, however, Fromm refers to the first written text, whenever and wherever it was produced and whatever it may have looked like, he is quite right: Bäuml and Ward regard such a text as originating in the form of a dictation out of the oral tradition. If such a text is presumed to be originally oral, there appears to be no other way of imagining its written origin. Second, Fromm, agreeing with Curschmann, criticizes Bäuml and Ward and all of the scholarship representing the Theory for ignoring the studies of Frings and Braun (55). Certainly, as indicated above, an inclusion of some of the notions of Frings and Braun in the structural-thematic studies concerned with the oral tradition would have been conceptually helpful. Methodologically, however, such an inclusion could easily be regarded as at least irrelevant and at most inappropriate, since the Theory rests on an empirical foundation, whereas the analyses of Frings and Braun do not.

Third, the transferability of Parry's and Lord's definition of the formula, questioned by Fromm, is discussed by Bäuml in a later study (1984). Here it is sufficient to point out that Parry and Lord certainly formulated this definition on the basis of orality empirically observed, but their purpose in doing so was to transfer it to the written texts of Homer. Fourth, Fromm's contention that such a transference of the mechanism of formulaic analysis overlooks the fact that verse itself imposes constraints is correct, and this is, of course, an argument against the employment of purely syntactic patterns as criterion. But this is not the case with the examples Fromm gives (56): all of them are not only syntactically but also semantically formulaic. And since the Homeric texts are subject to similar constraints, it is difficult to see why linguistic variation should be evaluated differently there, as Fromm suggests. Fifth, Fromm's characterization of the literate

vernacular medieval cultures as requiring patterned expression and thus distilling the multiplicity of phenomena into a limited number of patterned expressions (56) is, of course, also correct, and applies to a degree to every culture. But these patterns are not to be equated to the aggregate of formulae constituting a formulaic text. Surely nobody spoke "Nibelungian," and the significant difference between the employment of patterned expression in the romances and in texts such as the *Nibelungenlied* has often been noted.[13]

Sixth, Bäuml's and Ward's definition of "literate" and "illiterate" is not based on the ability or inability of individuals to read or write, hence Fromm's argument (58-59), designed to counter their characterization of literates as "privileged" and illiterates as "disadvantaged," that the emperor Henry II, Philip of Swabia, and others were illiterate, misses the point. They certainly could not have fulfilled their social function without recourse to the written word. It is true that the difference between literates and illiterates was not a matter of prestige, but the argument does not turn on a question of prestige. Seventh, in a series of significant paragraphs Fromm points out the importance for medieval culture of hybrid forms of transmission, such as those of the romances of Chrétien and Hartmann: "It is not fixation in writing that is important, but the fact that the thought-patterns of symbolically transferred reception are transposed into the imaginary realm of exemplary heroic action" (59; my translation). Since the manner in which this realm is imagined, however, depends on its perception, Bäuml would reverse this statement to read: "It is fixation in writing that is important, since the imaginary realm of exemplary heroic action is transposed into the thought-patterns of symbolically transferred reception."

But it is Fromm's elaboration of his notion of hybrid forms of transmission, arising from the "Symbiose von mündlicher and schriftlicher Kultur" ("symbiosis of oral and literate culture," *idem*) that is of particular importance. Hybrid forms are above all to be sought in the realm of "Spielmannsdichtung" ("minstrel poetry"), about which the quantity of scholarship and the extent of our knowledge are best described by saying that the mountain labored and brought forth a mouse. Fromm envisages the origin of the Nibelungen epic in this realm of minstrelsy. This is no doubt so, but two aspects of this supposition must be noted: (1) Fromm speaks of the "Nibelungenepos" in this respect (60), not our transmitted *Nibelungenlied*, and unquestionably he is right in doing

so; and (2) the shadowy realm of "Spielmannsdichtung" itself changed in the course of time and under the pressure of vernacular literacy. Certainly the "Spielmann," the popular performer/reciter of vernacular narrative poetry, whatever his more precise attributes, was all but timeless, but his function and the manner in which he performed it necessarily also changed under the influence of increasing vernacular literacy.

The earlier stages in the transmission of the epic therefore cannot have shared the characteristics of the later stages of, say, the late twelfth century. And it is only in reference to these later stages that one can speak of a symbiotic relationship between literacy and illiteracy. Here, however, in the later stages, performances cannot be assumed to have been quite as socially homogeneous as Fromm sees them in his description of this symbiotic culture: "This symbiotic culture possessed a mediating institution whose significance cannot be overestimated: this was the recitation in the circle of a noble audience. Here written literature and orally transmitted material was received by the same public in the same process" (60; my translation). Certainly it is true that a courtly audience was familiar with both read texts and orally performed texts. But it does not follow that a non-courtly audience was as familiar with readings of written texts as a courtly public. The costs of production of written texts alone limited their use to those circles who could afford them-and these were, of course, the "literate" circles, the members of which required access, direct or indirect, to the written word in the exercise of their social function. That such a situation, and indeed the symbiosis of literacy and orality itself, whatever its structure, necessarily led to differentiation among its constituents, even as it mediated among them, seems clear. But however one may see this process in detail, certainly the Nibelungen epic emanated from the realm of "Spielmannsdichtung," and certainly Fromm is right in postulating a written original of the transmitted versions of the *Nibelungenlied* (61-62). Whether this original itself is a product of the realm of "Spielmannsepik," as Fromm surmises (62), is debatable, since it depends on one's concept of the symbiosis of literacy and orality which characterized that realm in the late twelfth century.

In any case, Fromm is certainly correct in his judgment that the redactions of the *Nibelungenlied* cannot simply reflect different oral versions (61), and that the written original, whatever its literary-historical provenience, was the work of one author. All

this, however, must not be mistaken for a return to the theory of Andreas Heusler: one no longer imagines the roles of single authors of single versions, composed word for word and "gedächtnismäbig überliefert" ("transmitted by memory," Heusler's phrase), to be isolatable in the transmitted text; similarly, the much more problematic but much more realistic view of the oral transmission of the epic provided by the empirical foundation of the Theory and by Brackert's research compels a rejection of the simplistically neat Heuslerian theory and of the assumptions and methods of this theory's foundation; not least, it unmasks as methodologically and historically naive the positivistic exercise of "reconstructing" hypothetical texts for use as tailor-made textual "evidence."

Unique in research concerning the application of the Theory to Middle High German texts is the article by Hans Dieter Lutz (1974), "Zur Formelhaftigkeit mittelhochdeutscher Texte and zur 'theory of oral-formulaic composition'." Lutz concentrates on the methodological basis of the application of the Theory and on the methodological aspects of its structure. After a survey of the role of the formula-exemplified here by the common adjective-substantive combination (cp. Lutz 1975)-in Middle High German studies, and a division of this role into two parts (before Parry and Lord and after Parry and Lord), Lutz turns to a basic methodological question: "The discussion surrounding the 'theory of oral-formulaic composition' makes it . . . obvious that the problem of formulicity is extended to become 'the problem of the explanation of texts' and thus leads to a specific question: 'Does formulicity explain the orality of Middle High German texts?'" (440, my translation).

Lutz sees the Theory as developed from three "presuppositions": (1) Parry and Lord could deduce their Theory from an experimental basis and could test it experimentally; (2) the texts which they analyzed were known to be South Slavic and "oral"; and (3) the central issues of the analyses were the functions, the compositional technique, the structure, the performance, the principles of transmission of these epics. With its several elements the Theory works as a descriptive mechanism for the input "oral epic," and the output describes the organization of this input as resting on themes, formulas, and so forth. It is therefore a descriptive, functional model. The decisive factor in the function of such a model is its purely descriptive nature: Lutz

characterizes it as not conceived to determine the "orality" or "literacy" of a text, for the "orality" of the input is known, and the output merely describes its structural principles (442).

This is obviously not the case when the Theory is applied to Middle High German texts. The question becomes: "Why is a Middle High German text formulaic or not formulaic?" The three "presuppositions" of the Theory thus become irrelevant; the Theory is no longer adequate to the new presuppositions and therefore cannot be used for this purpose. In short, as Claes Schaar (1956) had remarked almost two decades earlier, the terms of the proposition "oral poetry is formulaic" cannot be reversed. A substitute theory is therefore necessary. But the metrical structure of Middle High German verses is free and can be altered by the demands of a formula, whereas the Theory and its concept of a formula is based on a system of an unalterable ten-syllable verse which may affect the structure of a formula, but cannot be affected by it. In short, the substitute theory must be based on a concept of the formula which, in its relationship to metrical structure, is reversible and not asymmetrical. A new definition of the formula must therefore be sought, deduced from a structural description of the texts and containing syntactical, strophic, metrical, rhythmical and verse-combinatorial factors as well as the statistical operations based on these factors. Thus one can achieve not only a structural description of a text or texts, but also a typology of texts and formulae. Where source problems prevent such a procedure, one must have recourse to phenomenological description, and socio-historical, poetological, reception-historical, and communicational analyses, all of which must be kept strictly apart from one another. On this basis the hypothetical definition of the formula can be tested and, if necessary, modified. Only then can a theory be constructed which could replace the Theory and be adequate for all Middle High German texts, epic or not.

Although Lutz' reasoning is correct,[14] the direction which research in this area has taken in recent years may render moot his recommendation for the formation of such a "substitute theory" for Middle High German texts. It should be pointed out, nevertheless, that there is a difference between the application of criteria of formulicity (1) to determine whether a given passage transmitted in writing was part of the oral tradition in its transmitted form, and (2) to determine the nature of the "orality" of certain Middle High German epics before their fixation in

writing. Lutz' formulation of the specific question posed by the problem of formulicity (440) is therefore not sufficiently precise. For there was never any question regarding the oral transmission of certain Middle High German epics such as the *Nibelungenlied*, which preceded and continued alongside their written transmission. The Theory cannot well serve to establish the former orality of the transmission of such texts if it was never in doubt. But the Theory *does* reveal certain characteristics of orality never before brought to bear on these texts by illuminating similarities in the written transmission of certain Middle High German epics (the former oral transmission of which must, for cultural and historical reasons, be assumed) and empirically observed and tested oral transmission. These characteristics are of consequence for an understanding of the literary and social function of oral poetry, the consequences of its fixation in writing, and its reception by the publics of both media, the oral performance and the written text. They may also be of consequence for the establishment of the former orality of certain passages of formerly oral epics with varying degrees of probability, but they are of no consequence for the establishment of the formerly oral transmission of these epics. It is clear that this contradicts some of my earlier statements regarding the possibilities of determining the orality of certain texts previous to their written transmission on the basis of formulaic density. I should have said that formulaic density may indicate the type of oral transmission of such texts previous to their fixation in writing, or the type of oral transmission in existence at the time of their written composition. This type of oral transmission is at variance with previous assumptions, and therefore has a number of critical consequences for our understanding of the evolution of these epics.

Teresa Pàroli, in her monumental study, *Sull'elemento formulare nella poesia germanica antica* (1975b; revs. by Curschmann 1978 and Schwab 1978), treats Old Norse, Old English, Old High German, Old Saxon formulaic texts, as well as the *Nibelungenlied*, to which she devotes some 259 pages. She is principally concerned with formulae introducing direct or indirect speech. This limitation has a number of undeniable advantages, but, in addition to the lack of a clear definition of the concept "formula," one great disadvantage: the ultimate "orality" of such formulae is, if anything, even more difficult to determine than that of less common, less "necessary" formulae. Her aim, however, is

not to establish the "orality" of the *Nibelungenlied* (or of the other texts discussed), but to examine the operation of formulism in the process of composition. In this connection she is able to show the difference in formulism of the principal versions of the *Nibelungenlied*, a difference which leads her to assume several oral traditions at work concurrently with the first written versions. Formulicity itself is to be defined variously, in accordance with the structural conditions determining the procedure of oral composition in various types of texts: alliterative, metrical, end-rhymed, strophic. This, in itself, is very persuasive as a methodological principle, far more persuasive than the contention that, since formulism in South Slavic texts is dependent on the decasyllabic line, its function is not comparable to formulism in Germanic texts. As far as the *Nibelungenlied* is concerned, however, it presupposes that—as Curschmann has pointed out (1978:303)—the "poet" of the extant text(s) of the *Nibelungenlied* who, according to Pàroli, is responsible for its strophic, rhyming double-hemistichs, must have been conversant with two distinct processes of formulaic composition: the process given by the stichic, alliterative form of the traditional texts and its new, strophic, rhyming transformation. It seems more likely that, as Curschmann suggests, the formulaic content of the extant versions is a matter of written style, derived, of course, from the oral tradition.

Edward R. Haymes' *Das mündliche Epos. Eine Einführung in die "Oral Poetry" Forschung* appeared in 1977 (revs. by Green 1979 and Mewes 1980). Its purpose is to provide a historical, methodological, and bibliographical introduction to research concerning the oral epic. It exceeds the primarily descriptive and explanatory function of such an introduction in several respects, of which the following are noteworthy in the present context: the sufficiency of formulaic density as an indication of the oral provenience of a text is placed in doubt (14-17); formulaic analysis as it has been practiced on the basis of Parry's definition of the formula is viewed as problematic (7-13); and among the problems cited as awaiting solutions are the consequences of the Theory for literary and social history, and the cultural consequences of the introduction of writing to a previously non-literate society. In this regard Haymes' introductory volume hints at the direction which the second phase of research in the area of orality and Middle High German literature had begun to take.

K. H. R. Borghart's book on the traces of orality in the

Nibelungenlied (1977)[15] is an instance of the overlap of the earlier into the later phase of research in this area: "The same basis as for the South-Slavic oral epic transmission could also be used for the Germanic epic. Seen from this viewpoint the *Nibelungenlied* as representative of the Middle High German heroic epic, 'though fixed in writing, would be basically the poem of an oral tradition, composed by an oral poet'" (18, my translation; with citation from Lee 1970:341 ff., 348). Testing the validity of this assumption is the burden of the book: "The extent to which such an assumption can claim to be valid for the *Nibelungenlied* shall be shown by an investigation of the formulae and formulaic expressions . . ." (18; my translation)—in short, by an investigation which pays little or no heed to its own problematical nature. An analysis of 10 stanzas from each of three narrative themes, and comparisons of these to other stanzas from other instances of the same narrative themes, yields a formulaic density of 54%. Noteworthy is the relatively strong variation in density among the samples and within each sample. This suggests, among other things, that the transmitted *Nibelungen*-texts are not descended from a "Vortragsexemplar," a "recitation copy," or directly from a dictation or a copy of a dictation, as Borghart surmises (155, 157-158), but that they are descendants from an adaptation, a composition of a writing poet. A comparative investigation of formulism in Hartmann's *Iwein* yields a not surprising total density of 15%. And a comparison of "significant" and "insignificant" words, dislocations of words, and so on in 10 stanzas chosen at random from Mss. A, B, and C understandably leads to no certain conclusion other than a confirmation of the suspicion that the notion of copies of a dictation from an oral performance as basis for the transmission can safely be rejected in favor of the assumption of a written, adapting, composition.

The papers presented at the Fifth International Congress of Germanists in Cambridge, England, in 1975 appeared two years later, including Bäuml's essay on "Lesefähigkeit und Analphabetismus als rezeptionsbestimmende Elemente: Zur Problematik mittelalterlicher Epik" (1977a). The Theory forms the basis of Bäuml's remarks, but not their subject matter. He therefore does not concern himself with a clarification of the problems he admits it poses as a means for determining an oral origin of written medieval epics, and regards it instead as a tool for establishing the hypothesis of an oral transmission *of a certain kind*. For, in the

first place, it is not necessary to "establish" the orality of the transmission of narratives such as the *Nibelungenlied* before their fixation in writing: their oral transmission has not been questioned, and must be assumed in light of the culture of early medieval northern and central Europe. That this oral transmission, however, resembled that indicated or implied by the Theory has not been recognized. Secondly, the hypothesis of this resemblance between medieval oral transmission of some epic texts and the oral transmission implied by the Theory is methodologically not only "safe"; it is logically called for: it is logical (and analogical) to explain the presence in written texts of characteristics identical with those of oral transmission as characteristics of oral transmission, rather than as characteristics of something else, which would leave the functions of these characteristics to be explained in terms of this "something else," since they could no longer be explained by the empirically demonstrated functions of the characteristics of oral transmission. The Theory is therefore significant, inasmuch as it sheds light upon the mechanics and the function of oral epic transmission from a basis of empirical observation, and thus significantly alters previous assumptions in this respect.

Bäuml examines these mechanics and functions in the light of the reception of oral and written texts in various circumstances: reduction of distance between oral narrative and public; homeostasis in a preliterate context; stability; creation of the fictional narrator; split of the oral unity of poet, narrator, performer, and text in a literate context; possibilities of literate ironization of the oral tradition; increase in the distance between text and public; creation of anachronisms by the transition from orality to literacy; and formation of an implied author and an implied public.[16]

An example of an extensive application of some of these concepts in the light of the Theory to elucidate a series of complex problems in literary history—the relationships between orality and the vernacular courtly romance in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries—is Green (1978; revs. by Cambridge 1980 and Minis 1980). To be sure, Green still relies heavily on Herbert Grundmann's (1958) excessively neat distinction between *litteratus* and *illitteratus*, which should now be corrected by the findings of M. T. Clanchy (1979), but his very careful and constructive use of the notion of transitionality clarifies for the texts what Grundmann's definition threatens to obfuscate for medieval society.

In light of the development of methodological self-consciousness in research devoted to the Theory, a critical look at the path followed in its application to Middle High German texts was appropriate; it was promptly forthcoming in Curschmann (1977). Curschmann begins his criticism by raising the "most fundamental" question, i.e., "whether it is legitimate at all to apply a theory developed pragmatically in the field of a living tradition to medieval literary production" (64), and illustrates the various attitudes taken toward the problem of orality in medieval texts with three examples: Armin Wishard's (1972) "unquestioning acceptance" of the Theory, Ruth Hartzell Firestone's "reservations regarding the direct applicability of the Theory" to texts from the Dietrich-cycle and her application of Proppian analysis,[17] and Lars Lönnroth's taking "full account of the special living conditions of his sources, that is, the specifically North-Germanic combination of poetry and prose in the Sagas" (*idem*).[18] The trouble is, however, that the "special living conditions" of any medieval text cannot be identified on the basis of the text alone. We cannot even be certain of the manner in which any medieval text was read, if we do not look beyond it. In the absence of a knowledge of a medieval text's function in the social context for which it was produced, we are reduced to one of three alternatives: (1) we can admit our ignorance, as is increasingly the case with regard to *Minnesang* (see note 3 above); (2) we can anachronize the text by not attempting to correct for the inevitable intrusion of modern (literate) notions of cohesion, as in the case of Heusler's theory of the transmission of the *Nibelungenlied*; or (3) we can test the characteristics of known functions of a text against the medieval text in question, and, if a comparison of these characteristics and the possibility of their analogical function in the medieval text permit it, we can form a hypothesis regarding the "living conditions" of that text; if this hypothesis is supported by the historical data already known, we can accept the hypothesis as an explanation of the possible function of the medieval text in its original cultural environment—until a better hypothesis *with a better functional and historical validation* comes along.

The main concern of Curschmann (1977) is with the applications of the Theory to the transmitted *Nibelungenlied*, with the development of the material "from the late Migration Period to the time around 1200" and the textual diversity existing among its three basic versions (65). Brackert's analysis, being based "on

simple, if highly imaginative and trenchant, textual criticism," is credited with yielding the "most persuasive evidence so far of the presence of a strong oral element in the *Nibelungenlied* tradition well into the thirteenth century," since it is not based "on any particular theory of poetic diction" (*idem*). It is therefore here, "in the area of manuscript diffusion . . . , that any further explication of the *Nibelungenlied* should have begun or, at the very least, looked for support or corrective evidence" (*idem*). Here Curschmann is no doubt correct: Brackert's analysis could have provided considerable support for some early applications of the Theory to the *Nibelungenlied* by providing at least hypothetical historical validation for an assumption of several oral versions as sources for the written transmission.

After a critical review of some conclusions drawn by Haymes and Bäuml, and of the differences between their positions, however, Curschmann finds it "remarkable-and revealing-that two studies for which formulaic usage is the common critical denominator can come to such different conclusions . . . . Moreover, the formulations used by both scholars to characterize as oral the dictated text assumed by both in effect dispose of the Theory as a meaningful tool of literary criticism, for they actually blur the theoretical distinction between written and oral without realizing its critical potential" (66). Of these two points it is the second that is the more important: the remarkability of the differences between Haymes' and Bäuml's conclusions is somewhat lessened if one considers their different aims, methods, samples, and general orientation. That "the formulations used by both . . . to characterize as oral the dictated text" are problematic cannot be denied. And certainly something must be done about the manner in which the Theory's concepts are still commonly formulated, despite all the water that has passed under the bridge since 1967, when these early studies by Bäuml and Ward, Haymes, and Bäuml and Bruno began to appear. But insufficient precision of terms or concepts, inaccuracy, even outright sloppiness in their use, are not sufficient reason to abandon the Theory. They are ample reason for refinement of the concepts and terminology, the burden of later work by Bäuml. That some of these refinements may lead to, or accompany, new dichotomies, such as the notion of the relationship of a disadvantaged illiterate population within a literate culture, and that "it is beginning to look as though the chief purpose of these investigations into the oral character of the *Nibelungenlied* has

been . . . to stress the literary character of the extant text," as Curschmann remarks in reference to Bäuml and Spielmann's article (67), is quite true. But it can scarcely be denied that, partly as a result of precisely these "investigations into the oral character of the *Nibelungenlied*," the extant text and its "literary character" have come to be viewed in a new perspective, that is, as preceded and surrounded by an orality which it reflects in historically significant ways.

Curschmann then summarizes Fromm's argument against Bäuml's contention that illiteracy in the sense of a lack of need for access to written texts implies a disadvantaged status in a literate society. The argument that "literacy did not confer social status" (67) is, of course, quite correct, but not to the point, since it allies "social status" with individual literacy rather than with a social function which requires access (direct or indirect) to written texts as a condition for the exercise of that function. Curschmann's elaborations of Fromm's notion of a symbiotic relationship between literacy and illiteracy are indeed illustrative of such a relationship, but also illustrate its inevitable one-sidedness: *litterati* as well as *illitterati* who required access to writing to fulfill their social duties are amply documented as public for narratives from oral tradition, while the *illitterati* who did not require such access rarely become visible as public for the "courtly" romances. Whether the reason is the obvious economic disadvantage of those who required no access to writing for the exercise of their social function, or the equally obvious disregard of these social groups by the authors of written documentation, or the fact that their circumstances normally excluded them from the circle of auditors at court, the cause and the effect of these reasons is their disadvantaged social status in comparison with those groups whose social function required direct or indirect access to the written word.

Nevertheless, Curschmann is correct in emphasizing that "the idea of a symbiotic culture leads to several general conclusions regarding the applicability of the Theory to medieval situations. Any such attempt must be preceded by careful study of the living conditions and cultural ambience of the document in question . . . . Second, the chief obstacle in the path of this seemingly self-evident approach is the concept of the poetic formula itself and the way in which it is linked to the concept 'oral'" (68-69). The reason for Curschmann's view of the formula as such an "impediment" is that the "definition of formulaic usage . . . is

bound to be at variance with what is formulaic in medieval poetic usage" (69). It can scarcely be denied that an identification of the formulicity of a given text with the oral composition of that text—even if that oral composition is located at some distance from the extant text as in the view of the *Nibelungenlied* advocated by Bäuml, Ward, Bruno, and Spielmann-leads into a cul-de-sac, since it cannot do justice to the historical fact of at least one aspect of the medieval symbiosis of literacy and illiteracy: the unquestionable written-formulaic composition of some vernacular narrative texts in verse. And, as Curschmann points out, Lutz' investigations (1974, 1975) have clarified the degree of applicability of the Theory in methodological respects, and his operational definition of the formula would at least lay to statistical rest several vexing problems of formulaic analysis.

Furthermore, he is certainly correct in his third conclusion: "We have become so mesmerized by the specificity of the claim made by the Theory—absolute distinction between written and oral creation—that we have forgotten all the other aspects of oral culture which pertain to the production and dissemination of vernacular literature in the Middle Ages-aspects that . . . are just as or more important than that of how, exactly, the text was composed" (70-71). How, for instance, "does the institution of oral performance influence the external proportions (and internal cohesion) of written texts?" And what of "the sources and . . . purpose behind the directness of address and repartee with which a poet like Wolfram communicates with his audience?" Curschmann then returns to the *Nibelungenlied* to demonstrate how "the more relaxed attitude advocated by Fromm and implicit in Brackert's analysis may develop new perspectives . . ." (*idem*): on the basis of the disagreement of the versions A, B, and C regarding the beginning of Aventiure 6, he postulates a hypothetical "Short Lay of Brunhild" which repeatedly crossed the path of the written *Nibelungenlied*. The resulting debate, not only between different versions, but between written and oral narratives, exemplifies the situation described in the *Klage*, which Curschmann sees as "the record of the situation in which a written tradition begins serious competition with oral ones" (74).

Curschmann's criticism of the overemphasis on oral composition is certainly justified, and indeed a shift in emphasis to other aspects of transmission, particularly reception, had already become noticeable. It is doubtful, however, that a "more relaxed

attitude" is the answer to the complexity of the symbiotic relationship between orality and literacy. Just the opposite: it seems more likely that increased rigor, above all in the definition of terms and concepts, will lead the application of the Theory out of its cul-de-sac and render it useful for an analysis of the relationship between orality and literacy. The distinctions—and the similarities—between, say, the oral performance of an oral poet in the sense of the Theory and the reading aloud of a formulaic text, or between the oral tradition in the sense of the Theory and the existence of formulaic written texts for the purpose of being read aloud, or between the implications of the reception of the one and that of the other, must be rendered explicit: the notions "oral" or "written" are not only no longer sufficient, they are, as Curschmann points out, misleading if they are thought of as opposites.

Joachim Heinzle (1978:67-96)[20] misses an opportunity to use the Theory to similarly constructive ends, in part precisely because he regards "orality" and "literariness" as opposites. He regards the Theory as potentially relevant for medieval texts in two respects: the conclusion that a text is orally composed rests either on an analogy between divergences in the transmission of the medieval text and those among various oral performances, or on stylistic aspects of the medieval texts analogous to those of the oral epic (69). He next asks if in the texts he investigates (the Middle High German Dietrich epics) means of composition are used which are analogous to those of the oral epic and could be conceived of as remnants of an oral tradition (77).[21] Assuming the *mündliche Kompositionsmittel* ("oral means of composition") could be found in these texts in quantity, it would be possible to regard them as remnants of the oral tradition, but this would only be probable if the existence of such an oral tradition "der in den Texten behandelten Stoffe" ("of the matter treated in the texts") were confirmed by other means (*idem*).

There follows a curious statement with an even more curious footnote: "If—as in the texts at hand—this is not the case, one can never exclude the possibility with sufficient certainty that 'literary' authors availed themselves, as it were, of 'artificially' oral stylistic devices, perhaps because the public 'expected exactly this stylistic attitude in connection with certain themes and narrative material' [ref. to Curschmann 1968]" (77; my translation). The curious footnote (n. 61) refers to the fact that we do have evidence

of a poetic Dietrich-tradition in the vernacular antedating the thirteenth century-but "Beziehungen zu unseren Texten [sind] nicht greifbar" ("connections with our texts [are] not tangible"). One may ask oneself what is more probable before the thirteenth century, written or oral vernacular versions of the Dietrich material? And precisely what is meant by "connections with our texts" and why such connections, other than the themes themselves, should be so significant, is unclear. But Heinzle is right: the existence of such an oral tradition is unproven.

In the preceding section of this chapter on "Unwritten Tradition," Heinzle had cited passages from Konrad von Wurzburg, the Marner, from the texts themselves (*Eckenlied, Laurin, Rosengarten, Virginal, Wunderer*), and the titles of printed versions of the *Eckenlied, Sigenot,* and *Wunderer*, as well as frequent designations of melodies, such as "Im thon Deterichs von Bern . . . ," referring to the singability of these narratives (73-74), and other evidence supporting an oral transmission. Finally, after showing that over half of the transmitted texts remain within the limits of 2,000-3,000 verses—the assumed maximum singable at one time—he concludes: "The existence of song-versions of our texts must for the present be regarded as unproven" (76; my translation).

Again Heinzle is right: the existence of song-versions of our texts is unproven. Again it is unclear what is meant by "song-versions of our texts" and why the existence of such versions specifically of "our texts" is necessary to establish the existence of a "rein mündliche Tradition *vor* and *neben* unseren Texten . . . ("a purely oral tradition *before* and *contemporaneous* [Heinzle's emphases] with our texts . . . ," 70), of a "genuin mündliche Tradition der in unseren Texten behandelten Stoffe" ("a genuine oral tradition of the narrative matter treated in our texts," 71). In the course of Heinzle's argument, these (quite correct) formulations disappear, and their place is taken by demands for evidence of the existence of oral "versions of our texts," which is a different matter altogether. And as far as such evidence as the cited references to the singability of Dietrich-material is concerned, while it does not irrefutably "prove" the existence of an oral tradition of such narrative matter—nothing is irrefutable—it certainly establishes a very high degree of probability for it. For, if it did not exist, what is the evidence cited by Heinzle actually evidence of?

More important in terms of the Theory itself, however, is

Heinzle's contention that the Theory rests on circular reasoning (78), and that "even the most extensive agreements between medieval texts and oral epics do not, in principle, have to assert anything about oral tradition in the Middle Ages" (79; my translation). He bases his first contention on his view that "on the basis of the textual evidence one infers orality, and on the basis of the latter one again explains the textual evidence" (*idem*; my translation). This, of course, is not so: orality is not inferred on the basis of the evidence of a given written text, but on the basis of an analogy of certain characteristics of such a text with those of texts known to be orally composed. Once this inference is made, certain aspects of the written text can be explained in terms of an orality not inferred on the basis of the evidence of the written text, but on that of the evidence of texts known to be oral.

Heinzle's contention that characteristics of orality in written medieval texts are irrelevant as far as medieval orality is concerned is itself the product of a methodological error. He expresses it most concisely in one sentence with a supporting quotation from M. Delbouille (1959): "Zunächst einmal haben wir es doch offenbar mit *Literatur* zu tun, and wir sind gehalten, die stereotypen Darstellungsmittel der Texte vor allem anderen als Stilphänomene im literarischen Sinn aufzufassen" ("First of all we are confronted by *literature* [Heinzle's emphasis], and are obliged to regard the stereotypical devices of the texts above all else as stylistic phenomena in the literary sense," 78). It may be noted in passing that Heinzle's insistence that the texts in question are *Literatur* and therefore distinct from non-literature, is perhaps an example of circular reasoning and certainly an anachronism; if his criteria for their literariness are abstracted from the texts themselves, then it is a case of inferring literariness on the basis of the textual evidence, which is then explained on the basis of literariness. If, however, Heinzle's criteria of literariness, of what constitutes *Literatur*, are based—as are all our notions of what constitutes *Literatur*—on convention, on conventional notions of cohesion, of form, of the function of "literature," then the question arises whether they are based on modern conventions or on conventions contemporaneous with the texts in question: if the former, then his criteria are clearly anachronistic; if the latter, then it is by no means clear that these texts confront us with *Literatur*. And the quotation from Delbouille with which Heinzle supports his contention is similarly used to close a circle of reasoning: "So hat

Delbouille mit Recht darauf aufmerksam gemacht, dab sich in diesen 'Standardversen' and Wiederholungen ein allgemeines Prinzip mittelalterlicher Kunst manifestiert: 'la stylisation des formes, volontiers simplifiées dans leurs traites essentiels' " (78). Here "la stylisation des formes . . ." is simply declared to be a "general principle of medieval art," which, being general, results in the "stylisation des formes" in the texts in question.

That stylization, repetition, and stereotypical formulation constitute "a general principle of medieval art" is true enough. But the question at hand is: what function does such stylization, such stereotypical formulation, serve in the texts under consideration? And here it becomes obvious that, even though the stereotypical devices of these texts cannot be regarded as remnants of oral composition, even though, as Heinzle puts it, they are to be regarded as stylistic devices in the written texts, they necessarily refer to the oral tradition and hence comment on it. This function of the formula and the theme in pseudo-oral texts, that is, in texts which not only are written but which were composed by writing authors, has come to be far more significant than the alternative of oral or written composition of a given text which dominated the earlier phases of research. For it is becoming ever more obvious that the formulaic epic texts in Middle High German are either some distance removed from the oral epic tradition at the point to which we can trace their written transmission or they are written formulaic texts to begin with.[22] Since there demonstrably existed an oral epic tradition, and since there is every reason to assume the mechanics of Middle High German oral epic composition and transmission to have resembled that observed by Parry and Lord in Yugoslavia (else the pervasiveness of lexical and thematic stereotypes in such Middle High German epics has to be explained in terms of a different function), the question of the function of these stereotypes in texts composed in writing becomes urgent. By regarding the written Dietrichepics as *Literatur*, as existentially distinct from oral epic, by contending that written formulaic texts need not assert anything about the oral tradition, Heinzle prevents himself from viewing the written formulaic texts as necessarily a comment on the oral tradition, a part of the symbiosis of orality and literacy, and perhaps an indicator of the varying relationships between oral tradition and medieval writtenness.

Curschmann takes a decisive step in one direction out of the

cul-de-sac of the older applications of the Theory with his essay "'*Nibelungenlied*' and 'Nibelungenklage.' Über Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit im Prozess der Episierung" (1979). On the basis of a formulaic analysis of stanza 1731, lb in versions AB (*sprach der küene man*), he concludes that one cannot decide without arbitrariness how many and which elements of the clause have to remain identical so that the hemistich may fulfill the requirements of formulicity. In short, one can define the concept of the formula only in terms of the two extremes: exact lexical recurrence or exact recurrence of the syntactical structure without regard to the lexicon. In the latter case, not only would all such syntactical structures in the text have to be regarded as equally formulaic, but also every statement in everyday speech of the same syntactical structure (91).[23] Of course, one could object that the requirement of recurrence under identical metrical conditions would presumably not be met under everyday conditions since the Bourgeois Gentilhomme is not unique in "speaking prose without knowing it," but Curschmann is certainly correct in essence: not much remains of the possibility of a purely quantitative verification of the "orality" of the *Nibelungenlied* on the basis of purely syntactically defined formulicity. And any other definition will require a degree of arbitrariness.

As far as the relevance of this statement for earlier studies is concerned, one can argue that formulicity, no matter how defined, did not serve to establish the "orality" of the *Nibelungenlied*, but rather to establish the kind of orality with which it was transmitted—non-memorizing, fluid recomposition with the aid of stereotypes—and its consequences. The point here, however, is that the formulicity of the text is closely related to the strophic organization of the text and to its rhyme-structure, and that, despite its superficial similarities to oral formulism in the literal sense, the multitude of intratextual interdependences mark the text as a literarization of an oral narrative style (93); the language of the text is not that of an oral tradition in the sense of a fund from which any number of texts can be composed, but rather it is specifically "Nibelungian" (94). So conceived, the *Nibelungenlied* appears in a new perspective if seen through the *Klage*, with its obsession with the notion of "source": Curschmann makes a generally convincing argument for the priority of the *Klage* as an experiment in the vernacular written formulation of (oral) narrative matter, which was followed by the "literarization" of the traditional

narrative in the form of the *Nibelungenlied*.[24] A critical use of components of the Theory thus serves an elucidation of relationships between literacy and orality in a specific literary-historical context.

Bäuml, on the other hand—and in keeping with his view of literature as primarily a social phenomenon, has tended to use the concepts of the Theory in a cultural-historical context, with a specifically perception/reception-oriented bent. The cultural-historical context is given by his definition of literacy and illiteracy not in the problematic terms of an individual ability to read and write, but in terms of the necessity for a given individual to make use—himself or through an intermediary—of the written word for the exercise of his social function. The emphasis on the difference in the perception/reception of oral and of written texts is in part given by the historical circumstance that the majority of the medieval Western and Central European population was illiterate and yet belonged to a literate society in the sense that its codes of conduct and beliefs were primarily transmitted in writing: in part by the differences in perception between oral texts heard, written texts heard, and written texts read (and, no doubt, formerly oral texts read);[25] and in part by the differences in reception between written Latin, oral vernacular, and written vernacular texts. A combination of these approaches and a delineation of some of the literary-critical consequences arising from them may be found in Bäuml (1980).[26] Here he has left the domain of the Theory proper for a concern with the problems arising from the coexistence of a Latin literacy, an emergent vernacular literacy, and an oral epic tradition with the characteristics suggested by the Theory.[27]

A highly critical survey of applications of the Theory to Middle High German studies forms the first part of Stein (1981a). Certain of his criticisms form the point of departure for his essay: the problematic application of observations from one cultural context in another; the different significance of the formula in Germanic heroic song; the literary character of Middle High German texts-objections summarized in Hoffmann (1974); Heinzle's insistence that, even if a genuine oral tradition of the Dietrich epics existed, it remains intangible; the conscious use of formulae as elements of written style, perhaps in the service of oral performance; the generally low quality of American scholarship in this field; the high degree to which applications of the theory are burdened by a priori assumptions; the Theory's monofunctional

concept of oral poetry and its consequently mechanical application of analyses merely to determine oral composition; the monotonous application of basically the same principles of quantifying analysis and its demonstrated futility in connection with other facets of research; the methodological questionability of a reasoning process leading from isolated textual characteristics to conclusions regarding the mode of existence of a text (148-49)—all these criticisms have been made, if perhaps less belligerently, in one form or another and with varying degrees of justification, elsewhere (see also Stein 1981b:32-34, 38).

Specifically, Stein sees the point at issue in the problem posed by the assumption of oral composition for the interpretation of a text: how can one reconcile the polygenesis of an oral text with its unitary extant written manifestation? He rejects Fromm's hypothesis (for the *Nibelungenlied*) of a medial type of writing author between the oral transmission and the extant text as resting on the false premise of regarding characteristics of oral composition as necessarily evidence of such composition. In this regard Stein bases his argument on those advanced by Curschmann in 1967 and 1968: one must reckon with the possibility that lexical and thematic stereotypes were used consciously by writing authors, and thus, in Heinzle's terms, were transformed into stylistic devices. He also rejects the notion of "transitional texts" in this connection. It is surprising, however, that Stein subscribes to Heinzle's *a priori* assumption, in keeping with idealistic criticism, that these texts are "quite obviously Literature," and that *therefore* one must regard their stereotypical devices as stylistic phenomena in a "literary sense." However, since Stein, unlike Heinzle, is not primarily concerned with the methodological issue of the relevance of these phenomena as evidence for an oral tradition, this does not affect his argument. He is principally concerned with demonstrating, on the basis of an analysis of *Orendel*, that the mutual exclusiveness of the assumptions of literacy and of orality is merely apparent and that the resolution of this conflict cannot be achieved by way of a compromise. He succeeds in showing that formulicity and written, "literary" composition are not mutually exclusive, and that, in fact, written formulaic style and stereotypic thematic structure serve as the basis for the function of the text as "answer" to the (pseudo-) heroic epic.

The existence of an oral tradition in the sense of the Theory, that is, as transmission of epic material by composition and

recomposition in performance on the basis of lexical and thematic stereotypes rather than as stable texts, is no longer seriously questioned. It is the predominant sense in which the term "oral tradition" has come to be employed in the more general analyses aimed at clarifying the concepts "oral" and "written." Two important examples of such analyses addressing other, in part more general, problems of medieval literacy and orality than those arising from the Theory and its application are two of Curschmann's recent essays (1984a, b).

In the former, Curschmann demonstrates not only a number of types of interdependence among orality, literacy, and pictorial representation, but also the participation of social conventions in such interdependences: the narrator in the role of knight assumes the social chivalric attribute of illiteracy in Wolfram's *Parzival*, partly in answer to Hartmann's literate chivalric narrator and partly in support of Hartmann's program of an emancipated chivalric vernacular literature. Literacy, however, is not a unitary concept: Thomasin of Circlaria, Hartmann, and Wolfram all understand different things by it, and none of them understands it in our sense, namely as the ability of most or all members of a society to communicate about all sorts of things in writing. The tension between literacy and orality, moreover, can be a calculated means of structuring the reception of a text; and to the written vernacular text belongs more and more the picture, the reception of which is not necessarily dependent on a reading of the text. In the latter of these two essays, Curschmann is concerned, in part, with the implications of the prologue of the *Thidreks saga* for traditional North German narrative, and he succeeds in showing that the writer of the prologue, "when he describes-or purports to describe-the reality of a living tradition of traditional poetry and prose in North Germany . . . is in fact thinking in terms of Icelandic-Norwegian literary tradition and contemporary literary practice. . . . And . . . it is from this Northern literary practice that he derives the model of how prose and verse work together to make an authentic story" (1984b:146). This literary model "builds on its own concept of orality and its role in human affairs" (*idem*), a concept in which writing, memorization, and oral composition play a role.

A review of the structure of the Theory, its point of departure in Lutz (1974), an attempt to clarify certain concepts used in discussions of the Theory, and a suggestion for a

theoretical basis for future applications of the Theory in Middle High German studies are provided in Bäuml (1984). The author sees the Theory as composed of two separate theories: (1) a primary theory consisting "of the derivation of the concepts of the compositional stereotype, the formula and the theme, from the observation of their function as essential elements of oral composition," and (2) a secondary theory which regards the appearance of these compositional stereotypes in written texts as symptoms of oral composition. Both theories form part of the Theory as propounded by Parry and Lord: the primary theory is based on their fieldwork on the South Slavic oral epic, the secondary theory is the basis of their application of the concepts derived from that fieldwork to the written Homeric texts.

As Lutz had already pointed out, the structure of these two theories differs: the primary theory is based on "the observable production of the oral text in performance," the secondary theory on an already produced written text; the "observation of recurrent stereotypes in oral performances" (33) in the primary theory has its counterpart in the secondary theory in the recognition of these stereotypes in a written text; and the result of the primary theory, the description of the function of the recurrent stereotypes in the oral composition of a text, corresponds in the secondary theory to the inference of oral composition antecedent to the written text. The secondary theory transforms the known basis of the primary theory into an unknown: the known orality of the former is thus converted into an unprovable, though inferable, result of the latter. Moreover, the secondary theory is represented by the process of written reception, whereas the primary theory refers to oral composition.

These innate complications of the Theory as well as the polysemic use of concepts such as "oral," "orality," "literacy," and above all the implication in the secondary theory of the processes of reception rather than composition, lead Bäuml to argue for a rigorous definition of concepts. And, finally, he attempts to give theoretical expression to the increasingly dominant role of the notion of the "pseudo-oral" formula in written Middle High German texts, that is, of formulicity as written style. In this formulation, as in that of the secondary theory, the basis is the written text, the formulism of which is regarded analogically to the mechanism of composition in oral texts, *not in the process of written composition, but in that of transmission and reception*. In

each of these processes the stereotypical devices of the text "can have a mechanical and a referential function . . . . In the process of oral-formulaic written composition they play no essential mechanical part; but they necessarily have a referential [and mechanical] role" in transmission and reception: "they refer to a specific (oral) type of text, and thus represent the convention which determines the composition of the written text" (43). This theoretical view, or one very much like it, is, of course, already implicit in the recent studies by Curschmann and Stein. These analyses of specific texts currently represent the most promising directions of research regarding the role of the oral tradition in Middle High German literature.

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Notes

[1] Working familiarity with the Theory is assumed; for the basic texts see Parry (1971) and Lord (1960).

[2] Including hypotheses of the manner of performance of epics. See, e.g., Jammers (1957, 1959), Bertau and Stephan (1957), and Bertau (1965).

[3] CF., e.g., Kuhn's comment (1981:131-44, espec. 135) on Carl v. Kraus' view of the initial stages in the transmission of the courtly lyric.

[4] See, e.g., Homan (1977: espec. 433); Hoffman (1974:53-59); Heinzle (1978:67-79); von See (1978:15-23); and, for an incisive Austrian voice, Stein (1981a). Not to be overlooked, of course, is the "great silence" referred to by Homan (433, n. 33). It is not without symptomatic significance that Homan, though quite correctly emphasizing the fact that the existence of an oral epic tradition was never in question whereas its characteristics remained unclear, charges Bäuml with the intention of proving the *Nibelungenlied* to be "a product of oral composition in the sense of the Theory" (433, n. 32)—which is precisely *not* Bäuml's intention (see below). Fast, rather than close, reading characterizes much of the polemic surrounding the application of the Theory to Middle High German studies. On the reception—or lack of it—of the theory by germanists, see also the comments by Norbert Voorwinden and Max de Haan (1979:1-8) in the introduction to their anthology of essays on the Theory.

[5] I shall limit my account to studies published before closure of the present essay in December 1984. In addition, the following dissertations are relevant: Wishard (1970); Egbert (1972); Aebi (1974); Ahern (1976); Wahlbrink (1977); Spraycar (1977).

[6] In this connection, and particularly with reference to the relationship between formulae and metrical structure, see Schwarz (1966).

[7](1965:61); see also Delbouille (1959:355 ff.). Like most scholars during the early phases of research on oral-formulaic composition, Schwarz uses the notion of "essential idea" as a reductive paraphrase rather than applying it in reference to the tradition. For its use in the latter sense, see Edwards (1983).

[8](1987:49). For some comments on the *Hildebrandslied* in a South Germanic oral tradition, see Kellogg (1965:espec. 72-73).

[9]Of course the more comprehensive basis for comparison would also result in an underestimation, since there will always be formulae which cannot be recognized as such in the absence of transmitted evidence. If, however, the more comprehensive procedure is viewed as a desirable norm, once this norm is established the underestimation resulting from the more limited procedure can be exactly calculated. This cannot be the case if the basis for comparison is comprehensive, since untransmitted evidence must be assumed but cannot be calculated (see also 365, n. 43). The same, of course, is true of analysis of narrative themes; cf. 385.

[10]For reviews, see Gillespie (1977), Green (1977), Trioreau (1977), Wakefield (1977), Bäuml (1978b).

[11]Doubt concerning the applicability of the Theory to medieval texts on the ground that formulicity does not (necessarily) indicate oral composition of a text, since texts unquestionably composed in writing are often also formulaic (e.g. Latin riddles, the *Meters of Boethius*, the Old English *Phoenix*, and so on), emanated for the most part from Anglistic studies. A notable exception is Holzapfel (1974), who, however, misses the target with his demonstration of the formulicity of Novalis' *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*: Novalis' novel is not an epic in verse and (therefore) the "formulae" in that text can be regarded as recurrent phrases, but not as expressions recurrent under the same metrical conditions. See also the statement by Lord cited below in note 22.

[12]See the reviews by Hennig (1964), Lievens (1964), Bumke (1964), Batts (1965), Fleet (1965), Zink (1965), Schrader (1966), Northcott (1966-67), and Coleman (1967).

[13]See, e.g., the comparisons, using different definitions of "patterned expression," of Beatie (1965:espec. 98-100); Haymes (1970:44-66); Borghart (1977:71-81); and Voorwinden (1983a:espec. 43).

[14]One might disagree with the application of the term "Ersatztheorie" (substitute theory) to the theory applicable to Middle High German texts, since it does not and cannot simply replace the Theory, but must build on it (see Bäuml 1984). In this connection, one might also argue that, while Lutz' description of the Theory itself is correct, his characterization of the deciding factor in its descriptive function as the fact that it was not "dafür konzipiert . . . , einen Text als 'mündlich' oder 'schriftlich' zu charakterisieren" ("was not conceived to characterize a text as 'oral' or 'written'," 1974:441-42), is not strictly correct: the Theory, though descriptive and based on empirical experiment, was "conceived" to characterize texts as "oral" or "written" -the Homeric texts.

[15]Rev. by Haymes (1979), Rosenfeld (1979), Pérennec (1980), Bäuml (1981).

[18]Certain aspects of these functions had been treated by Bäuml in separate papers some years before the emphasis on the implications of orality and literacy, characteristic of the second phase of research in this area,

became evident. On the possibilities of creation of irony in the transition from oral to written transmission, see Bäuml (1974). In Bäuml and Spielmann (1974) a distinction between preliteracy and illiteracy within a literate society is drawn, and the problems of the distance between narrative and audience, homeostasis, and the representational and illustrative types of reception are discussed. The operation of irony directed against the 'hero' is discussed with special reference to reception in the contexts of orality and literacy in Bäuml (1977b), and some perceptual differences in the reception of oral and written texts are the subject of Bäuml (1978a).

[17]Curschmann (1977:64). Firestone (1975; see revs. by Heinzle 1977, Haymes 1978 and discussion in Stein 1981b) sees Proppian analysis as "the only adequate technique for describing the relationship between content and structure in a given narrative, Lord's distinctions between traditional and non-traditional patterns are the only adequate means of *evaluating* the descriptive information. By applying Propp's technique, we can describe the relationship between structure and content in each individual narrative in enough detail to show *how* the narrative was composed. However, in order to provide a sound basis for classification of the narratives, the resulting descriptive information must be examined in the light of Lord's observations of genuinely traditional use of recurrent patterns and ideas in oral tradition and literary adaptation of traditional patterns and ideas in medieval narratives." (1975:126-27; see also 4-7).

[18]Curschmann refers specifically to Lönnroth (1971) and to Clover (1974). In this connection, and particularly in respect to taking "full account of the special living conditions of [the] sources," see Byock (1982, 1984) for studies of significance beyond the boundaries of saga research.

[19]Curschmann counters Haymes' negative response (in the new preface to Haymes 1970) to Lutz' contention that in Middle High German the formulaic system can determine metrical structure. In this connection he refers to "the conventional use of a small number of trivial rhymes which creates its own 'system' of formulaic response, producing equivalences that are indistinguishable from what the Theory would designate as correspondences resulting from the process of oral composition" (69). This very indistinguishability, however, makes it questionable whether one can always determine the priority of rhyme over formula; there is a strong possibility that one may be faced with the question of which came first: the chicken or the egg.

[20]Revs. by Lecouteux (1979), Murdoch (1979), Spiewok (1979), Schultz (1980), Haug (1980), Curschmann (1980), Shaw (1980), Wierschin (1980), Flood (1981), Gschwantler (1982).

[21]His use of the term *Kompositionsmittel* ("means of composition") is here inexact: if the "means of composition" in written texts are "analogous" to those of the oral epic, they cannot well be remnants of an oral tradition, and if they are such remnants they cannot be the "means of composition" of the written texts in which they are found.

[22]Haymes (1980) has shown that pseudo-oral epics exist in South Slavic: "Of course Njegoš' text is not simply a 'pastiche of formulas'; rather, it is a conscious imitation of the oral style by a poet intimately acquainted with it. It is not an oral text. It is, however, a 'product' of the oral tradition as much as the poems of the Parry Collection are" (398); "Imitations of the kind we find in Njegoš' poem do not come into being in a vacuum; they are totally

dependent on a living oral tradition for their form, their language, and their themes. Recognizing oral form in a medieval poem does not mean that the poem was the product of a dictating session in which the dictating poet was a real oral singer of tales. *It does, however, mean that there were such singers and that they sang essentially similar songs* with practically the same language and the same narrative devices" (401, emphasis added). Lord does not deny the existence of a written formulaic style resembling oral formulism, but approaches the problem from a functionalist direction:

> . . . one cannot have *formulas* outside of oral traditional verse, because it is the function of formulas to make composition easier under the necessities of rapid composition in performance, and if that necessity no longer exists, one no longer has formulas. If one discovers repeated phrases in texts known not to be oral traditional texts, then they should be called repeated phrases rather than formulas. I do not believe that this is quibbling about terms because the distinction is functional . . . . The fact of the matter is that the oral traditional style is easy to imitate by those who have heard much of it . . . . After all, the style was devised for rapid composition. If one wishes to compose rapidly in writing and comes from or has had much contact with an oral traditional poetry one not only can write in formulas, or something very like them, but normally does so. The style is natural to him. When the ideas are traditional the formulas may be those of oral traditional poetry; when the ideas are not traditional, they will not. One should not overlook the possibility that such written poetry may set up formulas of its own for those ideas that do not come from the oral traditional poetry. The situation is extremely complicated, because one must keep in mind (a) that within the oral tradition itself . . . new ideas enter the songs, and (b) the poems written in the style of the tradition sometimes influence the tradition itself (1975:18).

[23]In this connection, see also Voorwinden (1983a:43; my translation): "The question of whether a text belongs to the oral tradition cannot be answered by ascertaining the formulaic content of that text, but only by showing that all verses of that text are products of a traditional epic grammar and a traditional epic lexicon." See also the quotation from Lord in note 22 above.

[24]For the priority of the *Klage*, see also Voorwinden (1981). A thoughtfully critical view of Curschmann's thesis of the priority of the *Klage* is Wachinger (1981). It is interesting, incidentally, in view of his opposition to Bäuml's "Schichtenmodell," that Curschmann formulates the reason for the writing of the *Klage* and its coupling with the *Nibelungenlied* in terms of stratification: "Der Nibelungenstoff drängte nach oben, . . . " (The Nibelungen material sought to rise . . . ," 1979:116), and the *Klage* represented "status," a legitimate type of book, and thus could help support the "revolutionary newcomer," i.e. the *Nibelungenlied* (119).

[25]A survey of research on perceptional aspects of the relationship literacy/illiteracy is offered by Ong (1982).

[26]Some of the points treated here are raised in other essays, e.g., Bäuml (1981).

[27]Of importance in this respect are Scholz (1980) and Green (1984a,

1984b). Wider implications of medieval literacy and orality, specifically the "rebirth" of literacy in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, are investigated by Stock (1983). For reviews of Scholz (1980), see Spiewok (1981), Bäuml (1982), Kartschoke (1983), and Voorwinden (1983b).

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TWO ABORIGINAL ORAL TEXTS FROM ARNHEM LAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA

1. *The Creation of Balpildja Swamp*

By Frank Gurrmanamana, transcribed and translated by
Margaret Clunies Ross

Frank Gurrmanamana told me this story in July 1975 as an explanatory gloss on a series of *mardaian* song verses. These verses are the "outside" or non-secret version of the "inside" *mardaian* songs performed at Arnhem Land rituals of the same name, known in Eastern Arnhem Land as *ngärra* (Warner 1958; Elkin 1972; Keen 1978; Elkin and Jones 1958). The word *mardaian* means "sacred" or "holy."

The conceptual and social world of Aboriginal Arnhem Landers is divided into two halves or moieties, named Dua and Yirritja, and *mardaian* ceremonies of these two moieties each celebrate a different set of supernatural beings. Gurrmanamana belongs to the Dua moiety (called Djowunga in his own language, Burarra) and many of this moiety's *mardaian* songs celebrate the creative acts of a primeval old woman named Modj who, in the Dreamtime, went about the lands of the Anbarra clans of the Blyth River region, forming many of the natural features of the landscape like creeks and billabongs. As she walked, burdened with the dilly bags in which she carried her belongings, she leaned heavily on her stick, moving it backwards and forwards, uttering words and calls which men now repeat in their *mardaian* rituals. Her creative acts are the subject of a Dua *mardaian* dance, known from North Central to North Eastern Arnhem Land. In the east, Dua clans ascribe similar creative acts to the Wawilag or the Djang'kawu sisters.

The *mardaian* verses Gurrmanamana sang and explained to me formed part of a *larrgan* mortuary ceremony held at Kopanga Beach, on the left bank of the mouth of the Blyth River. For the most part *manikay* or clan songs (see Text 2) form the liturgical accompaniment to mortuary rites, but, at their most sacred

moments, *mardaian* songs are sung in their "outside" versions, as women and children may sometimes be present or within earshot. *Mardaian* singing usually accompanies the crushing and red-ochring of the dead person's bones and the burial of a hollow log ossuary at the finale of some mortuary rituals (Clunies Ross and Hiatt 1977). It was on such an occasion that Gurrmanamana and his fellow singer Malkorda sang *mardaian* verses about Modj and I recorded them. About a week later I played them back to Gurrmanamana on one tape recorder and got him to explain their meaning on another. At certain points, as here in his account of the creation of Balpildja, he embarked on an extensive narrative.

Balpildja swamp, also known as Balpanarra, lies about eight kilometers from the Arnhem Land coast and some twelve kilometers southwest of Kopanga Beach (Meehan 1982:27, 33, and 41). It is a very important economic and ritual site for the Anbarra ("river mouth") people, and the archeological evidence suggests this has been so for a long time. Here grow a variety of important foods, such as water lilies and the spike rush *Eleocharis*. There is also an abundance of ducks and geese. Balpildja is shared by a consortium of clans from both the coastal and inland regions of the area and is often the site of Kunapipi initiation rites. The story of its creation is thus of considerable significance in the religious and economic life of the Anbarra.

1. gu-ngurridji-nga djin-djami-na
   3sg/- call far F intr-carry far
   gun past on head past
1. she called out [as she] carried her swag,
2. djin-ya-na dji-bami-na
   F intr-say- far F intr-carry far
   past on head past
2. she spoke [as she] carried her burden;
3. bulupurr djin-djami-na
   dilly bags, F intr-carry on far
   gun-cl. head past
3. she carried dilly bags on her head
4. arrapa 'in-birin-gi-na *too much* bulupurr
   and F intr -carry far dilly bags, gun-cl.
   suspended from past
   head

4. and was heavily burdened with dilly bags.
5. murla gu-ma-nga
walking 3sg/gun -get far
stick, man-cl. past
5. She got her walking stick
6. arrap' djin-djarlakarrldji-nga dji-bo-na Balpildja
and F intr-walk along far F intro.-go- far Balpildja
path past past
6. and walked along the path to Balpildja.
7. gun-gata Balpildja gun-elingga gu-ma-nga Balpildja
gun- that Balpildja gun- name 3sg/-get far Balpildja
cl. one cl. gun past
7. That Balpildja got its name.
8. Ngun-yuna ngu-ni ngu-barra ngu-worki-ya
I-lying lsg-be 1sg-fut. lsg-do reflexive
here part. habitually
8. "Here where I am I will always make my home."
9. djin-yaraki-dja
F intr-sit far
down past
9. She made camp,
10. bulupurr gu-wanyagi-ra
dilly bags, 3sg/ -hang up far
gun-cl. gun past
10. she hung up her dilly bags;
11. djin-yaraki-dja gu-mannga
F intr-sit far in-jungle,
down past dense vegetation, gun-cl.
11. she made camp in the jungle,
12. 'in-yuna
she-lying here
12. here where she was,
13. gu-mannga 'in-yuna
in-jungle, she-lying here
gun-cl.
13. in the jungle where she was,

14. ‘in-yuna-ga
she-lying here-dem.
emphatic
14. in this very place.
15. ngu-yinda-barra ngu-ni
lsg.-do/say -fut. lsg.-be
thus part.
15. “I will be doing this,
16. ngu-yinda-barra
1sg.-do/say-fut.
thus part.
16. this is what I’ll say:
17. Murlula
marrabindjak
yauwurri-yauwurr-ya
djaparnmala
marragarlei-garlei
gananyirda a.”[1]
18. djin-yini-nga
F intr-do far past
thus
18. She did thus:
19. ei ei a gitpwo[2]
20. djin-yini-nga
F intr-do far past
20. That’s what she did,
21. djin-guna
she- that
one
21. that one,
22. wana
big, important,
adj.
22. important one,
23. bambai *ol’guman*
old
woman,
djin-cl.
23. old woman,

24. Modj
24. Modj.

Abbreviations and Notes

Abbreviations and method of transcription

The numbered phrases, into which the text is divided, are determined by Gurrmanamana's breath breaks.

Burarra has four noun classes, which are usually marked by the prefixes *an-* (for most masculine gender referents), *djin-* (for most feminine gender referents), *man-* (vegetable foods, man-made objects) and *gun-* (other naturally occurring objects). The class of nouns and some other parts of speech is indicated in the text by means of the appropriate prefix. Nouns are not marked for number. In the case of verbs, the first element is either an intransitive personal prefix (in this text F intr = feminine [*djin*-cl.] intransitive) or a transitive prefix which encodes the subject-direct object relationship. Thus the prefix *gu* denotes a third person singular subject and a *gun-* class direct object. The middle element of Burarra verbs is the lexical element, while the final element usually indicates tense, in this case the far past. Futurity is indicated by the invariant particle *-barra*.

Notes

1. This is a verse of the Modj *mardaian* song which Gurrmanamana sang at this point in his narration. It is impossible to provide a continuous translation, but each song word is glossed here.
murlulu: name of an avatar of Modj, also to be found in the place-name *Murlula-djin-djirrapa*, "Murlula lives here," a location on Balpildja. Murlula's eye can be found in the form of a stone, groups of Murlula can sometimes be seen. Members of the clan Wordeia, who own the site, can tell these beings to go away or people will see them and be ashamed (L.R. Hiatt, unpublished field notes, 1958-60). Keen (1978:39-40) notes that *murlulu* is the name for sandalwood among the Yolngu further east and also for the canoes used by the Djang'kawu sisters and for a *mardaian* sacred object which is a transformation of the canoe.

marrabindjak: another name for Modj
yauwurri-yauwurr: a) another name for Modj; b) *rrauwa atjula*, "her camp," which she made at Balpildja
djaparnmala: gloss as for *yauwurri-yauwurr*
marragarla (var. *-garles*)*-garla*: another site created by Modj; a billabong, "lily place" and paperbark swamp. The word also occurs in the Brolga song of the *manikay* series Goyulan, as the habitation of Brolga.
gananyirda: another name for Modj, but an aspect of her being particularly associated by the Anbarra with the estates of *Mardang-adjirra* and *Gurridjarra-adjirra* on the eastern side of the Blyth River, which are linked through the creator *Garnbalaitj*, red-collared lorikeet. *Gananyirda* also connotes the slow dance and calls of the creator Modj, and human imitations of her behavior in *mardaian* ritual (cf. Elkin 1972:261-62 and his comments there on the Rembarrnga word *ganinjarda*, which is probably a variant of the same term). Keen (1978:39-41) records that in the Milingimbi area *ganinyidi* refers to the Djang'kawu sisters' digging stick, with which they created freshwater springs in various places and dug up yams and shell fish.

2. This ritual call is part of the *mardaian* liturgy among Dua clans in Arnhem Land. It seems here to be represented as Modj's vocalization as, with great effort, she uses her digging stick to create features of the landscape.

2. *A Ngalilak (White Cockatoo) Song-verse from the Clan Song Series Djambidj*

Sung by Frank Malkorda, text transcribed and translated by Margaret Clunies Ross with musical notations by Stephen A. Wild. Copyist Margaret Gummow.

This song-verse was recorded by Peter Barker during the filming of a mortuary ceremony at Djunawunya on the Arnhem Land coast in July, 1978. Djunawunya is a few miles west of the mouth of the Blyth River. The film, *Waiting for Harry*, was shot and directed by Kim McKenzie. This particular Cockatoo song and its accompanying dance appear on Camera Roll 39 of the

Waiting for Harry footage and are accessible in the film archive of the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

Ngalilak (Little Corella, *Cacatua sanguinea*) is one of the twenty-one subjects of the *manikay* or clan song series known as Djambidj by the Anbarra people of North Central Arnhem Land and their neighbors (Clunies Ross and Wild 1982). Djambidj is one of many *manikay* owned by Aboriginal clans of Central and Eastern Arnhem Land. Each *manikay* celebrates a different collection of parochial totems; Djambidj, for instance, includes Crow, Wild Honey, Shark, and North-West Monsoon, to name a few others besides Cockatoo. These songs accompany several kinds of ritual, especially mortuary rites, but may also be sung for entertainment around the evening camp fires. Dances, performed by both women and men, often accompany Djambidj singing, as is the case with the item notated here. When *manikay* song and dance are performed together, the product is called *bunggul*.

The texts of *manikay* are difficult, if not impossible, to translate word for word. They provide a kind of epitome of the totemic being celebrated, focusing on its sacred names, its dwelling places, and sometimes on minute details of its biological behavior. There is often a mythological connection between several song subjects of a given series, as there is in Djambidj between White Cockatoo and Hollow Log Coffin. The Cockatoo song mentions the names of two wells at Barragulawa and Ngaldjipa which Cockatoo inhabits; Cockatoo and a spirit *didjeridu* named Mangabupidja created Barragulawa. There in the upland forest Cockatoo and other totems such as Crow and Hollow Log gather to sing and dance Djambidj. Cockatoo plays Mangabupidja while Crow sings and plays clapsticks. These mythological allusions in the song exist alongside references to the behavior proper to the natural species of the bird in question.

The accompanying notation of a Cockatoo verse shows how a Djambidj singer deploys a number of textual and melodic phrases, with frequent repetitions and variations, within a set verse structure. The basic structure consists of a short introduction, often with burden syllables, followed by a second part comprising a number of sections (marked here A to G) separated by breath breaks. When accompanied by dance, as here, the Cockatoo verse-form ends with a short refrain (R), followed by a short terminating figure (T). When there is no dance accompaniment the singers add a third part, an unaccompanied vocal coda, which

gives an opportunity for individual virtuosity in the recitative. The first line of the notation gives the melody, while below come the clapstick rhythms (sts), text, *didjeridu* hoot patterns (dj), and ritual calls (r.c.) given out by the male dancers, in that order. The patterns of the ritual calls, sticks, and *didjeridu* are subject-specific within Djambidj. Beside the notation, I give the text of the Cockatoo verse on its own, together with a glossary of the textual phrases.

A wang-gurnga guiya wang-gurnga guiya gulob'arraidja ngwar-ngwar larrya
maningala rarei njaldjiba
B djamburr budjarinya blairiber larrya garrarra-garrarra
C ngwar-ngwar larrya blairiber larrya djamburr budjarinya
ngaldjiba guiya garambag mbana
D yelilibа guiya ngwar-ngwar larrya garrarra-garrarra rradjinga guiya
blairiber larrya
E. ga-garrarra rradjinga guiya
F ngaldjiba guiya ngwar-ngwar worria djamburr budjarinya
blairiber larrya ngwar-ngwar worria maningala rarei
rradjinga guiya gulguinga guiya
G ngwar-ngwar worria yirpelainbelain rradjinga guiya ngaldjiba guiya
R ngwairg ngwairg T gulgulngam

Glossary

wang-gurnga guiya: wang-gurnga is an alternative name for White Cockatoo; *guiya*, which occupies the second part of many Cockatoo textual phrases, has no ascertainable meaning.

gulob'arraidja: this phrase refers to Cockatoo's feeding behavior; he gorges himself on grass seeds and then makes a sort of hiccoughing belch.

ngwar-ngwar larrya and *ngwar-ngwar worria*: the second element of these two phrases refers to Cockatoo's dancing and leaping in the sky; in the Cockatoo dance two male lead dancers imitate this behavior with special high leaps (*djangalk*). This is illustrated in photo no. 5 in my accompanying article.

Ngwar-ngwar is echoic, as is the refrain *ngwairg ngwairg*, of Cockatoo's cry.

maningala rarei: my informant, Frank Gurrmanamana, could not give a meaning to this phrase.
ngaldjiba (guiya): the name of one of the two wells in the upland forest behind Cape Stewart, east of the Blyth River, where Cockatoo has his home.
djamburr budjarinya: a waterhole in the upland forest, Cockatoo's home.
blairiber larrya: Cockatoo's food of corms and dry grass seeds.
garrarra-garrarra: Cockatoo's crest feathers.
garambag mbana: *garambag* is the word for *didjeridu* in Yanyango, a Yolngu language spoken to the east of Cape Stewart; the reference is to the totemic *didjeridu*, Mangabupidja. *mbana* is glossed as "he takes it up" (to play it).
yeliliba guiya: meaning unknown.
rradjinga guiya: one of Cockatoo's foods, the grass *rraridja*, *Eleocharis* sp., Fam. Cyperaceae.
gulguinga (guiya): Gulgulnga is the name of the place of Cockatoo's birth.
yirpelainbelain: meaning unknown.

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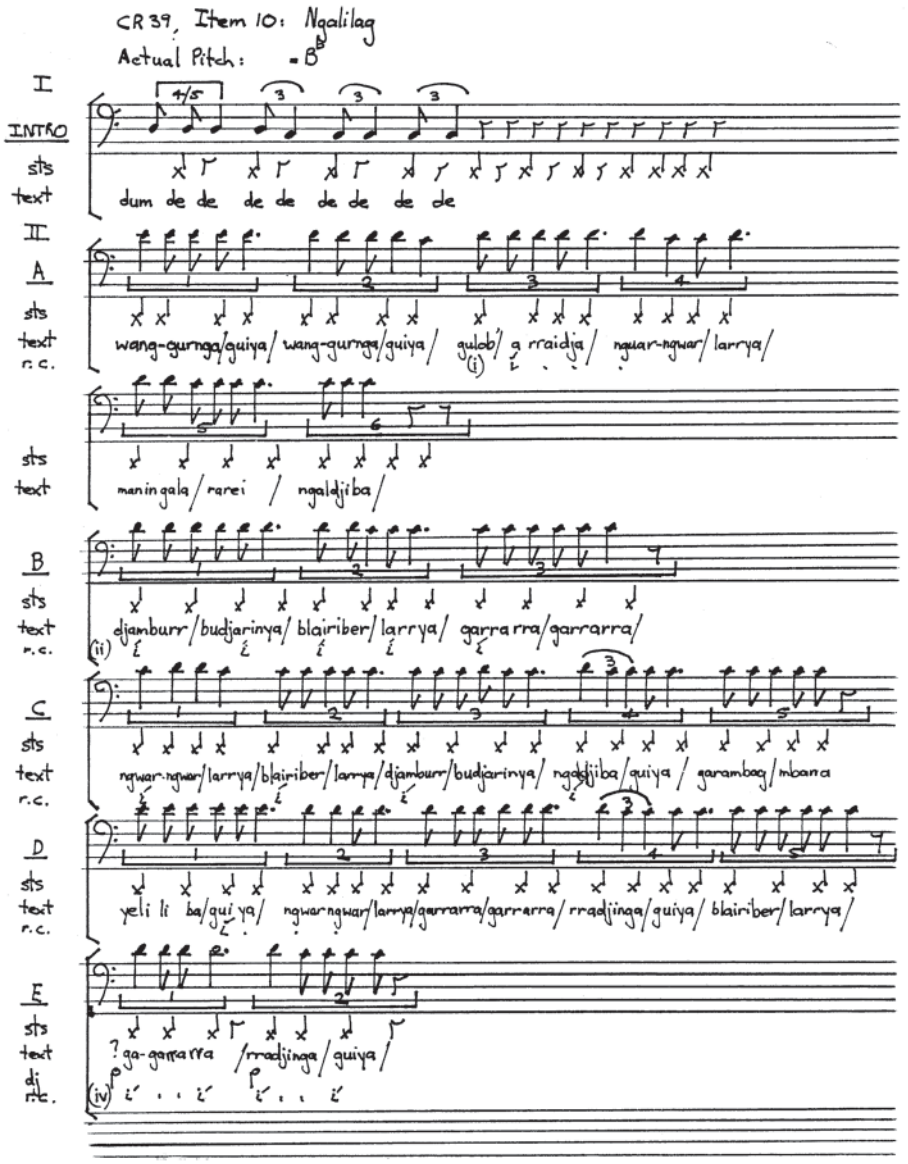

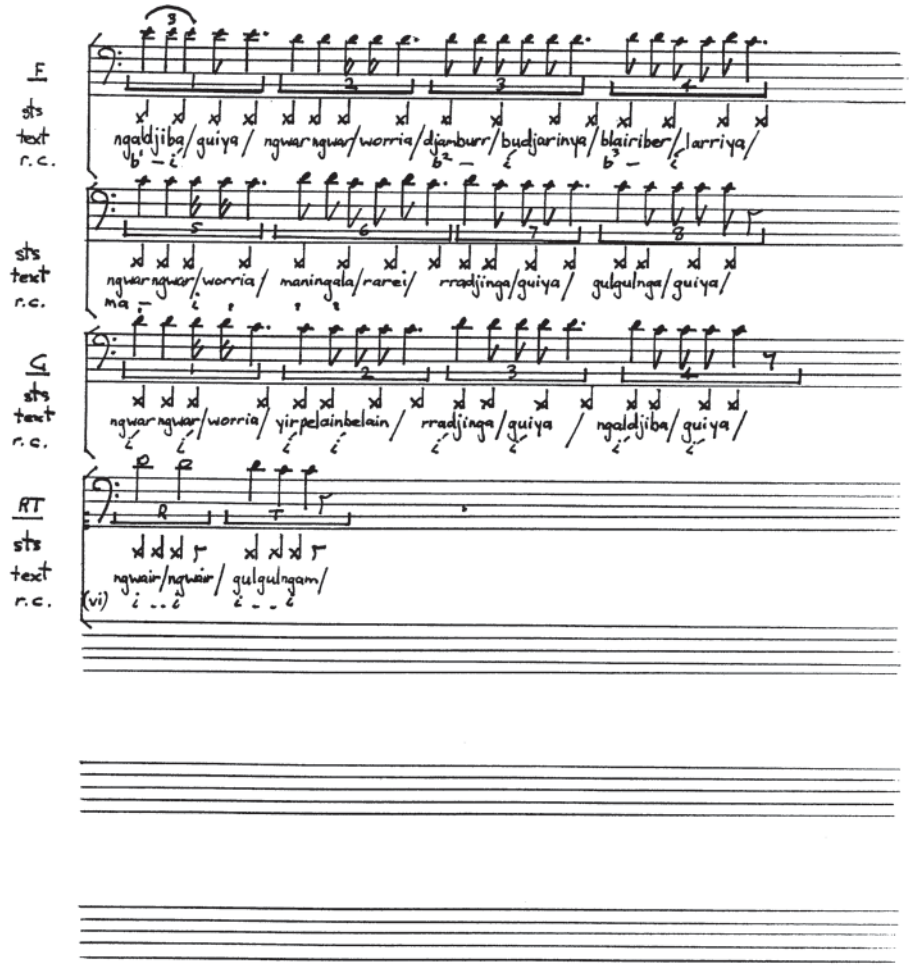
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About the Authors

Franz H. Bäuml (University of California/Los Angeles) has done much to extend studies in oral tradition to Middle High German poetry. In a series of articles, he has stressed the audience's "reception" as well as the poet's composition, with special emphasis on the uses of literacy and the social function of the texts involved.

David E. Bynum (Cleveland State University) was trained in Slavic languages and literatures at Harvard University. His *The Daemon in the Wood: A Study of Oral Narrative Patterns* (1978) treated the motif of the two trees in the world's folk literature. Dr. Bynum is also an editor of the Parry Collection series *Serbo-Croatian Heroic Songs*.

Margaret Clunies Ross, a member of the English department at the University of Sydney, has for some time had a special interest in the oral traditions of the Australian Aborigines. She has carried on fieldwork, particularly in North Arnhem Land, and has written numerous articles and monographs on this area.

Mark W. Edwards (Stanford University) is well known for his analyses of Homer's traditional style, having published papers that continue the kind of close philological scrutiny associated with Milman Parry's original work. He has written on aspects of phraseology, type-scenes, and the tension between convention and individuality in the *Iliad*.

Elizabeth Hoffman is a Ph.D. candidate in Comparative Literature at Washington University. Her areas of concentration include the influence of classical Greek and Roman cultures and literatures on the western Renaissance in light of the rise of western literacy and the impact of print.

Joseph Falaky Nagy teaches in the Folklore and Mythology Program at UCLA. His first book, *The Wisdom of the Outlaw: The Boyhood Deeds of Finn in Gaelic Narrative Tradition*, recently appeared. Professor Nagy's research interests include medieval Irish literature and Celtic mythology and its relationship to other Indo-European mythologies.

Ruth House Webber (University of Chicago, Emerita) was the first to introduce the scholarship of Parry and Lord to Spanish medieval literature in 1951. She is author of a long and distinguished series of articles and monographs on the oral traditional forms of epic and ballad, especially in relation to questions of style and narrative structure.

Meetings and Professional Notes

Some of the meetings summarized in *Oral Tradition* will receive fuller treatment in subsequent issues. Readers are encouraged to write to the editor about notices and reports of conferences they attend.

November 15-18, 1985

FROM ORALITY TO LITERACY AND BACK. . .
Elsinore, Denmark

Sponsored by the
Center for Sammenlignende Kulturforskning
Københavns Universitet

Peter Burke (Cambridge), "The Art of Insult in 17th Century Rome"
Kirsten Hastrup (Arhus), "Literacy and Morality: Cultural Deconstruction in Iceland 1400-1800"
Brian Street (Sussex), "Orality and Literacy as Ideological Constructions: Some Problems in Cross-Cultural Perspective"
Jesse Byock (Los Angeles), "Saga Feud, from Orality to Literacy"
Martin Zerlang (Copenhagen), "The Lonely Storyteller in Latin American Literature"
Birgitte Sonne (Copenhagen), "Dogs, Bears, and Devils: A Century of Changes in Oral and Literary Structures of Inuit Ethnicity"
Michael Chesnutt (Copenhagen), "The Enigma of the Middle English Romance"
Christopher Miller (Yale), "Orality through Literacy: Malinke Verbal Art after the Letter"
Carol Clover (Berkeley), "The Long Prose Form"
Michael Harbsmeier (Copenhagen), "Inventions of Writing"
Minna Skafte Jensen (Copenhagen), "Script, Print, and Cosmology in 16th Century Denmark"
John Baines (Oxford) and C.J. Eyre (Liverpool), Title to be announced
Masao Miyoshi (Berkeley), "The Orality/Literacy Distinction in the Narrative Forms of Various Cultures"
Ulrich Unger (Münster), "Literacy and Orality in Ancient China"
Niels Haastrup (Copenhagen), "On Phrase Books"
Frans Gregersen (Copenhagen), "The Conspiracy against Letters"
Jesper Hermann (Copenhagen), "Computer Literacy as a Challenge or a Solution"
Steen Larsen (Copenhagen), "The Script Which Writes Itself"
Johnny Christensen (Copenhagen), "Speaking, Thinking, and Writing in Ancient Rhetorical Performance"
Jesper Svenbro (Paris), "The Invention of Silent Reading"
Howard Bloch (Berkeley), Title to be announced

Journals of interest to readers of *Oral Tradition*:

MEDIAEVALIA

A JOURNAL OF MEDIEVAL STUDIES

Editor: Bernard S. Levy

Mediaevalia seeks to encourage the publication of articles on the Middle Ages that are interdisciplinary in nature. It also intends to publish articles on history, literature, art history, and philosophy that, though not strictly interdisciplinary in themselves, may by their content lead to interdisciplinary application. It is also interested in encouraging new interpretations and new interpreters. To this end *Mediaevalia* invites both unpublished and established scholars to submit such work for consideration by our referees. In the development of new knowledge, the editor regards the publication of the following as particularly important: significant new texts, translations of difficult works, and bibliographical essays that will stimulate and direct research in the area surveyed.

Manuscripts to be considered for publication should be double-spaced throughout and should be submitted in duplicate copies, together with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Essays submitted must be written in English; authors should provide translations of quotations in foreign languages. Manuscripts should conform to the *MLA Handbook*, with footnotes indicating place and date of publication (not publisher), and normally should be limited to twenty-five pages plus reasonable footnotes.

Manuscripts and correspondence should be sent to:

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