



ORAL TRADITION

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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.

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Editor's Column

What we might call the “bookends” to this second and final issue of *Oral Tradition* for 1993 represent a new direction for the journal. One of them consists of an interview with George Sutherlin, aka DJ Romeo, a traditional oral artist whose specialty is rap music. He responds to questions posed by Debra Wehmeyer-Shaw, their discussion covering such topics as the origins of rap, performance features, and “freestyling” (improvisation). At the other extremity of the present issue lies a transcribed performance of sorts, in this instance a group discussion of “Orality and Deafness” that was conducted on the electronic network ORTRAD-L sponsored by the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition at Missouri. This collective effort is presented substantially as it occurred, the only addition being informational notes to guide the reader. Within the fascinating and often bewildering mix of media that constitutes contemporary Western expressive and perceptual repertoires, we hope these two examples of (textualized) non-print, performance-based interactions shed some light on the complex processes associated with oral tradition.

Within the bookends this issue's potpourri includes contributions on Finnish, Hispanic, Anglo-Saxon, Arabic, Greek, and French traditions. Thomas DuBois starts by confronting the knotty problem of the relationship between oral tradition and the individually crafted *Kalevala* of Elias Lönnrot. Another kind of transformation, that of a sixteenth-century Spanish ballad that has survived into modern oral tradition, provides the subject for Madeline Sutherland's subsequent essay. Miriam Youngerman Miller then considers two modern reconstructions of how *Beowulf* might have been performed, employing a scientific measuring device to compare rival metrical theories. Bridal songs by Arab women in the Galilee are described and set in social context by Mishael Caspi and Julia Blessing. Finally, William Sale closes his demonstration of the similarity of the formulaic techniques used by Homer and the poet of the Old French *Chanson de Roland* (Part I appeared in volume 8, i: 87-142). All in all, we trust that this heterogeneous selection fulfills *OT*'s commitment to maintain a broad comparative view.

In our next issue, that perspective will be focused on the tremendous variety and richness of African oral traditions. Special editor Lee Haring

has assembled a valuable collection of nine essays, plus his introduction, on topics as diverse as Chokwe storytelling, Igbo epic, Somali women's poetry, and Hausa rap artists. Number 9, ii will return to the format of a miscellany, with a cluster devoted to Editing and Oral Tradition (A.N. Doane on Old English, Dell Hymes on Native American, Joseph Russo on Homer, and Susan Slyomovics on Arabic), and additional essays by Richard Bauman (the 1992 Lord and Parry Lecturer), Mark Amodio (on *Beowulf*) Timothy Boyd (on Homer), Bonnie Irwin (on the frame tale in the Middle Ages), Anne Klein (on orality and literacy in contemporary Tibet), and Bruce Rosenberg (on African American folklore in the novels of Leon Forrest). Looking further ahead, we will present a special collection on Native American oral traditions, edited by Barre Toelken and Larry Evers, as the first issue for our tenth year, 1995.

John Miles Foley
Editor

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Rap Music: An Interview with DJ Romeo

Debra Wehmeyer-Shaw

*I'm mean like Joe Green
Clean like a limousine
Bad like a hurricane
Lean like a jet plane
Hot like a house on fire
Not like a flat tire
Rule like a president
Cool like a cigarette
Rough like Mr. T
Tough, bad as I can be
Real like a heart attack
And quick like a six-pack
Big like a Hollywood
I make you feel good
Like a gigolo
'Cause I'm Romeo*

—DJ Romeo, 3/26/92

George Sutherlin (DJ Romeo) was born April 24, 1964, in St. Louis, Missouri. He grew up there in the inner city, one of five children. His first musical influences were James Brown, Aretha Franklin, and Stevie Wonder, as well as blues and R&B artists such as Johnny Taylor, B.B. King, Bobby Bland, and Al Green. The influence of the early rap group Sugar Hill Gang, however, provided a lasting direction for Sutherlin's music, beginning around 1979.

He came to the University of Missouri-Columbia in 1982, completing two years in the music program. Since that time he has pursued his musical career in a variety of ways, from deejaying parties to producing and

recording his own and other artists' work. The latter efforts have resulted in a six-song release, *Look My Way*, as well as a guest appearance on the compilation CD *Noise Ordinance*, which consists of contributions by local artists.

Sutherlin's career continues to gain momentum. Most recently he has prepared a cassette single for regional release, and has appeared as a supporting act for the celebrated rap group Public Enemy. He emphasizes that his first artistic commitment is to utilizing the social impact of his work in a constructive and essentially optimistic way.

Rap: Its Origins and Nature

OT: How did you get started in rap music?

DJR: Well, I got into rap when it first came out. I first became aware of it through the Sugar Hill Gang.¹ I learned that whole rap in a short amount of time. I've always written lyrics and been good at lyrics and been able to know a song by a certain line and been able to memorize a song lyric. When rap came out it was so different and the lyrics were so alive. So then I started writing raps.... I remember one of the very first raps I wrote. I was going to call myself Ace. I was going to be the "Ace of the Bass." I didn't even have a bass, didn't even know how to play bass. But that was the deal.... It was all stuff that won't matter the next day. I really started getting into more serious lyrics after Grand Master Flash came out with "The Message."² Grand Master Flash came out with "The Message" and they came out with "Survival" and "New York, New York."³ All of those

¹ One of the first rap groups, the Sugar Hill Gang was a trio and virtually unknown until the release of their first single, "Rapper's Delight," launched on Sugarhill Records in 1979.

² In the early 1970s, Grand Master Flash got its start as one of the first rap groups. Their song "The Message" appeared in the late summer of 1982 on Sugar Hill Records.

³ These two Grandmaster Flash tunes, which came out after "The Message," broke ground on positive political themes in rap.



George Sutherlin in the recording studio

just hit me hard. I remember being stirred by Melle Mel's "Beat Street."⁴ "The Message" was hit and "Survival" and "New York, New York" was really hittin', but Melle Mel—he was Grand Master Melle Mel, one of the original members of Grand Master Flash—did "Beat Street," the theme rap to "Beat Street," and it just blew me away. It was killer.... I took a turn toward more positive things and more socially relevant issues....

And it never got beyond the level of writing raps, knowing lyrics, until I came here in '82 and studied music.... I did a Delta After Dark Talent Showcase in, I think, '85. It was real primitive by today's standards—what's acceptable in rap, even live. But the thing about it was that I was playing guitar and rappin'. I had a bass player, a drum machine, a guy on keyboards, and a dee-jay up there scratchin'. We didn't have a sound system and we got by with what we had. It was okay. I got my feet wet with it.... And then I got in a group in, I believe, '85. One night we were jamming together and I just started doing one of the rap songs and they said eh! you know. And the rap was "Romeo." I didn't have a name at that time so Romeo kind of stuck with me.

OT: What is the significance of the names that all the rappers have?

DJR: Well, I think that if the first rap song had been "The Message" by Grand Master Flash then the whole rap scene would have been different, but since the first song was "Rapper's Delight" by Sugar Hill Gang, rap was on a competitive level—"I'm this, I'm that, I got six cars, I got diamond rings on every finger"; since that song had that kind of context I think that's the direction most rap went. Nobody got into any social significance until "The Message" came out. When that came out that really changed a lot of things. A lot of the attitude. It wasn't so party-oriented. It wasn't so happy....

OT: Did rap get its start in the South Bronx right around 1972, 1973, 1974?

DJR: From what I understand, that's fairly accurate. From what I understand—and I'm by no means in the mainstream of it—I'm here in

⁴ *Beat Street* was a black film released during the break dance era; it was produced by Grand Master Melle Mel.

Columbia—but Grand Master Flash used to dee-jay in a park in New York. And some black guys would come up, and he'd be basically mixing two songs together or using a drum machine or whatever drum machine they had back then. And mixing songs together and then guys would come up and get on the microphone to rap just to give it some kind of counter-beat. It all got started that way. And then it got to the level of a big recorded music and then it became more attitude when Sugar Hill Gang came along. But rap by no means started there. When you dig a little bit you see elements of rap in square dance music and in the African traditional music....

OT: What are your views on the popularity of rap music?

DJR: Rap isn't in the mainstream. One of the things that I think keeps rap out of the mainstream per se is the technology that's used to create a song; whereas rock 'n' roll is still basically guitar-oriented, rap heavily relies on technology to constantly come up with new sounds. A sound that you hear in rap now won't be acceptable three years from now. It simply won't be. A lot of the sounds that we used in the early eighties were alive and fresh. They were using analog keyboards—people like Planet Patrol⁵ and Grand Master Flash. All the rap groups that were coming out then were using big old synthesizers, and they were getting those basic sounds out of them, basic sounds that are just unacceptable now as far as drums are concerned. A lot of times they were using live drums but usually they were using a drum machine that just put out the same story every time—*snare*, *snare*—whereas now there's a lot of expressiveness to everything. So that's one thing that's going to continually change with rap. In order to stay on top you have to come up with new sounds all the time. And that's why I try to concentrate as well on the lyrical edge—because the lyrics have changed a lot....

OT: What's the significance of the rivalry between east coast rap and west coast rap?

DJR: It's the same thing. Everybody wants to be the first. Everybody

⁵ Planet Patrol was a group affiliated with Afrika Bambaata, who broke ground in rap music using Kraftwerk electronic music around 1982.

wants to be the best. Everybody wants to be original. And a lot of times the only way you can get attention and feel that you are doing what you set out to do is to find somebody that you feel you're better than and then tell everybody else that you *are* better.

OT: I guess it's all part of the competition, keeps it all going.

DJR: Yeah, exactly. And New York is notorious for being hard-core, streetwise, and L.A. is notorious for being hardcore, streetwise, street gangs, and stuff. So there's naturally going to be that competition; it was bound to happen....

Learning to Rap

OT: How does a person learn to rap?

DJR: You know, it is just that—a learned experience. A person learns to rap a lot of times by learning other rappers' raps. They learn the raps that they like. They might write them down or learn them phonetically. Usually people learn raps phonetically and then later they piece together the things that they don't understand and the things that don't make sense. You know, they just accept lyrics that are disjointed and don't make sense because a lot of the time it's hard to understand everything that a rapper says. Possibly because some of the rappers don't stick to the point; they'll interject a word or phrase just to rhyme or just to sound cool.

OT: How did you learn to rap?

DJR: My personal experience is that I learned from the Sugar Hill Gang and the early rappers, Kurtis Blow⁶ and Grand Master Flash.

OT: Did they influence your style or material?

⁶ Contemporaneous with Grand Master Flash, Kurtis Blow was one of the first rappers. Kurtis Blow came out with "Christmas Rap," an all-time unofficial Top 10 classic (hip-hop Top 10). Soon after, Sugar Hill did "Rapper's Delight" (Christmas of the same year).

DJR: Let's see here. Yeah. A person learns to rap and then they form their own style when they start composing their own raps. You know, when they listen to what they've composed and compare it to what's out there, either they will adjust to what's out there or they will like what they do and stick with it. I try to be very flexible in what I do so that I keep up with the times yet keep my own personal style. The song that I just came up with, "Black List," was slightly influenced by the hip-hop⁷ groove that LL Cool J laid down on "The Boomin' System."⁸ It was laid back, one of the same samples that I use in mine. As always, when I finish a work it has my personal touch on it. I don't feel like I've done anything that sounds exactly like something that somebody else has done or that I could be mistaken for them, because I have my own inflections and my own way of phrasing that I feel is uniquely personal to me. I hope it is. I mean I don't try to be like anyone. If it just so happens that my style coincides with another established rapper's style then so be it. It's not any intentional thing on my part.

OT: Do some rappers imitate each other's styles? It seems that certain styles do lend themselves to imitation.

DJR: I notice a lot of people do get a certain style. There's a style of being very monophonic with the tones.... [For instance, one rapper] has a way of flowing rhythmically—and as far as the harmonic content of his rap, it's very monophonic, it's on one level. It doesn't vary from that. He throws some rhythmic accentuation in there, but it's basically a beat that you could really get into and he locks into it real well. I don't do it that well. It's not my style. I'm not saying one style is better than another.

⁷ The term "hip-hop" originated in the mid-1970s in the early history of what is now known as rap; it was coined by DJ Hollywood, who, while playing records, would get on the mike and shout, "To the hip-hop the hippy hippy hippy hop and you don't stop!" The term caught on, and other pioneering DJs and MCs in Harlem and the Bronx picked up on it, and it became the one expression used by everyone involved in the music. The term is now used to specify the type of rap music that is closest and truest to the original, as well as the style and state of mind established by the originators of hip-hop music and culture.

⁸ This rap was recorded by LL Cool J on the Def/Columbia label.

They're two different interpretations of the same rap—not very good imitations at that, I might add. I don't do other people's raps very well. Some people would say that it's amazing that I could know someone else's rap that well. But I get personally involved in everything I do, even though it's not mine per se. That's the way it is....

OT: How much of your heritage do you put into your music? How much of your African music do you put into it?

DJR: I have to admit that it has a lot to do with the way I was educated and the way I was raised. In my home I have four brothers, and one sister who grew up, and two other brothers, and there was never any African, or rather it was never brought up about the African experience or any part of that. My mom was raised in Mississippi and of course there were always references about “when I was your age.” And while I was being educated in St. Louis, I remember once when I was in kindergarten Miss Wilkins told the class that there was going to be an African lady that was going to come in and talk to us. I remember having this image of some really black lady in African gear with a big ring in her nose and having big muscles from carrying water, and when she got there she was beautiful. I mean, she was from Ghana. That was my first awareness that things aren't the way I had been hearing. Because all I knew was what I had seen in *National Geographic*. So even in high school and even in college I was educated about the cradle of civilization and the Samaritans and all that, but there's a lot that was not touched upon. And now I'm beginning to come into that. So in my rap I haven't claimed to be African in any of my songs. I feel a lot of people are selling out to that mentality, jumping on that bandwagon because that's hip right now. I know a guy in St. Louis who sells African jewelry. He makes it himself, he makes it out of plywood and uses those little beads that we used to use in kindergarten, and people are buying it. To me that's not what it's all about....

Composition and Performance

OT: How does the whole composition process come together? Do you get an idea, think of a lyric, then the beat?

DJR: Well, for me, rap is real flexible. You can either come up with a beat and then get inspired to write a rap tune or you can write a rap and then build a beat to it just as easy—I don't know which is easier—whereas in popular music usually the lyric comes first, and then the music comes later. I mean you might get an idea for a quarter progression and then write the lyric and then come back to the music. But it's hard, real hard, to compose a lyric to music that's already composed. So rap is very easy that way. Because basically it's rhythm. A lot of types of music accent on the melody and the notes, whereas rap accents on the beat. The beat comes up front.

A lot of people diss rap. I see a lot of bands, especially rock bands, that feel threatened by rap. And I don't know why they should because the rappers aren't trying to take any of their market—although they probably think so. But that's because rappers are acquiring some of the rock market; a lot of people who like rock 'n' roll like some rap songs. They don't look on the flip side of the coin though. A lot of people like rap and like a lot of rock 'n' roll songs. They diss it, you know. And that becomes a whole part of the rap thing too: dissin' each other and saying, "We're the best and this is good and that's not...."

OT: When we're looking at poetry we take things like meter and other elements of prosody into consideration. Do rappers do this?

DJR: Yes. A lot of rappers just rap. For instance, Hammer, Marky Mark,⁹ people like that—they just rap. They don't use any of the tools that are at a poet's disposal, like simile, hyperbole, alliteration. But rappers like Big Daddy Kane, Ice Cube,¹⁰ they create illusions, not only with the images

⁹ MC Hammer and Marky Mark are contemporary rap artists; they presently enjoy large popular followings.

¹⁰ Big Daddy Kane is a New York rapper on the Cold Chillin' label. He worked on the soundtrack for the film *Colors* and Quincy Jones' LP "Back on the Block." He has also worked with Public Enemy on "Burn, Hollywood, Burn," which appears on the LP *Fear of a Black Planet* (1990). *Wrath of Kane* was Big Daddy Kane's debut LP. Big Daddy Kane has a reputation of being eloquent and elegant; he comes from the school of dress shirts and designer suits rather than street attire.

Ice Cube is a Los Angeles rapper who started writing lyrics for NWA and Easy E.

that they project with the lyrics but with the way the lyrics come out. You can say this is an orange or you can describe it without saying that it's an orange, but let the listener get whatever out of it that they want to get out of it.

OT: Create an illusion?

DJR: Yeah. You know—that, for me, is where you really make an impression on the listener. When the listener can listen to a lyric and get whatever they want to get out of it as opposed to “this is an orange.”

OT: Everybody is going to walk away with something a little different?

DJR: Right.

OT: Or they bring their own experience to it? I bring my experience to your music, so maybe I'm going to take something away with me that the next person is not.

DJR: Exactly. I find that there are elements of that as far back as the Bible. You know. It's just completely full of parables and statements that you can read your own experience into and get a certain level of truth out of it at different levels....

OT: What is a “break beat”?

DJR: A break beat is a break in a song where the beat changes. The whole drum set changes a lot of times. Or the effects that are on the drums, like the reverb, changes, and it changes the attitude of the song, the direction of the song. It's also a beat, a rhythm within the drum track that's in and of itself. Rap has made a lot of innovations in the way we construct music; it breaks music down a lot of times to its barest essential, which is sound. You can have a drummer playing a drum set and you can make the sound

He is a pioneer in gangster rap. His debut solo LP, *Amerikkka's Most Wanted*, came out in 1990. Ice Cube has since converted to Islam and moved to New York. He is the head of the hip-hop production team Lench Mob. He starred as Dough Boy in John Singleton's film *Boyz N the Hood*, and currently appears with Ice T in the film *Trespass*. Ice Cube records on the Priority Records label.

of those drums so narrowing a sound that it becomes only one instrument. Then you have another whole set of drums playing. You know, a good example of that, I guess, would be “Mama Said Knock You Out”¹¹ by LL Cool J. He’s got a change of ground drum track under the humpty beat drum track. You know it’s two completely separate drum tracks, and one is the main drum track and the other is just the accent. It just breaks the music down to its barest form. That’s what the samplers do—break the sound, the music, down to its barest essential, which is the sound....

OT: What about the gestures, the dancing, in performance? How significant are they?

DJR: I think it’s a learned thing. People saw Run DMC¹² doing it and subconsciously, whether they knew it or not, they started doing it. Because Run DMC couldn’t dance, they couldn’t move very well, so they just started doing all this [gesticulates]. And so that became part of it. But I think it’s a credit to people like MC Hammer, people like [Freedom] Williams of C&C Music Factory,¹³ that they’re changing that. You can’t just go out and hold a microphone. You can’t do that any more. You have to provide the visuals. Even if you’re not dancing, somebody needs to be dancing. There needs to be some animation to the show. Otherwise, all you have left is your music, and if your music is not up to par then you’re not going to win any people.

OT: Do you think the emphasis on this kind of performance diminishes the importance of rap’s origins—people standing around rapping on street corners—or do you think that’s just a romantic notion?

DJR: I think that’s pretty much just a romantic notion now. Because when I started rapping I never stood on a street corner and rapped. A lot of times I can be somewhere and someone who knows that I rap will ask me for one.

¹¹ LL Cool J also records on Def/Columbia label.

¹² Moves can be seen on the videos *Walk This Way* and *King of Rock*.

¹³ Like MC Hammer and Marky Mark, C&C Music Factory with Freedom Williams and Zelma Davis presently enjoys huge popular success.

I can be at a party, a house party, and somebody who knows I rap will ask me to rap, front me off.

Freestyling and the Formula

OT: When someone fronts you off, asks you to rap, do you create something new, depending on what surrounding you are in and depending on your audience at that party?

DJR: That's called "freestyle." Freestyling is coming up with a rap off the top of your head.

OT: That's what intrigues me.

DJR: That is hard to do. You have to be inspired and you have to work on it. I find when I don't do it [often] I don't do it very well. But when I do it, I get to the point where I can rap about anything; it's just a practice thing. Or I can drink a couple of beers and start. It's definitely the gauge of a true rapper. It shows the talent; I respect people who can do that....

OT: How can you tell when a rapper is freestyling?

DJR: I met a girl a week ago Saturday night and she knew that I was DJ Romeo. She came up to me and she was pretty bold. She just started rappin' to me. She was, like, "Well, I do raps like..." and then she just started flowing into this lyric. It's hard to tell whether or not she was freestyling. She didn't make any mistakes. However, some of the direction of her rap was getting trivial at points. It was as if she was saying anything at times, but she basically stuck to the point she had. She had great inflection and she had great possibilities as a rapper. I could tell that she could probably freestyle if she wasn't freestyling already.

Freestyling, a lot of times, involves just seeing something. Whatever you see while you're freestyling may be a part of what you are about to say. And a lot of times what you see are events from the past. You know—situations and people, feelings and personalities seem to come out in what you say. If I was freestyling against somebody and they said something about me in their freestyle, then I would incorporate what they

said. I would make reference to what they said—or at least try to—and I’d look at them and if there was anything that I wanted to talk about—as far as how they looked—I’d incorporate that.

Freestyling is a very spontaneous, ultra-spontaneous, process. A lot of times you’ll use formulas that help you maintain or help you get that spontaneity. There are certain end-line words that are easier to rhyme with. Obviously, “lay,” “he,” the vowels “a,” “i,” “o,” and “u.” And then there’s other tools like suffixes, “-tion”—“prediction,” “resurrection,” “persecution.” You can throw all that kind of stuff in there, “reiterate,” “exasperate,” whatever. You use those kinds of words as often as you can.

OT: Does freestyling have its own history?

DJR: I don’t think freestyling necessarily gets its roots from—but perhaps reared its uniquely rap-oriented head—when people would get together and someone would be playing piano—they’d just be playing a plain old blues riff—and people would just come up with little one-verse or two-verse ditties. People would just alternate, trade off, and come up with little things on the spur of the moment.... That was one of the ways that people were freestyling in the blues. It happened around campfires during slavery. There were songs that people would just take turns coming up with. “Ditty” wouldn’t be the word, “song” wouldn’t be the word. I’m sure that there were names for these songs that were created out of this process. That’s not part of my personal experience. However, I would like to know more about those things. I am aware of their existence and how they fit into the transition from the *griot*¹⁴ to the rapper....

OT: So freestyling is a characteristic of an especially good rapper?

DJR: Yes. And another characteristic of a good rapper is to have some continuity to a rap. A lot of times people who will start rapping about one thing here and then later on in the song they’re rapping about something else—they get off on a tangent. People with talent can stick to a theme and

¹⁴ *Griots* were specifically selected individuals who were entrusted with reciting and passing on their society’s oral history from one generation to the next. In West Africa *griots* were chosen as young children and taught to perform centuries of tribal history, stories, and songs while accompanying themselves on musical instruments.

take it from A to B and bring it back and keep the continuity to it.

OT: Are you talking about a story line?

DJR: Those are very hard raps to do. Like, Slick Rick did one called “Children’s Story”¹⁵ where there are no breaks in the vocals, there is no chorus, there’s just a story line. Those are some of the best raps. I know a guy who did one. He’s from Kansas City. It’s called “Under Pressure,”¹⁶ and he talks about standing on a corner, obviously selling drugs, and a cop comes up, he blows the cop away and he starts running and he just goes through this whole scenario and the rap never stops until close to the end of the song. The continuity of it keeps you listening.

OT: Now, can he change the story each times he tells it if he wants to? Depending on his audience, is it going to have the same elements concerning this character? Does he always just blow one cop away or can he blow two cops away? Can he elaborate on it depending on who his audience is?

DJR: Unless you’re doing a freestyle, your lyrics are written down and structured.... Some [rappers] don’t write them down on paper, but I always wrote mine down on paper to organize them. Just getting them onto cassette—even in the crude and most raw form—kept the progression of the song moving. As opposed to just getting it on paper and rappin’. I have a studio friend that says, “Well, if you can’t do it studio quality, why do it at all?” My answer to that is that you have something that you can *hear*. The written paper is something you can *see* and the lyrics in your head are just something that you *feel*. When you’ve got something you can play back and hear, then you know what everything sounds like together. It aids in the progression of the rap as a finished art work....

¹⁵ Def Jam developed a following on *The Show* with Doug E Fresh on Reality Records. Slick Rick’s solo LP was *The Great Adventures of Slick Rick*. Slick Rick wears an eye patch and raps with a British accent.

¹⁶ Struggling local artist Ray-Dec. DJ Romeo produced some of Ray-Dec’s work at Red Line Studio in Columbia, Missouri. “Under Pressure” is a dialogue about a young man who shoots a cop and his subsequent pursuit by the police.

OT: You definitely write them down?

DJR: Yes. And anybody who's ever recorded anything and everybody who's ever done any serious rap always writes their lyrics down. And you don't just write them. I've seen people write lyrics and at the end of one statement they start the next one. And it just looks like one big piece of paper. There're no stanzas, there're no verses. And when I see that, that's a good gauge of how well they're going to do the rap. From recording in the studio, if someone goes into the vocal booth with a piece of paper to do their rap, I usually go, "Oh, my goodness." Because I don't do that. I've only seen one person be able to rap off of paper. And evidently he knew the rap anyway. Whenever somebody raps off paper, it sounds just like they're reading it off the page. You can hear it. I can hear it. Like, I can hear in Marky Mark, I know he did that off paper. That "Walk on the Wild Side,"¹⁷ his rhythm, there's disjointed rhythm, a lot of things he could have said a lot better than he said them. And I can't believe the song's number one. I just cannot believe it. There're just too many good rappers who have done the exact same theme, not the same music and not the same lyrics but the exact same theme and did it well and it didn't make it to pop radio....

OT: One of the things we study in oral tradition is something called the formula. In the Homeric poems, for instance, the dawn is always "rosy-fingered." Are there similar formulas in rap music, groups of words that are commonly repeated under similar circumstances, that help you remember the lyrics when you're not writing them down? When this all first started, a lot of the kids in New York who were involved couldn't read or write. How did they compose and remember their lyrics?

DJR: I find that many of the lyrics and the lyrical content in rap—especially the New York rap—relies heavily on "I know what this means so I'm cool. And if you don't know what it means you're not." So they're always coming up, just like when I say we have to come up with new sounds, they're always trying to come up with new catch phrases that everybody's going to have to do research on to find out what it means.

¹⁷ "Walk on the Wild Side" was recorded by Marky Mark on his first LP; it was recorded over a sample loop from Lou Reed's tune "Walk on the Wild Side."

OT: Well, I would have to do research because it's not part of my tradition.

DJR: Oh, it's not part of my tradition either. Possibly in those circles they use that terminology, but I'm sure that a lot of times they don't. They're coming up with new ways to say things that get their origins from songs, and then everybody starts using them. Sometimes that's not the case, like in "24-7," that means "all the time." There are a million of them, some of them that I don't think—like "say O.P.P."¹⁸—I'm sure that's not used. That wasn't used widely in any circles but he just tapped into it and got it. Like "word up."

OT: Or "word to your mother"?

DJR: Yeah, exactly, "word to your mother."

OT: What does that mean?

DJR [laughs]: I don't know.

OT: I've read some things that imply that "word" means "truth."

DJR: Right. "Word" does mean "truth." And that probably came about—well, if Cameo¹⁹ got it then it must have been used by those guys, and they don't have their fingers on the pulse of what's happening on the street. But "word to the mother"—I don't know, possibly. And so when they come up with new phrases like that, a lot of times it's to stay on top of the lingo or the slang, whatever you want to call it.

OT: Do you think that sometimes we may be trying to read a little too much into the lyrics? Is it possible that certain words are used simply

¹⁸ "O.P.P." is glossed as "other people's property/pussy/penis."

¹⁹ Cameo is a rhythm-and-blues group from the Earth, Wind & Fire era of the mid-to-late 1970s. They achieved huge success with their *Word Up* LP and single in the mid-1980s. Cameo was headed by Larry Blackman on Polygram Records.

because they rhyme, or sound good?

DJR: There are a lot of rappers who, when you listen to their whole album, everything becomes apparent. If you just listen to one song and they're using all the terminology that they use, you are going to come away with nothing. Like X-Clan,²⁰ they have a rapper named Brother and he's African, very African—you know that's the opening line to the first song. He uses a lot of language like "mystical," "magical," and "stone crib" and "scroll," "weights of the scale." When I first became aware of their music I was, like, "yeah, get out of here." But he's basically on a back-to-Africa platform; he's not to the point of wanting to go back, but he's to the point of wanting to acknowledge his heritage and wanting to educate his listeners about some of the things he feels have been overlooked....

The Social Function of Rap

OT: Why do you think so many people feel threatened by rap?

DJR: I think a lot of times people are threatened by what they don't understand. It's like being afraid of the dark. But it's the same: our grandparents were afraid of rock 'n' roll, and I hear a lot of people—who loved the Beatles and loved all the music that was done then and that was so controversial—dissin' rap. And rap is exactly the same thing that was happening twenty years ago. And I find a lot of it quite humorous, the way people can be so jaded and have double standards.

OT: So you think basically that they feel threatened because they don't know what it's all about?

DJR: They hear it, they hear some guy throwing lyrics into a microphone, they hear this beat that just stays the same, and I think a lot of times people become dependent on that. They identify a song by the beat, not just the beat of it but the sound of the drums. They both go hand in hand.

²⁰ X-Clan's debut LP, *To the East, Blackwards*, was released in 1990 on 4th & Broadway Records.

OT: Do you think that people hear, for example, what NWA²¹—who get a lot of negative publicity—are doing and assume that all rap music is going to be like that?

DJR: That's definitely part of it. And not only that. People are looking for the bad part. They're looking for the bad—that's a fact of life....

OT: In our society, on what occasions or in what particular situations does rapping occur? And secondly, how does rap function in our society?

DJR: Some of the occasions that it happens informally are those that we discussed earlier—like the girl I met in a club. Some of the other occasions where rapping occurs? There are a lot of talent shows that go on—everywhere. Rap is a way for someone to perform at a talent show without the expense and hassle and effort required to get a full band or a complicated and dedicated music bed. When people go to sing at talent shows—these little small talent shows that I've seen around here—it's always the same situation. Somebody will sing to a record that already has vocals on it. Either you have to turn down the music so low that it's barely there—in which case you lose some of the aesthetic appeal of voice to music—or they'll just play the music and the person will sing and all you'll hear is a few notes here and there. Whereas, with rap, you don't need any particular song, all you need is a beat. With a song, you need a song in the right key, you need a song with the right chord progressions, you need the music for that song. When rappers want to do a talent show, they just come up with any beat. They can steal a beat from an instrumental version of a dance tune. When you buy the twelve-inch and the CD singles and cassette singles, there's usually an instrumental version. So they can do that and do a little rap and get busy and get some effect. It's an interpretation, a different interpretation of this beat. The audience will get the familiarity of the music because usually a rapper will choose some music that is slammin' already. It's associated with a song that's already a hit in everybody's mind. Rappin' affords the rapper more opportunity than the singer.

Rap is occurring in commercial and contemporary music all the time.

²¹ NWA consisted of Easy E, Ice Cube, McRen, DJ Yella, and Dr. Dre, of Compton, California. They pioneered gangster rap, extra hardcore, and explicit language. The group debuted in 1988.

Groups like Bell Biv DeVoe, Boys to Men, Bobby Brown, High Five, even people like George Michael—he’s incorporating some of the flavor of rap in some of the things he does, like “Freedom.”²² It has such a hip-hop beat that it’s slammin’. There’s a lot of music out there with these new hip-hop beats in them and there’s this new hip-hop sound that’s going on. Rappin’ is occurring all the time in commercial radio. If you turn on your TV on Saturday mornings, all you hear is rap beats on kids’ commercials and rap beats in kids’ cartoons. Rap is selling products, it’s selling records, it’s selling everything. Just turn on MTV. All these hair salons use rap beats to sell their hair products. All this stuff geared toward the cool set, it’s using rap. Rap is all around us.

OT: The rap beat or the language?

DJR: People are using the catch phrases from raps, too. In everyday language, you know, like “O.P.P.,” “I’m not down with that,”²³ phrases like that. In those respects it’s occurring all around us. Rap has been around since poetry—in some fashion. It’s just a merging of two emotionally steering art forms, combined to create a third form that’s unique in and of itself. Rap has so many of the things that we love about each individual aspect of art....

OT: Is there a definition of hip-hop culture? Is rap part of hip-hop culture?

DJR: A lot of people might have a different opinion. The word “hip-hop” came from the very first rap song. It was the very first lyric in the Sugar Hill song. And that’s where hip-hop came from. So to separate hip-hop from rap is kind of like separating rock from rock ‘n’ roll. There is definitely hip-hop culture and there is definitely a rap culture, and I find that rap is more closely associated with the street, whereas hip-hop is associated more with the upscale, like the college black experience, the middle-class black experience and the way you dress. People who dress rap-fashion might wear a Raiders hat and a while ago it was a fat gold chain,

²² *Freedom* (1991) was George Michael’s second LP.

²³ “I’m not down with that” means “I disagree.”

and hip-hop is more or less a trendy pseudo-African type of dress, where up until about this summer they were wearing African pendants a lot and African cloth—the woven cloth with a mosaic type of print, and black is definitely a big color. Lots of red, black, and green. And a lot of head gear. Lot of jewelry, whereas three years ago the gold kind of symbolized turning the chains of slavery into chains of gold. Now the jewelry is more or less saying that “I have riches without money, so I don’t need gold.” You see a lot of beads, and that kind of thing. But hip-hop, I like hip-hop fashion. A lot of times they go to the extreme, like with Tracy Chapman and the braids. They laughed at her and now everybody has them....

OT: Do you feel that rap is both an educational tool and an art form?

DJR: Yes. And I think a lot of times the education we get is not the education that was intended. It’s a roundabout education because we become painfully aware of some of the problems that we don’t really want to be aware of. Like NWA, Easy E, Ice T, Ice Cube. I think Ice Cube is the most positive because he’s not just glamorizing the gates to a subculture. There’s a positive pain that shines through in his stuff. Whereas people like Poison Clan²⁴ and NWA—I love NWA’s stuff—I wouldn’t let my daughter listen to.

OT: Do you think NWA uses a shock element in what they are trying to do?

DJR: I think that, yeah, but I don’t think they’re using that shock element in a positive way. You can use a shock element to get someone’s attention, but they’re getting the attention and then not doing anything with it. They’re just saying, “Hey, look, this is the problem! And we’re part of the problem.” And it wouldn’t influence me, but I’m sure there are some young minds out there who aren’t getting a good education, who aren’t getting a good deal in life, and they’re saying, “Yeah!”

OT: Then they’re not really offering an alternative.

²⁴ Poison Clan is noted for being very hardcore in the Miami style, similar to Luke Skywalker, whose music was banned in Dade County, Florida.

DJR: No, not at all. They're saying if you got a problem with somebody, ice them. They use "bitch" probably 10,000 times an hour and they don't ever let up on it, and they don't acknowledge the beauty in the women, period. It's kind of sad, too.

OT: Let's talk about the themes of rap music. There are certain themes that keep coming up, like racism and gang violence, and women aren't really considered in a positive way.

DJR: By some people.

OT: There aren't many female rappers either.

DJR: It's just like everything else. The male got into it and from the males doing it so much it started looking like a masculine thing, so that if a female did it and she didn't look quite as feminine as she should.... I never had a problem with seeing a female artist. As a matter of fact, women singing and doing it is ultra-feminine to me. So that wasn't part of my experience....

The Future of Rap

OT: Do you think rap has a future?

DJR: Yeah. I think rap's about as much a passing fad as rock 'n' roll. If there's a chance of rock 'n' roll running its course, then there's a chance of rap running its course. There're people who won't listen to anything but rap. There's another whole subculture of rap that is oriented around a \$3000 car stereo system and a tape that just hums. People buy systems just for that. Because if you played loud rock music it wouldn't be the same. There's a low frequency bass that just shakes the walls and windows when they drive by. I've done parties before when some of my people have pulled up outside and you can hear them over the music inside....

OT: Finally, what about your own future in rap?

DJR: The raps that I'm doing now are, I feel, more mature. I'm twenty-

seven years old, be twenty-eight next month. I'm kind of old for a rapper. I've got a lot of songs that I'm getting ready to do and that I've done that aren't raps, that are songs. And I want to be able to do those as well. The experience of living in St. Louis in my youth and my teen years had a lot to do with the way I was rapping then. Since I got to Columbia I've had to take on certain levels of responsibility and mature as a person. I feel that my music has done the same. As far as the lyrical content of what I do, it's a lot more relevant and that probably has a lot to do with the fact that I am recording and feel I have a social responsibility since my things are played on the radio. I have a responsibility to inform and educate wherever possible. I love doing that. I love sitting down with somebody and telling them things I know, especially someone who I can see is listening and who will benefit from those things. I don't feel like I could go to any public school and sit for eight hours a day and teach a bunch of kids. I like the one-on-one thing better, and the voluntary thing I could do.

From Maria to Marjatta: The Transformation of an Oral Poem in Elias Lönnrot's *Kalevala*¹

Thomas DuBois

The question of Elias Lönnrot's role in shaping the texts that became his *Kalevala* has stirred such frequent and vehement debate in international folkloristic circles that even persons with only a passing interest in the subject of Finnish folklore have been drawn to the question. Perhaps the notion of academic fraud in particular intrigues those of us engaged in the profession of scholarship.² And although anyone who studies Lönnrot's life and endeavors will discover a man of utmost integrity, it remains difficult to reconcile the extensiveness of Lönnrot's textual emendations with his stated desire to recover and present the ancient epic traditions of the Finnish people. In part, the enormity of Lönnrot's project contributes to the failure of scholars writing for an international audience to pursue any analysis beyond broad generalizations about the author's methods of compilation,

¹ Research for this study was funded in part by a grant from the Graduate School Research Fund of the University of Washington, Seattle.

² Comparetti (1898) made it clear in this early study of Finnish folk poetry that the *Kalevala* bore only partial resemblance to its source poems, a fact that had become widely acknowledged within Finnish folkloristic circles by that time. The nationalist interests of Lönnrot were examined by a number of international scholars during the following century, although Lönnrot's fairly conservative views on Finnish nationalism became equated at times with the more strident tone of the turn of the century, when the *Kalevala* was made an inspiration and catalyst for political change (Mead 1962; Wilson 1976; Cocchiara 1981:268-70; Turunen 1982). The 1980s were marked by both the centennial of the *Kalevala* (1985) and a renewed interest in the topic of its (in)authenticity, addressed by some of the leading figures in Finnish and American folklore studies (Dundes 1985; Honko 1986 and 1987; Jones 1987; Alphonso-Karkala 1986; Lord 1987/1991; Pentikäinen 1989; Voßschmidt 1989).

overall interpretations, thematic molding, and career phases.³ Shortcut explanations—citing the small number of lines actually composed by Lönnrot himself, for instance—oversimplify and obscure the role Lönnrot played. Side-by-side textual comparison of the sort facilitated by the publication of Kuusi, Bosley, and Branch's (1977) excellent bilingual anthology of verbatim folk epic texts offers a means of sensing Lönnrot's role in transforming such texts into cantos for his *Kalevala*. Researchers who have availed themselves of this resource to date, however, have concentrated largely on thematic variation rather than linguistic or stylistic alteration (Alphonso-Karkala 1986; Lord 1987/1991; Sawin 1988). What is needed, I believe, is a detailed thematic and stylistic analysis of a single portion of Lönnrot's poem in order to demonstrate exactly how the author handled traditional material and (re)presented it to an outside audience.

This close analysis must rest, I believe, on a twofold attention to both the author's *intellectual* agenda (what he believed he was accomplishing for the Finnish people and for the world) and his *artistic* agenda (what he believed constituted an aesthetically pleasing poem). If we compare a passage from Lönnrot's text—here, a portion of the epic's final Poem 50—with the transcription of an oral performance that served as its model—the *Nativity* song of Arhippa Perttunen (SKVR I,2 1103)—then we can glimpse the scholarly and poetic judgments that underlie Lönnrot's epic. We can see, in other words, how Lönnrot's good intentions led him to alter significantly the poems he had observed in their traditional milieu.

Undertaking the task of comparing two such pieces of poetry—one the product of a single oral performance and the other the product of a long process of literary revision—would be valuable in itself as a defense or explication of Lönnrot's motivations. We may reap additional rewards from such an analysis as well, however. For in comparing these two texts, we will come to appreciate the contrasting aesthetic systems that informed Arhippa's oral epic performance and Lönnrot's literary epic product. And an understanding of these underlying artistic considerations will prove, I believe, a far more significant and wide-ranging discovery than any devoted solely to the cause of defending or criticizing Elias Lönnrot.

In this paper, then, I propose to examine first how Arhippa Perttunen, singing in an oral tradition he had experienced all his life, conceived of and controlled his poetry. By referring to three alternate

³ Not so in the Finnish literature, where extremely detailed studies have been produced: See Kaukonen 1939-45, a detailed examination of the sources Lönnrot used for his epic; Kaukonen 1979, a shorter history of Lönnrot's method and career; and similar useful overviews by Anttila 1985, Kuusi and Anttonen 1985, and Pentikäinen 1989.

performances of the same song—Arhippa's 1834, 1836, and 1839 versions of the *Nativity*—we can perceive the stylistic range and regularities he commanded. Then, with this oral aesthetic system in mind, we will examine how Elias Lönnrot approached, appropriated, and textually performed the same poem in his 1849 *Kalevala*. Again, alternate “performances”—this time Lönnrot's earlier 1833 and 1835 written versions—will help us discern the poet's range and tastes. An examination of these poets' stylistics will lead us to an appreciation of contrasting discursive agendas, that is, the structural and narrative imperatives resulting from Arhippa's oral aesthetic and Lönnrot's Romantic sensibilities. And an understanding of these discursive considerations will allow us, finally, to perceive how each poet contextualized his performance in a wider intertextual framework: the pious Messiah Cycle for Arhippa (a cycle of poems concerning the life and career of Jesus), and a surmised pre-Christian heroic Väinämöinen Cycle for Lönnrot. We will learn, I contend, a great deal about the workings of oral performance in traditional Finland and its transformation into the product of a particular mode of nineteenth-century literacy.

Arhippa Perttunen: Oral Performer in Context

Much is known about the singer Arhippa Perttunen (1769-1840) and his relation to the epic songs that he performed. Later dubbed the “King of Finnish folk poetry” (*runon kuningas*; Haavio 1943:35), Arhippa could boast beautiful songs and a prodigious memory that brought him fame during his life in local and national contexts alike. He attributed his repertoire and skills to his father, who used to spend evenings singing epic songs with a farmhand from another district. The songs that Arhippa learned from his father, Suuri Iivana (“Great Iivana”) were in turn passed on to the next generation's Arhippainen Miihkali, whose blindness may have contributed to the continuation of this familial oral tradition (Haavio 1943:39). Arhippa's acclaim as a singer led to repeated notations of his repertoire: not only did Elias Lönnrot visit him for the purpose of collecting his poems (1834), but J. F. Cajan (1836) and M. A. Castrén (1839) each, in turn, made a pilgrimage to the village of Latvajärvi for the same purpose. The 4124 lines of poetry collected from Arhippa thus include multiple versions of many of his favorite songs over a wide span of years.

Nineteenth-century folklorists studying Arhippa's poetry limited their

analyses primarily to considerations of subject matter and memory. Cajan and Castrén both noted Arhippa's reluctance to sing *loitsut* (incantations), which the singer viewed as sinful and godless (*ibid.*:38). Haavio (1943:40) notes Arhippa's particular fondness for the epic genre, although he knew poems of other genres as well. In addition, folklorists observed the overall unity, or wholeness, of Arhippa's poems, finding little evidence of logical gaps or inconsistencies (*ibid.*:38-40). It is clear that these observers attributed Arhippa's consistency to his fine memory rather than to any particular rhetorical structuring operating within the poems themselves and conveying the impression of integrity. For collectors of the day, such performances were viewed as fossils, preserving the artistry of poets far in the past. The better the memory, the more faithful the rendition, and the more valuable the text.

Several researchers have studied Finnish Kalevalaic poetry from contemporary perspectives. Oral-formulaic theory has been applied tentatively to Finnish oral epic singing by such eminent researchers in the field as Paul Kiparsky and Albert Lord. Kiparsky (1976:96) notes that singers in the tradition varied texts not so much by adding otherwise independent themes or passages but by varying the completeness of the rendition they gave: details could be included or omitted, provided they "belonged" to the song as generally sung in the singer's region. Albert Lord (1987/1991) focuses in part on the relations between Lönnrot's *Kalevala* and published variants of source folk poems, although his comments are necessarily limited. Lord also draws attention to Lönnrot's own distinction between singers who desired to repeat their songs verbatim—as Lord puts it, those who memorized—and those who instead remembered: reconstructing their songs in a process which Lord notes is "more potent, I believe, than it is generally credited with being" (1987:307; 1991:115).

In Finland, Jukka Saarinen and Lauri Harvilahti have furthered oral-formulaic research on this genre. After extensive computer-assisted analysis of Kalevalaic texts, Harvilahti arrives at a three-level model for understanding the way in which Finnish folk poets stored, retrieved, and performed their songs (1992:93):

Competent singers characterize or recall first of all the poem's overall structure (the contents and order of broad narrative wholes). These broad entities are in turn constituted from small, recurrent optional units, which vary in number within the tradition: precise descriptions of actions/events, frames/individuals, and characterizations. A third group is made up of recurrent units at the level of the line or below.

He also notes that variation on these secondary and tertiary levels can be used by a singer to give a particular shape to a performance, modulating it “according to his own preferences and purposes” (1992:97).

Jukka Saarinen (1988; 1991) has further explored such variation in the songs of both Arhippa Perttunen and his son Miihkali. In the later article he distinguishes between two types of narrative elements, hierarchically treated within the tradition. Lower-level elements (typically those that describe, detail, specify, or ground) cannot occur without the upper-level elements they augment. On the other hand, such upper-level narrative elements can appear with or without lower-level adjuncts. This hierarchical system helps explain why certain parts of Arhippa and Miihkali's songs are open to variation while other parts remain fixed. Saarinen goes on to discuss the greater and lesser kinds of additions, repetitions, and alternations characteristic of the singers' songs. The addition of extra lines, especially supplemental parallel lines (see below for further discussion) arises, according to Saarinen and musicologist Ilkka Kolehmainen (1977), from the desire to match closing or climactic moments in the melodic line with similarly charged moments in the narrative.

In a related vein, I have attempted to demonstrate the ethnopoetic architecture of Arhippa's performances and its underlying basis in an oral aesthetic (DuBois forthcoming). Not only did accomplished Finnish performers comply with the prosodic conventions of the folk poetry genre, I maintain, they used a related set of linguistic devices to delineate an overarching rhetorical structure for their poems as wholes. Whereas the prosody of Finnish folk poetry includes a particular meter (trochaic tetrameter), rules about syllable placement within the line, alliteration, and line-pair parallelism, broader aesthetic shaping was achieved by such features as line groupings of three and five, strategic use of particles (e.g., *niin*, “thus”) and enclitics (e.g., *-nsA*, third-person human possessive marker), and an interplay of succinct and lengthy passages. In the case of the particularly artful singer Arhippa Perttunen, improvisational additions, repetitions, and deletions of lines allowed the singer to vary his performance, selectively highlighting a given narrative moment through techniques of expansion and compensating for the investment of discourse time by streamlining other portions of the poem. Such improvisation allowed the singer to spotlight a given aspect of the narrative, structure the performance in a novel way, and tailor the performance itself to the tastes, familiarity, and interests of the audience. Following Hymes (1981; 1982; 1985), we can contextualize this body of rules and practices as a kind of

ethnopoetic “grammar,” set in play nearly automatically during the oral performance. And crucially, it was the implicit understanding of this grammar of performance that permitted audiences to appraise and appreciate the artistry of their entertainers. As in all good performance, a balance between predictability and innovation had to be struck, and this balance lay along the axis of traditional prosody and rhetorical shaping.

Appendix I contains a transcription of Arhippa’s 1834 performance of the *Nativity*, as performed for Elias Lönnrot. The text’s printed appearance has been altered along lines suggested by scholarship in ethnopoetics to make evident the rhetorical mechanisms operating within the poem itself.⁴ Below I shall make some observations about the particular kinds of artistic shaping noticeable in Arhippa’s text.

Dialogue stands as a crucial structuring device in Arhippa’s *Nativity*. Each of the three main parts of the performance (which Kuusi [1977:552; 1980:233-34] believes originate in separate poems) features a particular type of dialogue, made central by its placement in the text and paucity of competing detail. Part I, entitled here “The Berry and Mary” (ll. 1-28), focuses on the berry’s terse and mysterious call to Mary, a call that results in her eventual impregnation. The lengthy second part of the poem, “Mary, Piltti, and Ugly Ruotus’ Wife” (29-230), is dominated by Mary’s three attempts to find a sauna in which to give birth, instructing her servant Piltti to run to the village three times, and receiving there a negative response from Ugly Ruotus’ wife on each occasion. The repetition of Mary’s instructions to Piltti, Piltti’s word-for-word rendition of these lines for Ruotus’ wife, the wife’s equally repetitive responses, and Piltti’s faithful rendition of these as well create a highly stylized passage in which familiar lines are repeated for purely aesthetic reasons. In the final part of the poem, “Mary, the Road, the Moon, and the Sun” (231-94), Mary’s conversations again form the core of the text, as Mary addresses each of three natural beings (the road, the moon, and the sun) for information about her lost son.

What is crucial to note about these turns at talk is that they do not simply “help” tell the story or delineate the characters—rather, they are the narrative events around which the entire poem’s structure revolves. Thus, Arhippa’s poem opens with only two brief lines prior to the berry’s call and ends with the final words of the sun. No further discourse is necessary in a text so emphatically dominated by dialogue.

⁴ For further discussion of this methodology, and its application to Finnish folk poetry, see DuBois forthcoming.

On the more local, stanzaic level, too, Arhippa uses various devices to structure and give point to his song. He transgresses the prosodic rule of line-pair parallelism, for instance, to create line groupings of three or five at prime narrative moments. Note, for example, his description of where Mary hides her child:

Neitsy Maria emonen	Virgin Mary little mother	231
rakas äiti armollinen	dear mother full of grace	232
piiletteli poiuttahan	she hid her son	233
kullaista omenoansa	her golden apple	234
alla sieklan sieklottavan	under a sieve for sifting	235
alla korvon kannettavan	under a pail for carrying	236
alla jouksovan jalaksen	under a running sled runner	237

Here the regular progression of line pairs is dramatically offset by the final series of three lines, stylistically linked by the repetition of the addressive preposition *alla* (“under”), as well as by syntactic and grammatical parallelism. Such a covariation between groupings of two and three breaks the potential monotony of the poetry and allows the singer to identify key moments.

Likewise, the crucial narrative moment at which Mary consumes the berry is highlighted by a striking “run” of five parallel lines:

Tempo kartun kankahalta	She drags a pole from the marsh	21
senni päällä seisataksen	and standing on that	22
heitti marjan helmohinsa	she threw the berry into her lap	23
helmoiltansa vyönsä päälle	from her lap onto her belt	24
vyönsä päältä rinnoillensa	from her belt onto her breast	25
rinoiltansa huulellensa	from her breast onto her lip	26
huuleltansa kielellensä	from her lip onto her tongue	27
siitä vatsahan valahti.	from there it slid into the stomach	28

Here the regular alternation of the ablative (“from off of”) and allative (“onto”) cases, along with the presence of the personal ending *-nsA* help express the lines’ unity. And the final, fifth line (28), which culminates the action of the previous four, is at once semantically linked to and poetically differentiated from the lines leading up to it: shifting to an elative/illative (“from out of/into”) progression, replacing a noun with a pronoun (*siitä*) and including a verb (*valahti*, “slid”). We can sense here, in other words, a very fine management of audience expectation and surprise—an impression borne out by examination of similar structuring devices in others of Arhippa’s songs.

An examination of Arhippa's poetry may also lead to the conclusion that we can use the presence or absence of ethnopoetic structuring as an index of the integrity, or even orality, of a given portion of the *Kalevala*. For although Lönnrot understood the prosody of Kalevalaic poetry well, he did not sense the kinds of structuring described here. And the absence of this notion, coupled with a literary poetic sensibility largely at odds with that of the folk tradition, led to major restructurings of the poems destined for inclusion in the *Kalevala*. The fact that Lönnrot himself conceived of his assimilation of the Kalevalaic tradition as largely oral—since he had memorized most of the lines of the *Kalevala*—obscured for him the very substantive ways in which literacy altered his understanding, appreciation, and appropriation of the poetry.

Elias Lönnrot: Literate Performer in Context

Before examining Lönnrot's version of the lines quoted above, we need to understand the process by which he created his text. Although Lönnrot clearly enjoyed the folk epic tradition and became one of its great extollers to the world, it must be said that his views and interpretations of Kalevalaic singing differed markedly from those of traditional singers or audiences. Whereas a traditional singer such as Arhippa contextualized his songs within his childhood experiences and lifelong familiarity with the performed tradition itself, Lönnrot contextualized the poems within the intellectual construct of "national literature." As an educated doctor, schooled in the general European embrace of such works as the *Iliad*, *Edda*, and *Ossian*, Lönnrot was thrilled primarily by the fact of the poems' existence, and secondarily by the seeming antiquity of the poems' content. Matters of style, performance context, repertoire choice, and so forth—those aspects so interesting to folklorists today and so consequential to the performers themselves—seemed trivial in comparison with the historical significance of the poems.

Thus, whereas the traditional audience listened to a song for entertainment in the here and now, Lönnrot listened for enlightenment in the ancient past and validation in the intellectual present. And whereas a singer such as Arhippa Perttunen gained competence in the tradition through listening repeatedly to the songs and absorbing gradually what Kuusi and Anttonen have termed the *kalevalakieli* (the traditional aesthetic means and practices that characterize this mode of singing; 1985:61-63), Lönnrot spent his brief moments as an audience member engaged in the

necessarily logocentric act of shorthand notation: documenting for his contemporaries and followers the fact and the content of the poems he heard.

When Lönnrot returned home after any of his numerous short-term collecting expeditions, he brought with him long passages of written words with only a glimmering memory of their performed reality. Literacy allowed him to distance the poems from their performed context, and he then approached them anew along lines established by his own teachers and contemporaries (Ong 1986: points 4 and 7, 39-40). The great H. G. Porthan (1739-1804) had initiated Finnish intellectual interest in Kalevalaic singing and its content. Drawing on Macpherson's purportedly authentic Scottish epic *The Poems of Ossian* (1765) for inspiration, Porthan collected and published a number of Finnish epic songs in his five-part study *Dissertatio de Poesie Fennica* (1766-78) and led his students to examine the content of such songs in detail (Hautala 1954:62-68). Under the tutelage of the Turku Romantic scholar R. von Becker, one of the next generation of scholars to find significance in Kalevalaic poetry, the young Lönnrot pursued studies of the epic figure Väinämöinen, resulting in his thesis of 1827 (*ibid.*:101-2). K. A. Gottlund (1796-1875), drawing further on literary fascination with epics, pointed to the possibility of constituting an epic equal to those of Homer out of the traditional songs of the Finnish people (1817) and made a first attempt at creating one in his two-volume work *Pieniä Runoja Suomen Poijille Ratoxi* (*Little Songs for the Entertainment of the Sons of Finland*, 1817-21; Kuusi and Anttonen 1985:43). And Sakari Topelius (1781-1831), a district physician from Uusikarlepyy, created his own first draft of such an edited epic in his five-part *Suomen Kansan Vanhoja Runoja ynnä myös Nykyisempiä Lauluja* (*Ancient Poems of the Finnish People along with some Newer Songs*, 1822-31) a text which Väinö Kaukonen (1979:19) describes as crucial to the formation and form of Lönnrot's original *Kalevala*. Lönnrot's experience of any text he collected thus hinged on the notions created by these intellectuals and the variant texts familiar to him from Topelius' collection.

The editing methodology that Lönnrot developed on this basis became a combination of faithful transcription and careful comparative emendation. A given singer's poem led Lönnrot to associate it in his own mind either initially with other poems of precisely the same content, or secondarily with poems of seemingly related content. Lönnrot writes repeatedly in his essays and letters of the existence of *toisinnot* ("variants")—by which he means different versions of the same *ikivanha* ("ancient") poem. When writing of Arhippa Perttunen, for instance,

Lönnrot states: “A number of these [poems] were ones that I had not obtained yet from anyone else,”⁵ from which we can infer that he viewed the poems as having their own separate existence outside of given performances. When describing the wealth of collected poems available to him for his revision of the *Kalevala*, Lönnrot writes to A. J. Sjögren that his note pages are “almost entirely full of additions, although many of these are variants.”⁶ This superorganic view of the poems naturally led the editor more toward regularization and emendation than toward absolute fidelity to transcribed texts, as we shall see.

Particularly subject to alteration in Lönnrot’s compilation work were the very kinds of three- and five-part runs of lines that help structure Arhippa’s poetry. Lönnrot’s method and mindset favored expansion at the expense of structural harmony, a shortcoming much criticized by some contemporaries familiar with the folk tradition (e.g., Castrén [Kaukonen 1979:165]). And structuring devices inherent in a given performer’s singing became lost in a confused jumble of lines from different performances. As an example, consider the path the berry follows in Lönnrot’s 1849 *Kalevala*:

Tempoi kartun kankahalta	She dragged a pole from the marsh	107
jolla marjan maahan sorti	by which she knocked the berry	108
	to the ground	
Niinpä marja maasta nousi	thus the berry rose from the ground	109
kaunoisille kautoloille	to the beautiful shoetops	110
kaunosilta kautoloilta	from the shoetops	111
puhtahille polviloille	to the spotless knees	112
puhtahilta polviloilta	from the spotless knees	113
heleville helmasille.	to the bright apron-hem.	114
Nousi siitä vyörivoille	It rose from there to the waistline	115
vyörivoilta rinnoillensa	from the waistline to her breast	116
rinnoiltansa leuoillensa	from her breast to her chin	117
leuoiltansa huulillensa	from her chin to her lips	118
siitä suuhun suikahutti	from there it slipped into the mouth	119
keikahutti kielellensä	tripped quickly on her tongue	120

⁵ “Useimmat niistä [runoista] olivat sellaisia, joita en ennen muilta ole saanut” (Haavio 1943:35).

⁶ “melkein kaikkialla täynnä lisäyksiä, mutta paljon niistä on toisintoja” March 1848 (Kaukonen 1979:163).

kieleltä keruksisihin	from the tongue into the throat	121
siitä vatsahan valahti.	from there it slid into the stomach.	122

Presenting Lönnrot's text in an ethnopoetic format reveals the extent to which his conglomerative editing damages the structural cohesiveness of the source oral performances. In the above sequence of 14 lines (50:109-22) we can recognize several competing ethnopoetic systems. Lines 109-14 begin with the particle *niinpä* (the phatic expletive *niin*, "thus," plus the emphatic enclitic *-pA*, "indeed"), an occurrence that tends to announce a significant unit of related lines or climax moment in the singing of poets such as Arhippa (DuBois forthcoming). Indeed, in Lönnrot's text, this particle announces the occurrence of a unified run of lines, each formed of a reference to an article of clothing or body part plus an appropriate adjective. A regular alternation between the allative ("onto") case and the ablative ("from off of") further links line pairs so that the singleton line 114 "heville helmasille" ("onto the bright apron-hem") stands as a contrastive climax to the berry's run. Rather than leave the berry there, however, Lönnrot uses lines reminiscent of Arhippa's rendition to bring the berry from the maiden's waist to her mouth (115-18). Here, the verb *nousi* ("rose") is repeated, announcing a further run of related lines in which references to two body-parts are combined within each line with an alternation of ablative and allative cases. As in Arhippa's poem, the enclitic personal marker *-nsA* ("her") again provides further structural cohesion. Finally, in lines 119-22, Lönnrot uses an amalgamation of repeated words (e.g., *siitä* "from there"), related verbs (*suikahutti*, "slipped"; *keikahutti*, "tripped"; *valahti*, "slid"), and references to body-parts to build a final sequence for his berry.

Although structuring devices abound in Lönnrot's passage, they do not achieve the unity evident in Arhippa's briefer run. Instead, the flow of discourse is interrupted as poetic voice and device shift from section to section. Clearly, Lönnrot's penchant for expansion and desire to create stanzas of roughly even length led him to combine lines from different poets in imperfect ways.

In some cases Arhippa, too, alternated structuring devices to break the berry's run up into several parts, as in the version of the poem he performed for Cajan. But in contrast to Lönnrot's attempts, Arhippa is able to create a unified passage in which seemingly distinctive portions are linked together by shared devices and vocabulary (SKVR 1103a:23-37):

Niin mänövi mättähälle	Thus she went to the hill	23
tempo kartun kankahalta	she drags a pole from the marsh	24

senki peällä seisataksen	and standing on that	25
Heitti marjan helmoillensa	She threw the berry onto her lap	26
voatteille valkeille	onto the white clothes	27
pätöville peäsomille	onto the worthy headdress	28
Niin marja ylemmä nousi	Thus the berry rose up	29
polosille polvillensa	onto her dear knees	30
niin marja ylemmä nousi	thus the berry rose up	31
riveille rinnoillensa	onto her nimble breast	32
niin marja ylemmä nousi	thus the berry rose up	33
leveälle leuallehe	onto her broad chin	34
leualta on huulellehe	from the chin to the lip	35
huulelta on kielellehe	from the lip to the tongue	36
siitä vatsahan valahti	from there it slid into the stomach	37

Here we can notice that the same structuring devices recur throughout the lines: *niin* is used over and over again to tie the lines together, while the personal enclitics *-nsA* and *-he* (“her”) further mark structural unity. Although lines 27-28 seem to differ from the run of three lines interlarded with the repeated “Niin marja ylemmä nousi” (“Thus the berry rose up”—29, 31, 33), the interspersed lines retain the same adjective plus alliterating noun structure, the same use of the allative case *-lle*, and the same recurrence of personal markers as was introduced in the previous two lines. The overall effect of this progressively more elaborate run of lines 26-34 is that the culminating set of three lines (35-37) stands apart as terse and final, illustrating the interplay of long and short passages that pervades Arhippa’s songs.

As time progressed, and the corpus of poetry familiar to Lönnrot grew, so too, the minuteness of comparison of which Lönnrot was capable increased. In the revision of the *Kalevala* undertaken during the years 1847-48, we see Lönnrot associating poems on the basis of fragmentary congruence or partial thematic similarity. A firsthand observer, August Ahlqvist, described Lönnrot’s method for revising his epic in detail. According to Ahlqvist, Lönnrot had set up a large board on which he had displayed the contents of the *Kalevala*. After reading a passage from a collector’s notebook (be it his own or that of any of the several fieldworkers who contributed material for the revised *Kalevala*), Lönnrot consulted the board to locate the place where the passage would “best” fit. He then opened his copy of the *Kalevala* to the appropriate page and wrote in the alternate lines on one of the separate blank pages inserted into the

work for this purpose. The result of this months-long process was a resource book for the revision of the *Kalevala* so extensive that Lönnrot wrote to his friend Fabian Collan in May of 1848: "Now the collected poems could well yield seven *Kalevalas*, each entirely different."⁷ The fact that this process of association depended largely on Lönnrot's own internalization of the poems' content is underscored by Ahlqvist's comment: "This work would be much more difficult for someone else, since Lönnrot knows almost every word of the *Kalevala* by heart so that in that way he needn't consult his board so often but can go instead straight to the *Kalevala*."⁸

This process of text-building was for Lönnrot not only largely associative but also necessarily sequential, in a manner that we may recognize as characteristic of literacy (Ong 1982,1986; Lord 1987). The poems that Lönnrot had heard and learned first became the stem on which he grafted further texts, *lisäyksiä* ("additions"), much in the way that the initial string of cards in a game of solitaire provides the basis for all subsequent acts of association. Thus, since Arhippa's *Nativity* was not collected until the year after Lönnrot had created the proto-*Kalevala* (a first draft of the epic completed in 1833 but never published), the new poem had to be worked into a preexisting narrative framework that contained none of the Messiah Cycle poems.⁹ The existence of a *Nativity* poem in the final portion of Topelius' anthology (Kaukonen 1979:20) along with the occurrence of a marsh¹⁰ seems to have led Lönnrot to associate the poem's Maria with the pregnant girl and condemned illegitimate son of the poem known by folklorists as *Väinämöinen's Judgment* (*Väinämöisen tuomio*).¹¹ Thus, although in the proto-*Kalevala* (in the manuscript entitled

⁷ "nyt kerätyistä runoista saisi hyvin seitsemän kappaletta Kalevaloja, kaikki erilaisia" (Kaukonen 1979:164).

⁸ "Vaan toisille olisi paljon vaikeampi tämä työ, sillä L. muistaa melkein joka sanan Kalevalasta ulkoa, eikä niinmuodoin tarvitse niin yhä katsoa tauluunsa, menee vaan suoraan Kalevalaan" (Kaukonen 1979:162).

⁹ For translations of the Proto-*Kalevala* and 1835 *Kalevala*, see Magoun 1969; for a complete translation of the 1849 *Kalevala's* Poem 50, see Magoun 1963.

¹⁰ Note that Lönnrot's final version of this poem both starts and ends in the marsh; see Appendix II.

¹¹ For a classic examination of this poem's reconstructed Urform, see Haavio 1950.

“Väinämöinen”) the Nativity story is entirely absent, the 1835 *Kalevala* has included those portions of the poem (with significant alterations; see below) leading up to the son’s mysterious disappearance (the beginning of section III in Arhippa’s text). At that point, Lönnrot ties the text to the beginning of his previous account of Väinämöinen’s judgment by placing the son not in the heavens but in a marsh—the place of illegitimate children condemned to infanticide. From there he will be rescued and condemned again to death by Väinämöinen, only to miraculously upbraid the ancient hero for his foolishness. In the 1849 *Kalevala* Lönnrot has included even more of Arhippa’s song, although, again, the child ends up in the same morass. Thus, although the Nativity song swells from 171 lines (its length in the 1835 version) to a full 341 lines (in the 1849 version), it remains narratively subordinated to the song of Väinämöinen’s Judgment, for which it becomes a kind of introductory excursus, leading to the important moment of Väinämöinen’s insulted departure from the land of Kalevala.

Lönnrot vs. Arhippa: Clashing Aesthetic Systems

It is in this act of linking poems that Lönnrot’s own ideas about poetry and narrative come to the fore. And here, too, Arhippa’s oral aesthetic finds its most concerted challenge. An examination of the beginning of Lönnrot’s Nativity sequence provides an apt example. Consider lines 73-88, similar in many details to their source in Arhippa’s performance:

Marjatta, korea kuopus	Marjatta comely youngest child	73
viikon viipyi paimenessa	long worked as a shepherd	74
paha on olla paimenessa	it is hard to be a shepherd	75
tyttölapsen liiatenki:	too much indeed for a girlchild	76
mato heinässä matavi	a worm slithers in the hay	77
sisiliskot siuottavi.	lizards wriggle	78
Ei mato maaellutkana	a worm really didn’t slither	79
sisilisko siuotellut	nor did a lizard wriggle	80
Kirkui marjanen mäeltä	Cried a berry from the hill	81
puolukkainen kankahalta:	a lingonberry from the marsh	82
“Tule, neiti, noppimahan,	“Come maiden and pluck me	83
punaposki, poimimahan	red cheek pick me	84
tinarina riipimähän	tin-breast gather me	85
vyö vaski valitsemahan	copper-belt choose me	86

ennenkuin etana syöpi	before the snail consumes	87
mato musta muikkoavi!	the black worm destroys!"	88

If we compare Lönnrot's reworking of this passage to Arhippa's original, we can note some of the ways in which Lönnrot's literary tastes cause him to alter the poem's stylistic mechanisms and character motivations. In Arhippa's version, for instance, the idea of the berry falling prey to lowly slithering beasts (*etana*, "snail"; *mato*, "worm") stands as a poetic metaphor for natural decay: that which is not harvested by humans will be consumed by miserable scavengers. The berry calls for the maiden to save it from rotting on the vine. In Lönnrot's version, on the other hand, the berry clearly plays on the maiden's delicate fear of slithering things. By prefacing the berry's call with the lines "a serpent is slithering on the grass / lizards are wriggling there / the serpent did not really crawl / nor the lizard wriggle" (77-80), Lönnrot creates a psychological character sketch of a high-strung maiden—one earlier elaborated by the various tasks that the overly modest girl refuses to do, e.g., eating fertile eggs (23-24) or the meat of once-pregnant ewes (25-26), touching cows' teats (27-34), or riding in a sled drawn by sexually mature horses (35-42). The crafty berry uses the girl's fears to trick her into consuming it. Finally, the passage is rounded out by lines that accord the maiden a unique position among countless other women similarly tempted by the berry. It is only the extremely modest, sensitive Marjatta who responds to the berry's entreaty and fear tactics.

Lönnrot's text thus makes explicit both the motivations and the psychology of its characters, depicting them with foibles and guile absent from Arhippa's poem. This tendency arises, of course, from the fact that for Arhippa the characters are already familiar to his audience. The Virgin Mary and Holy Spirit need no characterization; one need only invoke what Kellogg (1979) has called the "vast context of story"—the great intertextual or extratextual body of other narratives and knowledge shared by performer and audience alike, signalled *metonymically*, as Foley (1991, 1992) would put it, by the very use of their names or actions. When Lönnrot chooses to desacralize the Virgin (a choice that we will examine below), the now-unfamiliar, faulted, and demonic figures he creates require explication entirely superfluous to Arhippa's traditional performance. We will return to this particular and crucial difference between these two performances at the end of this paper.

For Lönnrot, the cryptic brevity of Arhippa's opening passage must have seemed deplorably incomplete, clearly the sign of a degenerated form. In addition to the lack of immediate psychological grounding, Lönnrot

perceived at least three major lacks in this short passage, emended in his own version. First, in accordance with literary standards of his time, Lönnrot could not accept the notion that dialogue could precede character identification: both the berry and the maiden needed to be identified as characters and embedded in an interaction that would justify the dialogue. As a corollary to this initial structural shortcoming, Lönnrot must have felt that since the maiden becomes the more consequential character in the poem as a whole, she must be introduced first and in greater detail than the berry. The fact that Arhippa's poem fails to identify the maiden in any way prior to the berry's calling to her becomes evident as a narrative "flaw" when we notice the pains to which Lönnrot went to correct it. The opening lines of Poem 50 (1-42) are thus devoted to characterizing the maiden "Marjatta korea kuopus" ("Marjatta comely youngest child"), whose traits, by the way, are anything but divine. For Lönnrot, the opening must have seemed a naked dialogue scene calling for the textual grounding provided by the opening of the *Väinämöinen's Judgment* poem.

The second major structural lack in the passage—from Lönnrot's point of view—was the failure to explain how or why the maiden came to be in a marsh in the first place. The very expression "in the first place" here highlights the nineteenth-century literary habit of delineating place (setting/situation) as a necessary precondition to the presentation of plot details. There must be a reason, in other words, for the convergence of the characters in a certain spot and a basis for their eventual interaction. In a nineteenth-century Romantic epic sensibility dominated by works such as Macpherson's *Poems of Ossian*, where place is elevated to the status of central theme, it would be unconscionable to allow the topographic vagueness of Arhippa's poem to stand. Thus, Lönnrot provides a sound and logical justification for the maiden's arrival in the marsh in lines 43-48: she has been sent there as a shepherdess and has been led to the marsh by her sheep. This explication provides information on not only where the maiden is, but also why she is there, harnessing the delineation of setting and character to the broader cause of emplotment. Marjatta sits on the hill in the marsh because she has been made a shepherdess, a task assigned to her in turn because of her overly modest refusal to do other types of household work. Characterization (lines 1-42) leads to a resultant situation and setting (43-58) that culminates in the dialogue.

Thirdly, however, Lönnrot must have found the berry's initiation of the dialogue entirely too forward and abrupt, even given the elaborate preamble provided by the above-mentioned lines. Thus, in the 1849 *Kalevala* he places the first utterance of the conversation in Marjatta's

mouth, making her sighingly question (in the manner of nineteenth-century pastoral heroines) her present condition and fated destiny:

Tuossa tuon sanoiksi virkki,	There she said a word	59
itse lausui, noin nimesi:	herself uttered, thus spoke:	60
“Kuku, kultainen käkönen,	“Cuckoo, golden cuckoo-bird	61
hope’inen hoilattele,	call out, silver one,	62
tinarinta, riukuttele,	tin-breast, sing out	63
Saksan mansikka, sanele	German strawberry, say	64
käynkö viikon villapäänä	will I live long with free hair	65
kauan karjanpaimenena	spend much time as a shepherd	66
näillä aavoilla ahoilla,	in these open clearings,	67
leve’illä lehtomailla!	in these broad groves!	68
Kesosenko, kaksosenko	One summer’s time, a pair,	69
viitosenko, kuutosenko	a fifth, a sixth	70
vainko kymmenen keseä	perhaps ten whole years	71
tahi ei täyteen tätänä?”	or not fully that?”	72

With these lines provided (drawn largely from lyric poems outside the Messiah cycle), Lönnrot creates a narrative sequence appropriate to the genre of nineteenth-century epic. The “completion” of Arhippa’s narrative “fragment” depends on Lönnrot’s own notions of narrative requisites and the associative processes that led him to connect Arhippa’s lines with those of other poems.

This associative process took place during the first stage of Lönnrot’s revisions: when collected lines were written in as “variants” (*toisinnot*) in the leaves of Lönnrot’s notebooks and modified *Kalevala*. Once this process of association was complete—a process mediated by literacy but also reliant on Lönnrot’s quasi-oral internalization of the tradition—the more fundamentally literary process of text-building could begin. But crucially, throughout both stages of the process, Lönnrot’s mindset remained unmistakably literate, conceiving of texts in a way that only someone learned in the ways of written literature would.

Lönnrot’s resultant emendations are very different from the kinds of variations evident in Arhippa’s three versions of the *Nativity*. Where Arhippa modifies his performance, it is for surface (though not trivial) aesthetic effect rather than fundamental narrative restructuring. Whether Maria sends her servant three times forth to search for a sauna (as in the version Arhippa performed for Lönnrot) or only once (as in the versions performed for Cajan and Castrén), the overall interactions, characterizations, and narrative events remain unchanged. The performance is varied to entertain, to refine, to surprise within the framework of its

tradition—not to “rewrite” the story. Such cannot be said, in contrast, of Lönnrot’s variations.

Maria and Marjatta: Intertextual Contexts

Chief among the transformations which Lönnrot effects in his use of the Nativity stands the desacralization of Maria, her conversion from “rakas äiti armollinen” (“dear Mother full of mercy/grace”) to “Marjatta korea kuopus” (“Marjatta comely youngest child”). This change is accomplished through more than simple epithet substitutions, however. Throughout Lönnrot’s text, the virgin is accorded emotions and reactions wholly absent from Arhippa’s Virgin, recasting her as a young, frail, and very human character. In the lines prior to the berry’s call (as discussed above) Marjatta is portrayed as overly modest and dreamy, and in the portion of the poem developed from Arhippa’s performance, Marjatta evinces nervousness (75-80), embarrassment (129-30), plaintiveness (156-60, 179-84), indignation (169-78, 195-200) and tearful sorrow (289-90). So humanized is the *matala neiti* (“lowly [i.e., deflowered] maiden”) that Lönnrot is able to place a very mortal midwife’s charm into her mouth (304-14) as a young mother’s prayer. Such entreaties to God are absent from Arhippa’s poem, probably because the Virgin is regarded as not needing to call on God for help, being always confident of his assistance.

For Arhippa, such attention to the emotive life of his protagonist would have seemed unnecessary or inappropriate. Arhippa’s Maria is dignified and forceful, even in her predicament: her entreaties of Piltti and of Ruotus’s wife, as well as those of the road, moon, and sun, are made with forceful insistence rather than high-strung plaintiveness. Likewise, her search for her son has a tone of empowerment absent from Lönnrot’s passive Marjatta. Indeed, when Arhippa supplies further epithets for *Neitsy Maria* (“Virgin Mary”) in other versions of the poem, these are ones that emphasize her sacredness: for example, “vanhin vaimoloista” (“oldest of women”) and “eläjien ensimmäinen” (“first among beings”) (1836 version, SKVR I,2 1103a:11-12). And in the 1839 version of the poem sung for Castrén (SKVR I,2 1103c), the refusals of the road and moon to divulge the whereabouts of the child result in the Virgin cursing them, dooming them (in the manner of etiological Saints’ legends) to the lowly duties that they perform today.

Part of the reason for Arhippa’s silence regarding his protagonist’s emotions must lie also with the generic expectations of Finnish oral epic.

The lyric sentiment belonged to other kinds of songs in the Kalevalaic meter, for instance the *huolilaulu* ("song of cares"), *itkuvirsi* ("lament"), and certain wedding songs—and was marked as a particularly (though not exclusively) female theme (Timonen 1990a, b). Lönnrot's readiness to transgress these generic bounds in his *Kalevala*, thus creating a mixed form atypical of the folk tradition, reflects his Romantic notions of the epic genre and nineteenth-century tastes born of such poets as Macpherson and Runeberg.

When one knows the folk poems that served as Lönnrot's base, one can sense in the *Kalevala* both its author's oral familiarity and the text's written artificiality. There is a pulling together of detail and commentary that could arise only from a truly intimate knowledge of the main plot and form of the epic; at the same time, however, the plethora of addenda alert us to a mind working over time rather than within it and unaware of the complexities that underlay that momentary achievement of the oral performance.

Lönnrot's Poem 50 differs from Arhippa's *Nativity* in that the former places plot above all else, delineating characters that help convey the significance of the plot actions and deploying details so as to heighten and prolong the reader's awareness of these actions. Arhippa's *Nativity* does something entirely different. The plot is already known; it exists in the Bible. The *Nativity* is an intertextual, metonymic meditation on that plot, in which, I think, the hierarchy of importance that places action over character over place over detail is exactly inverted: now the details (sparse though they be) command prime attention, coupled with imaginatively (but economically) depicted settings, in which somewhat less important characters carry out nearly trivial acts. The sacred events within the narrative—the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Crucifixion—are camouflaged within metaphorical structures that operate as a somewhat puzzling allegorical narrative, sensible, nonetheless, to an audience "alive to the encoded signals for interpretation" (Foley 1992:293). It may be possible to conjecture, as Haavio did (1935:67-77), that the notion of an impregnating berry arose from a lax understanding of the "Hail Mary" or a misguided interpretation of a painted Flight into Egypt (in which the Virgin is often depicted riding a donkey and eating strawberries; Kuusi 1963:292-300), but Arhippa Perttunen, at least, knew better than that. For him, this poem was sacred and beloved, not because it was quaintly misinformed, but because it recapitulated a sacred event. It participated in a valuable way in the great unity of story that constituted the Christian message.

For Lönnrot, on the other hand, the Christianity of the poem poses certain problems. Most obviously, it strenuously resists any assumption of pre-Christian provenience, threatening as well to drag the other poems of the *Kalevala* into the Christian Middle Ages by association. Thus, somehow, Lönnrot must partition this most Christian of poems, set it off as different from its (earlier) counterparts. The most logical way to accomplish this end, is, of course, by placing it at the end of the epic and linking it to an ascribed era of conversion, when understandings of biblical events would have been tenuous and naive. The point can be driven home by enveloping the poem into the Väinämöinen cycle, making it not the recounting of a sacred act alone, but a detail in explaining how the pagan hero Väinämöinen came to leave his beloved songlands. The very human Marjatta becomes reminiscent of the Virgin Mary but not identical to her, further distancing the poem from its pious origin. And if most readers of the *Kalevala* would probably think of Poem 50 as a poem about Marjatta and the arrival of Christianity (for Marjatta, notwithstanding all Lönnrot's emendations, remains an extremely appealing and central character), it is clear from Lönnrot's own synopsis of the epic that for him Poem 50 was about Väinämöinen's departure and the coming of Christianity. Marjatta is not even mentioned in the description of the epic Lönnrot wrote late in life:

The last song, which gives an explanation of Väinämöinen's departure, also signifies the downfall of paganism before the teachings of Christianity, said downfall being the principal reason for Väinämöinen's leaving.¹²

In placing the Nativity at the end of his work, Lönnrot followed the lead established by Topelius in his earlier anthology, who accorded the poem the status of a "newer poem" reflective of a Roman Catholic era. But in embedding this Christian song in a pagan heroic epic carefully cleansed of other overtly Christian references before its final canto, Lönnrot was acting entirely on his own, accomplishing a transformation that he no doubt believed reflected the poem's original state, but that can hardly be regarded as a slight emendation.

In essence, Arhippa's *Nativity* is a complex oral meditation, Lönnrot's Poem 50 a complex literary explanation. Arhippa's song

¹² "Viimeinen laulu, mikä antaa selvityksen Väinämöisen lähdöstä, tarkoittaa sitä paitsi pakanuuden väistymistä uuden kristillisen opin tieltä, mikä väistyminen kaiketi oli tärkein syy Väinämöisen poistumiseen" [Lönnrot, "Lyhyt selostus" prepared for professor J. K. Grot, 1882 (Kaukonen 1979:184)].

provides a metaphoric recapitulation of the birth and death of Christ, focusing on that female (p)recapitulation of Christ himself, the Virgin Mary. Lönnrot's poem, for its part, provides an explanation of how the prior 49 poems of the 1849 *Kalevala* fit into Finnish history: Poem 50 is the single point in the epic in which the mythic, legendary, and quasi-historical elements of the poems meet the solid earth of historical reality in the moment of conversion. If Väinämöinen is compelled to leave by the arrival of Christianity, symbolized (but no longer necessarily embodied) in the son of Marjatta, then all the narrative events prior to that moment must have occurred in the pre-Christian past. There is no need to wonder whether some of the poems may be of more recent vintage: the Christian elements so assiduously expunged from the prior 49 poems must have been late additions, removed by a judicious editor.

Examining Arhippa's oral performance and Lönnrot's literary text side by side teaches us a great deal about the traditional poetics of Finland and the nineteenth-century ideals of its Romantic elite. Each man looked to a different aesthetic system for his foundation, and built songs with tools characteristic of that world. Arhippa found his groundings in the oral tradition of his father, and created a text structured through devices typical of that same tradition. Lönnrot found his groundings in the intellectual movements of his day, and created a text structured along contemporary literary lines. And each man embedded his particular song of a maiden and child in a different "vast context of story": the miracle of the Christian revelation for Arhippa, and the miracle of a national soul for Lönnrot.

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[SKS= Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seura (Finnish Literature Society)]

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Appendix 1

SKVR I,2 1103 Latvaj. Lönnrot AII 6, n. 93 1834. Arhippa Perttunen
[Present translation based in part on Kuusi et al. 1977:283-91.]

I. *The Berry and Mary*

Marjanen mäeltä huuti	A berry called from the hill	1
puna puola kankahalta	a cranberry from the marsh:	2
"Tule neiti poimomahan	"Come maiden and pick me	3
vyö vaski valitsemahan	copper-belt choose me	4
ennen kun etona syöpi	before the snail consumes	5
mato musta muikkoali!"	the black worm destroys!"	6
Neitsy Maaria emonen	Virgin Mary little mother	7
rakas äiti armollinen	dear mother full of grace	8
viitisekse vaatisekse	dresses, adorns	9
pää somille suorieli	wrapped her head in a headdress	10
vaatehilla valkehilla	in clothes of white	11

Läksi marjan poimintaan	She went to pick the berry	12
punapuolan katsontaan	the cranberry to see to	13
niin meni mäille, sano	thus she went to the hills, say	14
keksi marjasen meältä	she picked the berry on the hill	15
punapuolan kankahalta	the berry on the marsh	16
On marja näkemiehen	It looks like a berry	17
puola ilman luomeehen ¹³	*a cranberry without interest*	18
alahahko ois maasta syöä	too low to eat from the ground	19
ylähäkö puuhun nosta.	too high from a tree.	20
Tempo kartun kankahalta	She drags a pole from the marsh	21
senni päällä seisataksen	and standing on that	22
heitti marjan helmohinsa	she threw the berry into her lap	23
helmoiltansa vyönsä päälle	from her lap onto her belt	24
vyönsä päältä rinnoillensa	from her belt onto her breast	25
rinoiltansa huulellensa	from her breast onto her lip	26
huuleltansa kielellensä	from her lip onto her tongue	27
siitä vatsahan valahti.	from there it slid into the stomach.	28

II. *Mary, Piltti, and Ugly Ruotus' Wife*

Siitä tyyty siitä täyty	Sated from that, filled from that	29
siitä paksuksi panihen	grew fat from that	30
lihavaksi liittelihen	added weight	31
niin kohun kovoa kanto	thus a heavy womb she carries	32
vatsan täyttä vaikieta	a stomach full of trouble	33
Kanto kuuta 2, 3	She carries it for months 2, 3	34
3 kuuta, 4 kuuta	3 months, 4 months	35
4 kuuta 5 kuuta	4 months, 5 months	36
7:n kaheksan kuuta	7, 8 months	37
ympäri 9 kuuta	around 9 months	38
vanhojen vaimon määriin	as old women count	39
kuuta 1/2 10.	half of the tenth month	40
Niin kuulla 10:llä	Thus in the tenth month	41
lyöäh kavon kipua	There strikes the pain of wives	42
imen tulta tuikatah	the fire of girls sparks	43

¹³ The asterisk (*) denotes lines ellipticized in the recorder's fieldnotes but supplied by the editors of SKVR.

vaimon vaivaksi tuleepi	a wife's trial comes	44
Sanan virkko noin nimesi:	She says a word, uttered thus:	45
“Piltti pieni piikaseni	“Piltti my little servant girl	46
lähe kylpyä kylästä	go find a bath in the village	47
saunoa Sarajahasta	a sauna in Saraja	48
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	49
avun anke tarvitsisi.”	help for the luckless one in need.”	50
Piltti pieni piikojansa	Piltti her little servant girl	51
hyvä kielas käskieki	good at taking orders	52
kepiä kehuttuoaki	easy to persuade,	53
sekä juoksi jotta joutu	both ran and rushed	54
ylähäiset maat aleni	pulled down the highlands	55
alahaiset maat yleni	pulled up the lowlands	56
Ruman Ruotuksen kotihin.	to Ugly Ruotus' (Herod's) home.	57
Ruma Ruotus paitulainen	Ugly Ruotus shirt-sleeved one	58
syöpi juopi pöyän päässä	eats, drinks at the table's head	59
päässä pöyän paioillaan	at table's head in his shirt-sleeves	60
aivin aivinaisillaan	in his clean linen	61
elääpi hyvän tavalla	he lives life well	62
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus' wife	63
liikku keski lattiella	moves about the middle of the floor	64
lieho sillan liitoksella	lightly treads upon the floorjoint	65
Sano Piltti piikojansa	Says Piltti her little servant girl	66
“Läksin kylpyä kylästä	“I went to find a bath in the village	67
saunoa Sarajahasta	a sauna in Saraja	68
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	69
avun anke tarvitsisi.”	help for the luckless one in need.”	70
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus's wife	71
sanan virkko noin nimesi	says a word uttered thus	72
“Ei ole kylpyä kylässä	“There is not a bath in the village	73
saunoa Sarajahassa	a sauna in Saraja	74
On talli Tapo meällä	There is a stable on Tapo hill	75
huone hongikko koissa	a room in a fir grove house	76
johon portot pojan saapi	where whores go to have a son	77
tuulen lautat lapsen saapi.”	harlots to have a child.”	78
Piltti pieni piikojansa	Piltti her little servant girl	79
pian juoksi jotta joutu	soon ran and rushed	80

sano tuolta tultuaan	says once she's returned from there	81
“Ei ole kylpyä kylässä saunoa Sarajahassa	“There is not a bath in the village a sauna in Saraja	82 83
Ruma Ruotus paitulainen syöpi juopi pöyän päässä päässä pöyän paiollaan aivin aivinaisillaan elääpi hyvän tavalla	Ugly Ruotus the shirt-sleeved eats, drinks at the table's head at table's head in his shirt-sleeves in his clean linen he lives life well	84 85 86 87 88
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä liikku keski lattiella liehu sillan liitoksella	Ugly Ruotus' wife moves about the middle of the floor lightly treds upon the floor-joint	89 90 91
Mie sanon sanalla tuolla	I say these words when there	92
‘Läksin kylpyä kylästä saunoa Sarajahasta jossa huono hoivan saapi avun anke tarvitseeppi.’	‘I went to find a bath in the village a sauna in Saraja where a wretch can receive attention help for the luckless one in need.’	93 94 95 96
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä ‘Ei ole kylpyä kylässä saunoa Sarajahassa On talli Tapo mäellä huone hongikko keolla johon portot pojan saapi tuulen lautat lapsen luopi’.”	Ugly Ruotus' wife: ‘There is not a bath in the village a sauna in Saraja There is a stable on Tapo hill a room in a fir grove house where whores go to have a son harlots to make a child’.”	97 98 99 100 101 102 103
Vaimon vaivalle tuleeppi Neitsy Maaria emonen niin sano toisen kerran	A wife's trial comes Virgin Mary little mother thus says a second time	104 105 106
“Sekä juokse jotta jouvu mene kylpyä kylästä saunoa Sarajahasta jossa huono hoivan saisi avun anke tarvitsisi.”	“Both run and rush go find a bath in the village a sauna in Saraja where a wretch can receive attention help for the luckless one in need.”	107 108 109 110 111
Piltti pieni piikojansa hyvä kieläs käskieki kepiä kehuttuoki sekä juoksi Ruma Ruotus jotta joutu alahaiset maat yleni	Piltti her little servant girl good at taking orders easy to persuade both ran Ugly Ruotus and rushed pulled down the highlands	112 113 114 115 116 117

ylähaiset maat aleni	pulled up the lowlands	118
Ruma Ruotus paitulainen	Ugly Ruotus the shirt-sleeved	119
syöpi juopi pöyän päässä	eats, drinks at the table's head	120
päässä pöyän paiollaan	at table's head in his shirt-sleeves	121
aivin aivinaisillaan	in his clean linen	122
elääpi hyvän tavalla	he lives life well	123
Sano Piltti piikojansa	Says Piltti her servant girl	124
“Läksin kylpyä kylästä	“I went to find a bath in the village	125
saunoa Sarajahasta	a sauna in Saraja	126
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	127
avun anke tarvitsisi.”	help for the luckless one in need”	128
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus' wife	129
liikku keski lattiella	moves about the middle of the floor	130
liehu sillan liitoksella	lightly treads upon the floor-joint	131
sanan virkko noin nimesi	says a word utters thus	132
“Eule kylpyä kylässä	“There is not a bath in the village	133
saunoa Sarajahassa	a sauna in Saraja	134
On talli Tapomeällä	There is a stable on Tapo hill	135
huone hongikkokeolla	a room in a fir grove house	136
johon portot pojan saapi	where whores go to have a son	137
tuulen lautat lapsen luopi.”	harlots to make a child.”	138
Piltti pieni piikojansa	Piltti her little servant girl	139
sekä juoksi jotta joutu	both ran and rushed	140
sano tuolta tultuaan	says once she's returned from there	141
“Eule kylpyä kylässä	“There is not a bath in the village	142
saunoa Sarajahassa.	a sauna in Saraja.	143
Ruman Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus's wife	144
sanan virkko noin nimesi	says a word utters thus	145
‘On talli Tapomeällä	‘There is a stable on Tapo hill	146
huone hongikkokeolla	a room in a fir grove house	147
johon portot pojan saapi	where whores go to have a son	148
tuulen lautat lapsen luopi.’	harlots to make a child.’	149
Niin sanoo mokomin.”	Thus something like that she says.”	150
Oli aikoa vähäsen	There was little time	151
yhä tuskaksi tuleeipi	still the pain comes	152
painuupi pakolliseksi	presses into aches	153

vaimon vaivoksi tuleeipi.	a wife's trial comes.	154
Kohtu käänty kovaksi etc.	the womb turns heavy	155
[vatsan täysi vaikieksi] ¹⁴	[the stomach full of trouble]	
sanan virkko noin nimesi	says a word uttered thus	156
“Piltti pieni piikaseni	“Piltti my little servant girl	157
lähe kylpyä kylästä	go find a bath in the village	158
saunoa Sarajahasta	a sauna in Saraja	159
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	160
avun anke tarvitsisi.”	help for the luckless one in need.”	161
Piltti pieni piikojansa	Piltti her little servant girl	162
sekä juoksi jotta joutu	both ran and rushed	163
alahaiset maat yleni	pulled up the lowlands	164
ylähäiset maat aleni	pulled down the highlands	165
Ruman Ruotuksen kotihin	to Ugly Ruotus' home	166
Ruma Ruotus paitulainen	Ugly Ruotus the shirt-sleeved	167
syöpi juopi pöyän päässä	eats, drinks at the table's head	168
päässä pöyän paiollaan	at table's head in his shirt-sleeves	169
elääpi hyvän tavalla	he lives life well	170
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus' wife	171
liikku keski lattiella	moves about the middle of the floor	172
liehu sillan liitoksella	lightly treads upon the floor-joint	173
Piltti pieni piikojansa	Piltti her little servant girl	174
sanan virkko noin nimesi	says a word uttered thus	175
“Läksin kylpyä kylästä	“I went to find a bath in the village	176
saunoa Sarajahasta	a sauna in Saraja	177
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	178
avun anke tarvitsisi.”	help for the luckless one in need.”	179
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus's wife	180
sanan virkko noin nimesi	says a word uttered thus	181
“Ei ole kylpyä kylässä	“There is not a bath in the village	182
saunoa Sarajahassa	a sauna in Saraja	183
On talli Tapomeälle	There is a stable on Tapo hill	184
huoni hongikko keolla	a room in a fir grove house	185
johon portot pojan saapi	where whores go to have a son	186

¹⁴ Lines in brackets ([]) were added by the present author to complete ellipses occurring in the original text and denoted by “etc.”

tuulen lautat lapsen luopi.”	harlots to make a child.”	187
Piltti pieni piikosehe	Piltti her little servant girl	188
sekä juoksi jotta joutu	both ran and rushed	189
sano tuolta tultuaan	says once she's returned from there	190
“Ei ole kylpyä kylässä	“There is not a bath in the village	191
saunoa Sarajahassa	a sauna in Saraja	192
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	193
avun anke tarvitsisi.	help for the luckless one in need.	194
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus' wife	195
sanan virkko noin nimesi	says a word uttered thus	196
‘On talli Tapomeällä	‘There is a stable on Tapo hill	197
huone hongikkokeolla	a room in a fir grove house	198
johon portot pojan saapi	where whores go to have a son	199
tuulen lautat lapsen luopi’.”	harlots to make a child’.”	200
Oli aikoa vähäsen	There was little time	201
vaimon vaivakse tulee	a wife's trial comes	202
kohtu kääntyy kovaksi	the womb turns heavy	203
vatsan täysi vaikiaksi	the stomach full of troubles	204
Otti vassan varjoksensa	She took a sauna-whisk for protection	205
koprin helmansa kokoili	gathered her skirt in her fists	206
käsin kääri vaatteensa	wound up her clothes in her hands	207
itse noin sanoiksi virkki	herself thus put in words	208
“Lähtie minun tuleepi	“Go I must	209
niin kun muinenki kasakan	just like a farmhand of old	210
eli orjan palkkalaisen.”	or a serf, a hireling.”	211
Astua taputteloo	She steps lightly	212
huonehesen hongikolle	to the room in the fir grove	213
tallih on Tapomeälle	to the stable on Tapo hill	214
niin sano sanalla tuolla	thus she says in words when there	215
“Hengeäs hyvä heponen	“Breathe good horse	216
vatsan kautti vaivallisen	across my troubled stomach	217
kyly löyly löyhähytä	bathhouse heat let loose	218
sauna lämpönen lähetä	sauna warmth send off	219
vatsan kauti vaivallisen	across my troubled stomach	220
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	221
avun anke tarvitsisi.”	help for the luckless one in need.”	222
Hengäsi hyvä heponen	Breathed the good horse	223

kylyn löylyn löyähyytti	bathroom heat let loose	224
sauna lämpösen lähetti	sauna warmth sent off	225
vatsan kautti vaivallisen	across the troubled stomach	226
Jouluna Jumala syntyy	On Christmas God is born	227
paras poika pakkasella	the best boy in the frost	228
syntyy heinille heposen	born onto the hay of horses	229
suora jouhen soimen päähän	into the straight-mane's manger	230

III. Mary, the Road, the Moon, and the Sun

Neitsy Maria emonen	Virgin Mary little mother	231
rakas äiti armollinen	dear mother full of grace	232
piiletteli poiuttahan	she hid her son	233
kullaista omenoansa	her golden apple	234
alla sieklan sieklottavan	under a sieve for sifting	235
alla korvon kannettavan	under a pail for carrying	236
alla jouksovan jalaksen	under a running sled runner	237
Kato pieni poikuoh	The little son disappears	238
kultainen omenuutensa	her golden apple	239
alta sieklan sieklottavan	from under a sieve for sifting	240
alta juoksevan jalaksen	from under a running sled runner	241
alta korvon kannettavan	from under a pail for carrying	242
Etsi pientä poiuttansa	She searched for her little son	243
kullaista omenoansa	her golden apple	244
kesällä kevysin pursin	in summer with a light boat	245
talvella lylyin lipein	in winter with sliding skis	246
Etsittiin vain ei löytty	He was searched for but not found	247
Neitsy Maaria emonen	Virgin Mary little mother	248
kävi teitä asteloo	walked roads, stepped	249
tiehyt vastaan tulevi	She comes upon a road	250
niin tielle kumarteleksen	thus bowing to the road	251
itse noin sanoiksi virkki	herself she put in words thus	252
“Tiehyöt Jumalan luoma	“Road, God's creation	253
näitkö pientä poiuttani	have you seen my little son	254
kullaista omenoani?”	my golden apple?”	255
Tie vastaan sanoo:	The road in response says	256
“Jos tietäisin en sanoisi	“If I knew I would not say	257

poikas' on minunki luonut	your son has created me as well	258
ratsuilla ajettavaksi	for riding saddlehorses	259
kovin kengin käytäväksi.”	for using heavy shoes.”	260
Neitsy Maaria emonen	Virgin Mary little mother	261
rakas äiti armollinen	dear mother full of grace	262
aina etsivi etemmä	ever searching onward	263
kuuhut vastaan tulevi	She comes upon the moon	264
niin kuulle kumarteleksen	thus bowing to the moon	265
itse noin sanoiksi virkki	*herself she put in words thus*	266
“Sie kuuhut Jumalan luoma	“You, moon, God's creation	267
näitkö pientä poiuttani	have you seen my little son	268
kullaista omenoani?”	my golden apple?”	269
Kuu se vastaan sanoo	The moon in response says	270
“Jos tietäisin en sanoisi	“If I knew I would not say	271
poikais on minunki luonut	your son has created me as well	272
päivällä katoamahan	to hide in the day	273
yön on aian paistamahan.”	to shine at nighttime.”	274
Aina eistyyppi etemmä	Always searching onward	275
Neitsy Maaria emonen	Virgin Mary little mother	276
rakas äiti armollinen	dear mother full of grace	277
etsi pientä poiuttansa	searched for her little son	278
kullaista omenoansa	her golden apple	279
päivyt vastaan tulevi	she comes upon the sun	280
päivälle kumarteleksen	bowing to the sun	281
“Sie päivä Jumalan luoma”	“You, sun, God's creation	282
Näitkö pientä poiuttani	have you seen my little son	283
kullaista omenoani?”	my golden apple?”	284
Niin päivä Jumalan luoma	Thus the sun, God's creation	285
sanon virkko noin nimesi	says a word uttered thus	286
“Poikas' on minunki luonut	“Your son has created me as well	287
päivän ajan paistamahan	to shine in the daytime	288
yön ajan lepäämähän	to rest in the nighttime	289
Tuolla on pieni poikuosi	There is your little son	290
kultainen omenasi	your golden apple	291
ylisessä taivosessa	in the high heavens	292
isän Jumalan siällä	in God the Father's place	293
tulee sieltä tuomitsemaan.”	he'll come from there to judge.”	294

Appendix II

Elias Lönnrot, *New Kalevala* (1849), Poem 50:ll. 73-420 (Stanzaic divisions as in Lönnrot's text).

Marjatta, korea kuopus	Marjatta comely youngest child	73
viikon viipyi paimenessa	long worked as a shepherd	74
paha on olla paimenessa	it is hard to be a shepherd	75
tyttölapsen liiatenki:	too much indeed for a girlchild	76
mato heinässä matabi	a worm slithers in the hay	77
sisiliskot siuottavi.	lizards wriggle	78
Ei mato maaellutkana	a worm really didn't slither	79
sisilisko siuotellut	nor did a lizard wriggle	80
Kirkui marjanen mäeltä	Cried a berry from the hill	81
puolukkainen kankahalta:	a lingonberry from the marsh	82
"Tule, neiti, noppimahan,	"Come maiden and pluck me	83
punaposki, poimimahan	red-cheek pick me	84
tinarinta riipimähän	tin-breast gather me	85
vyö vaski valitsemahan	copper-belt choose me	86
ennenkuin etana syöpi	before the snail consumes	87
mato musta muikkoavi!	the black worm destroys!	88
Sata on saanut katsomahan	A hundred have come to look at me	89
tuhat ilman istumahan	a thousand just to sit by me	90
sata neittä, tuhat naista	a hundred maidens, a thousand women	91
lapsia epälukuisin	children beyond count	92
ei ken koskisi minuhun	no one would touch me	93
poimisi minun poloisen."	pick poor little me."	94
Marjatta, korea kuopus	Marjatta comely youngest child	95
meni matkoa vähäisen	went a little way	96
meni marjan katsantahan	went to look at the berry	97
punapuolan poimintahan	to pick the lingonberry	99
kätösillä kaunihilla	with her beautiful hands	100
Keksi marjasen mäeltä	She picked the berry on the hill	101
punapuolan kankahalta:	the lingonberry on the marsh:	102
on marja näkemiänsä	It looks like a berry	103
puola ilmoin luomiansa	a lingonberry without interest	104
ylähäkö maasta syöä	too high to eat from the ground	105
alahahko puuhun nousta!	too low to climb into the tree	106
Tempoi kartun kankahalta	She dragged a pole from the marsh	107
jolla marjan maahan sorti	by which she knocked the berry to	
	the ground	108
niinpä marja maasta nousi	thus the berry rose from the ground	109
kaunoisille kautoloille	to the beautiful shoetops	110

kaunosilta kautoloilta	from the shoetops	111
puhtahille polviloille	to the spotless knees	112
puhtahilta polviloilta	from the spotless knees	113
heleville helmasille.	to the bright apron-hem.	114
Nousi siitä vyörivoille	It rose from there to the waistline	115
vyörivoilta rinnoillensa	from the waistline to her breast	116
rinnoiltansa leuoillensa	from her breast to her chin	117
leuoiltansa huulillensa	from her chin to her lips	118
siitä suuhun suikahutti	from there it slipped into the mouth	119
keikahutti kielellensä	tripped quickly on her tongue	120
kieleltä keruksisihin	from the tongue into the throat	121
siitä vatsahan valahti.	from there it slid into the stomach.	122
Marjatta, korea kuopus	Marjatta comely youngest child	123
tuosta tyytyi, tuosta täytyi	grew sated from that, filled from that	124
tuosta paksuksi panihe	grew fat from that	125
lihavaksi liittelihe.	added weight.	126
Alkoi pauloitta asua	She began to live without a waistband	127
ilman vyöttä völlehtiä	to lie about without a belt	128
käyä saunassa saloa	to visit the sauna in secret	129
pime'issä pistelläitä	to frequent in the darkness	130
Emo aina arvelevi	The mother ever wondered	131
äitinsä ajattelevi:	her mother thought about it:	132
“Mi on meiän Marjatalla	“What is going on with Marjatta	133
ku meiän kotikanalla	with our homespun hen	134
kun se pauloitta asuvi	that she lives without a waistband	135
aina vyöttä völlehtivi	ever lies about without a belt	136
käypi saunassa saloa	visits the sauna in secret	137
pime'issä pisteleikse?”	frequents in the darkness?”	138
Lapsi saattavi sanoa	A child thought to say	139
lapsi pieni lausuella:	a little child to declare:	140
“Se on meiän Marjatalla	“This is what's with Marjatta	141
sepä Kurjetta rukalla	this with luckless Mari	142
kun oli paljon paimenessa	she was working much as a shepherd	143
kauan karjassa käveli.”	walked long among the herd.”	144
Kantoi kohtua kovoa	She carried a heavy womb	145
vatsantäyttä vaikeata	a stomach full of trouble	146
kuuta seitsemän, kaheksan	months seven, eight	147
ynnähän yhdeksän kuuta,	a ninth month as well	148
vaimon vanha'an lukuhun	as an old woman numbers it	149
kuuta puolen kymmenettä.	half of the tenth month.	150
Niin kuulla kymmenennellä	Thus in the tenth month	151
impi tuskalle tulevi	the virgin begins to hurt	152

kohtu kääntyvi kovaksi	the womb turned heavy	153
painuvi pakolliseksi.	pressed down painfully	154
Kysyi kylpyä emolta	She asked the mother for a bath	155
“Oi emoni armahani	“Oh my mother dear	156
laita suojoa sijoja	fix me a cozy place	157
lämpymyötä huonehutta	a warm room	158
piian pieniksi pyhiksi	as a girl’s hide-away	159
vaimon vaivahuoneheksi!”	a woman’s room for labor.	160
Emo saattavi sanoa	The mother thought to say	161
oma vanhin vastaella	her elder to answer	162
“Voi sinua, hiien huora!	“Woe to you, demon’s mistress!	163
Kenen oot makaelema?	Whom have you slept with?	164
Ootko miehen naimattoman	With an unmarried man	165
eli naineen urohon?”	or a married husband?”	166
Marjatta korea kuopus	Marjatta comely youngest child	167
tuop’ on tuohon vastoavi:	answered this to that:	168
“En ole miehen naimattoman	“Not with an unmarried man	169
enkä naineen urohon.	nor a married husband.	170
Menin marjahan mäelle	I went to the berry on the hill	171
punapuolan poimentahan	to pick a lingonberry	172
otin marjan mielelläni	I took the berry gladly	173
toisen kerran kielelläni.	a second time on my tongue	174
Se kävi kerustimille	It travelled into my throat	175
siitä vatsahan valahti	from there it slid into the stomach	176
tuosta tyy’yin tuosta täy’yin	I grew sated from that, filled from that	177
tuosta sain kohulliseksi.”	from that I became pregnant.”	178
Kysyi kylpyä isolta:	She asked her father for a bath	179
“Oi isoni armahani!	“Oh my father dear!	180
Anna suojoa sijoja	Give me a cozy place	181
lämpymyötä huonehutta	a warm room	182
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	183
piika piinansa pitäisi!”	a girl pass her pain!”	184
Iso saattavi sanoa	The father thought to say	185
taatto taisi vastaella:	the father knew to answer:	186
“Mene portto poikemmaksi	“Go, whore, be off	187
tulen lautta tuonemma	harlot, away	188
kontion kivikoloihin	to the brown one’s stone-piles	189
karhun louhikammioihin	to the bear’s rock den	190
sinne, portto poikimahan	there, whore, to give birth	191
tulen lautta lapsimahan!”	harlot to bear a child!”	192

Marjatta korea kuopus tuop' on taiten vastaeli: "En mä portto ollekana tulen lautta lienikänä. Olen miehen suuren saava jalon synnyn synnyttävä joll' on valta vallallunki väki Väinämöisellenki."	Marjatta comely youngest child knowingly answered this: "I am not a whore at all not a harlot indeed. I am to bear a great man to give birth to one of noble birth who will have power over the powerful even over the people of Väinämöinen."	193 194 195 196 197 198 199 200
Jo on piika pinteissä minne mennä kunne käyä kusta kylpyä kysellä Sanan virkkoi noin nimesi:	Already the girl is perplexed where to go, where to visit where to ask for a bath She said a word uttered thus:	201 202 203 204
"Piltti pienin piikojani paras palkkalaisiani! Käypä kylpyä kylästä saunoa Saraojalta jossa huono hoivan saisi piika piinansa pitäisi! Käy pian välehen jou'u välehemmin tarvitahan!"	"Piltti my littlest serving girl best of my hirelings! Go get a bath in the village a sauna in Saraoja where a wretch can receive attention a girl pass her pain! Go soon and hurry you will need to hasten!"	205 206 207 208 209 210 211 212
Piltti, piika pikkarainen sanan virkkoi noin nimesi: "Keltä mä kysyn kylyä keltä aihelen apua?"	Piltti her small servant girl said a word uttered thus: "Whom shall I ask for a sauna whom shall I entreat for help?"	213 214 215 216
Sanoi meiän Marjattainen itse virkki noin nimesi: "Kysy Ruotuksen kylyä saunoa Sarajan-suista!"	Our small Marjatta said herself said, uttered thus: "Ask for Ruotus' sauna a sauna at the edge of Saraja!"	217 218 219 220
Piltti piika pikkarainen tuo oli nöyrä neuvottava kärkäs ilman käskemättä kehumattaki kepeä utuna ulos menevi savuna pihalle saapi. Kourin helmansa kokosi käsin kääri vaattehensa sekä juoksi jotta joutui kohin Ruotuksen kotia. Mäet mätkyi mennessänsä vaarat notkui noutessansa kävyt hyppi kankahalla	Piltti small servant girl she was easy to advise spry without ordering quick without persuading goes out like mist like smoke into the farmyard. She gathered her apron-hem in her palms wound up her clothes in her hands both ran and rushed toward Ruotus' home. The hills rang out as she went the mountains clamored as she climbed the pinecones jostled in the marsh	221 222 223 224 225 226 227 228 229 230 231 232 233

someret hajosi suolla	the gravel scattered in the swamp	234
Tuli Ruotuksen tupahan	She came to Ruotus' house	235
sai sisälle salvoksehen.	got inside the log building.	236
Ruma Ruotus paitulainen	Ugly Ruotus shirt-sleeved one	237
syöpi juopi suurten lailla	eats, drinks in the manner of the great	238
päässä pöyän paioillansa	at table's head in his shirt-sleeves	239
aivan aivinaisillansa	in his clean linen	240
Lausui Ruotus ruoaltansa	Ruotus declared from over his food	241
tiuskui tiskinsä nojalta:	scolded from beside his plate	242
“Mitä sie sanot katala?	“What do you have to say, good-for-nothing	
Kuta kurja juoksentelet?”	why, luckless one, do you run about?”	244
Piltti piika pikkarainen	Piltti small servant girl	245
sanan virkkoi noin nimesi:	said a word uttered thus:	246
“Läksin kylpyä kylästä	“I went to find a bath in the village	247
saunoa Saraojalta	a sauna in Saraoja	248
jossa huono hoivan saisi	where a wretch can receive attention	249
avun ange tarvitseisi.”	help for the luckless one in need.”	250
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus' wife	251
käet puuskassa käveli	walked with hands on her hips	252
liehoi sillan liitoksella	lightly treads upon the floor-joint	253
laahoi keskilattialla	thudded about the middle of the floor	254
Itse ennätti kysyä	Herself had time to ask	255
sanan virkkoi noin nimesi:	said a word uttered thus:	256
“Kellen kylpyä kyselet	“For whom do you ask for a bath	257
kellen aihelet apua?”	for whom do you entreat for help?”	258
Sanoi piltti (sic) pieni piika:	Said Piltti ¹⁵ the little girl:	259
“Kysyn meiän Marjatalle.”	“I ask for our Marjatta”	260
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus' wife	261
itse tuon sanoiksi virkki:	herself put this into words:	262
“Ei kylät kylähän joua	“There are no bathhouses in the village	263
ei saunat Sarajan suulta.	no saunas at the edge of Saraja	264
On kyly kytömäellä	There is a bathhouse on the burned-over hill	
hepohuone hongikossa	a stable in a fir grove	266
tuliporton poiat saa'a	for a whore to have a son	267
lautan lapsensa latoa:	a harlot to create a child:	268

¹⁵ Here Lönnrot's text reads *piltti*, implying the term should be taken as an epithet for “young girl” rather than as a proper name. Since the word seems to be treated as a proper name in the rest of the text, however, and in Lönnrot's *Kanteletar*, I have capitalized it here.

kun hevonen hengännevi	when the horse breathes	269
niinp' on siinä kylpeötte!"	then you can bathe!"	270
Piltti piika pikkalainen	Piltti the little servant girl	271
pian pistihe takaisin	soon comes back	272
sekä juoksi jotta joutui	both ran and rushed	273
Sanoi tultua ta'atse:	said once she'd returned from there:	274
"Ei ole kylpyä kylässä	"There is no bath in the village	275
saunoa Saraojalla.	no sauna in Saraoja.	276
Ruma Ruotuksen emäntä	Ugly Ruotus' wife	277
sanan virkkoi noin nimesi:	said a word uttered thus	278
'Ei kylät kylähän joua	'There is no bathhouse in the village	279
ei saunat Sarajan suulta.	no saunas at the edge of Saraja.	280
On kylä kytömaellä	There is a bathhouse on the burned-over hill	
hepohuone hongikossa	a stable in a fir grove	282
tuliporton poiat saa'a	for a whore to have a son	283
lautan lapsensa latoa.	for a harlot to create a child:	284
Kun hevonen hengännevi	when the horse breathes	285
niin on siinä kylpeköhön!'	then you can bathe inside!'	286
Niinp' on, niin sanoi mokomin	Thus it is, she said like that,	287
niinpä vaimen vastaeli."	thus just so she answered."	288
Marjatta matala neiti	Marjatta lowly maiden	289
tuosta täytyi itkemähän.	began to cry at that	290
Itse tuon sanoiksi virkki:	herself put into words:	291
"Lähteä minun tulevi	"Go I must	292
niinkuin muinenki kasakan	just like a farmhand of old	293
eli orjan palkollisen	or a serf, a hireling	294
—lähteä kytömaelle	—go to the burned-over hill	295
käyä hongikkokeolle!"	visit the fir grove!"	296
Käsin kääri vaattehensa	She wound up her clothes in her hands	297
kourin helmansa kokosi	gathered her apron-hems in her palms	298
otti vastan varjoksensa	She took a sauna-whisk for protection	299
lehen lempi suojaksensa.	a dear leaf-bundle for shelter	300
Astui taputtelevi	She stepped lightly	301
vatsanvaimoissa kovissa	in heavy stomach pains	302
huonehesen hongikkohon	to the room in the fir grove	303
tallihin Tapiomäelle.	to the stable on Tapio hill.	304
Sanovi sanalla tuolla	She says these words	305
lausui tuolla lausehella:	declared this in speaking:	306
"Tule Luoja, turvakseni	"Come, Creator, to give me refuge	307
avukseni armollinen	to help me, dear one	308
näissä töissä työlähissä	in these strenuous tasks	309

ajoissa ani kovissa!	in these heavy times!	310
Päästä piika pintehestä	Deliver the girl from this pain	311
vaimo vatsanvääntheestä	the wife from this stomach-ache	312
ettei vaivoihin vajoi	that she not succumb to her pains	313
tuskihinsa tummeneisi!”	fall beneath her trials.”	314
Niin perille päästyänsä	Thus arriving at the place	315
itse tuon sanoiksi virkki:	herself she put in words:	316
“Henkeäs hyvä hevonen	“Breathe, good horse	317
huokoas vetäjä varsa	puff, young drafthorse	318
kylylöyly löyhäytä	bathhouse heat let loose	319
sauna lämpöinen lähetä	sauna warmth send off	320
jotta, huono, hoivan saisin!	that I, poor one, can find attention!	321
Avun, ange, tarvitseisin.”	Help for me, the luckless one, in need.”	322
Henkäsi hyvä hevonen	Breathed the good horse	323
huokasi vetäjä varsa	puffed the young draft horse	324
vatsan kautta vaivaloisen:	across the troubled stomach:	325
min hevonen hengähtävi	when the horse breathed	326
on kuin löyly lyötäessä	it was like letting loose sauna heat,	327
viskattaessa vetonen.	water being thrown.	328
Marjatta matala neiti	Marjatta lowly maiden	329
pyhä piika pikkarainen	holy little servant girl	330
kylpi kyllyn kyllältänsä	bathed in the bathhouse to her content	331
vatsan löylyn vallaltansa	warmed her stomach as much as she cared	332
Teki tuonne pienen poian	She made a little son there	333
latoi lapsensa vakaisen	created an innocent child	334
heinille hevosen luoksi	onto the hay of horses	335
sorajouhen soimen päähän.	into the straight-mane’s manger.	336
Pesi pienen poikuensa	She washed her little son	337
kääri kääreliinahansa;	wound him up in his swaddling;	338
otti pojan polvillensa	she took the son to her knees	339
laittoi lapsen helmahansa.	placed the child on her apron-hem	340
Piiletteli poiuttansa	She hid her son	341
kasvatteli kaunoistansa	looked after her lovely one	342
kullaista omenuttansa	her golden apple	343
hope’ista sauvoansa	her silver ski-pole	344
Sylissänsä syöttelevi	She fed him in her arms	345
käsissänsä kääntelevi.	turned him over in her hands.	346
Laski pojan polvillensa	She lowered the son to her knees	347
lapsen lantehuisillensa.	the child to her lap.	348
alkoi päätänsä sukia	She began to groom his head	349
hapsiansa harjaella.	to comb his locks.	350

Katoi poika polviltansa	The son disappears from her knee	351
lapsi lannepuoliltansa.	the child from her lap.	352
Marjatta matala neiti	Marjatta lowly maiden	353
tuosta tuskille tulevi	starts to hurt at that	354
rapasihe etsimähän.	sped off to look for him.	355
Etsi pientä poiuttansa	She looked for her little son	356
kullaista omenuttansa	her golden apple	357
hope'ista sauvoansa	her silver ski-pole	358
alta jauhavan kivosen	from under a grinding stone	359
alta juoksevan jalaksen	from under a running sled runner	360
alta seulan seulottavan	from under a sieve for sifting	361
alta korvon kannettavan	from under a pail for carrying	362
puiten puut, jaellen ruohot	branching trees, parting grass stems	363
hajotellen hienot heinät.	separating fine hay strands.	364
Viikon etsi poiuttansa	Long she looked for her son	365
poiuttansa pienuttansa.	for her son her little one.	366
Etsi mäiltä männiköiltä	She looked amid hills, pine groves	367
kannoilta kanervikoilta	tree stumps, heathlands	368
katsoen joka kanervan	examining every heather-bed	369
joka varvikon vatoen	checking every birch stand	370
kaivellen katajajuuret	unearthing juniper roots	371
ojennellen puien oksat.	straightening tree branches.	372
Astua ajattelevi	She walked pensively	373
käyä kääperöittelevi.	stepped along lightly.	374
Tähti vastahan tulevi	She comes to a star	375
tähelle kumarteleikse:	bows to the star:	376
“Oi Tähti Jumalan luoma!	“Oh Star, God's creation!	377
Etkö tieä poiuttani	don't you know of my son	378
miss' on pieni poikueni	where my little son is	379
kultainen omenueni?”	my golden apple?”	380
Tähti taisi vastaella:	The star knew to answer:	381
“Tietäisinkö, en sanoisi.	“Were I to know I would not say	382
Hämpä on minunki luonut	He has created me as well	383
näille päiville pahoille	for these bad days	384
kylmillä kimaltamahan	to shine in the cold	385
pime'illä pilkkimähän.”	to sparkle in the dark.”	386
Astua ajattelevi	She walked pensively	387
käyä kääperöittelevi.	stepped along lightly.	388
Kuuhut vastahan tulevi	She comes upon the moon	389
niin Kuulle kumarteleikse:	thus she bows to the Moon:	390

“Oi Kuuhut, Jumalan luoma! Etkö tieä poiuttani miss’ on pieni poikueni kultainen omenueni?”	“Oh, Moon, God’s creation! Don’t you know of my son where my little son is my golden apple?”	391 392 393 394
Kuuhut taisi vastaella: “Tietäisinkö, en sanoisi. Hämpä on minunki luonut näille päiville pahoille yksin öillä valvomahan päivällä makoamahan.”	The moon knew to answer: “Were I to know I would not say. He has created me as well for these bad days alone at night to stay awake to lie down in the day.”	395 396 397 398 399 400
Astua ajattelevi käyä kääperöittelevi. Päytyi Päivyt vastahansa. Päivälle kumarteleikse:	She walked pensively stepped along lightly. She stopped before the Sun. She bowed to the Sun:	401 402 403 404
“Oi Päivyt, Jumalan luoma! Etkö tieä poiuttani miss’ on pieni poikueni kultainen omenueni?”	“Oh, Sun, God’s creation! Don’t you know of my son where my little son is my golden apple?”	405 406 407 408
Päivyt taiten vastaeli: “Kyllä tieän poikuesi! Hämpä on minunki luonut näille päiville hyville kullassa kulisemahan hopeassa helkkimähän. Jopa tieän poikuesi! Voi poloinen poiuttasi! Tuoll’ on pieni poikuesi kultainen omenuesi onp’ on suossa suonivyöstä kankahassa kainalosta.”	The Sun knowingly answered: “Indeed I know of your son! He had created me as well for these good days in gold to jingle in silver to rattle. Already I know of your son! Woe, your poor son! There is your little son your golden apple he’s up to the waist in the swamp up to the armpits in the marsh.”	409 410 411 412 413 414 415 416 417 418 419 420
Marjatta matala neiti etsi suolta poikoansa Poika suota löyettiin tuolta tuotihin kotia.	Marjatta lowly maiden searched for her son in the swamp The son was found in the swamp from there he was brought home.	421 422 423 424

La fraticida por amor:
A Sixteenth-Century Spanish Ballad
in the Modern Oral Tradition

Madeline Sutherland

How does innovation occur in the oral tradition? Where do new oral texts come from? How are they incorporated into the oral tradition? Since Guttenberg, printed texts have been one source upon which the oral tradition has drawn.

In the present article, I study innovation and incorporation in the Spanish Ballad, or *Romancero*. My focus is a ballad published in 1591 that entered the modern oral tradition of the Judeo-Spanish, or Sephardic, communities of Morocco. Scholars have assigned it the sensational, but appropriate, title *La fraticida por amor* [*The Girl Who Killed Her Sister for Love of Her Brother-in-Law*].¹ This ballad is an interesting case study for three reasons:

1) We know the source of the ballad (Armistead and Silverman 1971:296). Thus we may study it in its original, sixteenth-century form, as well as in numerous modern oral versions. This comparison allows us to explore what has happened over the centuries as the text moved from one modality (the printed word) to another (the spoken/sung word). We may compare the fixed poetic text with its modern oral descendants that are part of another genre, the *romance tradicional moderno* [modern traditional ballad], which Ramón Menéndez Pidal defined as “poesía que vive en variantes” [“poetry that lives in variants”] (1968, I:40). As I will show, the oral tradition has imposed a new narrator and a new narrative mode. As a result of the condensation and elimination of episodes, the oral versions are much shorter and more compact than the printed text. As I will suggest, the oral tradition expects an active audience, one that will use its imagination to fill in details. The audience for the printed text, in contrast, passively

¹ All English ballad titles used in this essay are those found in Armistead 1978. With respect to the 1591 publication date, it is not uncommon to find post-diaspora ballads in Sephardic communities. The exiled Jews maintained contact with Spain after 1492 (see Menéndez Pidal 1958:120-27).

receives information and instruction from the narrator. I will also show how the story told in the modern oral versions differs from its sixteenth-century ancestor, and I will attempt to account for those changes.

2) The modern oral versions of *La fratricida por amor* discussed in this essay are from the Sephardic tradition. This ballad, then, also provides testimony as to what happens when a text crosses over from one culture to another. The Sephardic singers have reshaped this overtly Christian ballad into a text of their own. In the discussion that follows, I will explore two phenomena associated specifically with the Sephardic *Romancero*: de-Christianization and attenuation of violence.

3) Because the original printed text of this ballad is available, I can examine the constant tension between “memory and invention” (Catalán Menéndez Pidal 1970) that characterizes the *Romancero*. Spanish ballads are dynamic structures. Contamination, the fusion of one ballad or part of one ballad with another, is one way in which change takes place. The Sephardic ballad tradition is often thought of as an archaic or conservative one in which memory or tradition dominates invention or creation.² The evolution of *La fratricida por amor*, however, demonstrates the high degree of creativity found in the Judeo-Spanish tradition.

The Texts

La fratricida por amor is just one of scores of long *noticiero* [“news-bearing”] ballads published in Spain during the second half of the sixteenth century. Although these ballads often recounted events that were historical in nature—a military victory, a royal wedding, the death of a king, they were just as likely to recount *casos*—natural disasters, unusual occurrences, martyrdoms, miracles, crimes. They were generally published in chapbooks (*pliegos sueltos*), though occasionally they made their way into books as well.³ The only known printed text of *La fratricida por amor* is found in Pedro de Moncayo’s *Flor de varios romances nuevos*, published in

² For a discussion of this view and others, see Armistead and Silverman 1986:3-4.

³ Examples of *romances noticieros* printed in chapbooks may be found in Rodríguez-Moñino 1962 and Askins 1981. An example of a book containing such poems is the 1578 *Flor de romances, glosas, canciones y villancicos*, which contains the most complete collection of ballads about the Habsburgs. For a modern facsimile edition, see Rodríguez-Moñino 1954.

Barcelona by Jaime Cendrat in 1591.⁴ In that collection, the ballad is given a nondescript title; it is simply “*Otro Romance*” [“Another Ballad”]. Given its subject matter and style, this ballad was probably published in chapbooks as well.⁵

The corpus of oral texts studied here is made up of 19 versions, all collected directly from the modern oral tradition between 1904 and 1981. All belong to the Moroccan branch of the Sephardic *Romancero*. The text published by Moncayo and a representative oral version collected in Tetuan⁶ are included in Appendix 1. A list of all oral versions with information as to singer, collector, and place and date of collection is included in Appendix 2.⁷ Appendix 3 lists the folkloric motifs found in *La fraticida por amor*.

As the title suggests, this ballad tells the story of a woman—in Moncayo’s text she is named Angela—who falls in love with her brother-in-law, Diego, and kills her sister, who is Diego’s wife. With the obstacle that her sister presented removed, Angela then makes love with her unsuspecting brother-in-law. Eventually, her crime is discovered. In Moncayo’s text, she pays with her life. In the modern oral tradition, various resolutions—ranging from execution to marriage—are possible.

⁴ Moncayo’s *Flor* went through a number of editions, and the contents changed from one edition to the next. For the complete publishing history see Rodríguez-Moñino 1973-78, III:34-68. For a modern facsimile edition, see Rodríguez-Moñino 1957.

⁵ In fact, Jaime Cendrat, who worked not only in books but also in chapbooks, might very well have published it in this cheaper format.

⁶ Hereafter I will refer to this version as Tetuan.

⁷ In this essay, I examine the Judeo-Spanish versions of *La fraticida por amor*, the vast majority of modern oral versions of this ballad. It should be noted that three non-Sephardic versions have been collected: two in Catalonia and one in the Canary Islands. Both of the versions from Catalonia are in a combination of Spanish and Catalan; only one is complete. The complete version is housed in the Menéndez Pidal Archive in Madrid. The other version was collected by Manuel Milá y Fontanals, who published a portion of it (26 lines) in his *Romancerillo Catalán* (1896:261). Milá edited out an unspecified number of verses that he deemed unimportant or inappropriate (xvii). The most recent version was collected in the Canary Islands in 1983 (Trapero 1987:180-81). It is a contamination or hybrid that combines *La fraticida por amor* with *Los soldados forzadores* [*The Soldier Rapists*]. Since the evidence for *La fraticida por amor* is so slight in the Catalan and Canary Islands traditions, I have chosen to concentrate on the Judeo-Spanish versions. I have, however, included the three non-Sephardic versions in Appendix 2 and will make occasional references to them as appropriate in notes.

Two differences that are immediately apparent when we compare printed and oral texts are the length of the ballad and the names of the characters. Looking at length first, we may observe that the oral versions are considerably shorter than the printed text; they range in length from 28 to 56 lines, whereas Moncayo's has 210.⁸ While the characters are named Angela, Diego, and Argentina in the printed text, the oral versions often change, or omit, their names. In nine of the 19 versions the protagonist is called Isabel; in six versions she is called Angela or a possible variant of Angela (Angeles, Anjíbar or Anjívar, Anzila, doña Giyán); in one version she is called Bougeria; in three she is nameless. In the version from Tetuan included in Appendix 1, the name of the protagonist changes from Isabel, in line 14, to Doña Anjívar nine lines later. The original name of the brother-in-law, Diego, remains constant in 12 of the 19 versions; in three versions he is Pedro; in the remaining four he is called Bougerio, Giba, Carlos, or given no name. In the oral versions, the sister is typically nameless. She is referred to as "una hermana que tenía" ["a sister that she had"] (12 out of 19 versions), "una/su hermana querida" ["a/her beloved sister"] (five versions) and "una hermana suya" ["a sister of hers"] (two versions). Only two versions accord her a name. In version 12, she is introduced as "su hermana querida" ["her beloved sister"] and much later called Regina. Likewise, in version 15, she is first called "una hermana que tenía" ["a sister that she had"] and later is spoken of as Donxiva.

In the discussion that follows, I compare Moncayo's text with the modern oral versions. Three aspects of the texts are of particular interest: 1) the persona of the narrator and the mode of narration found in the printed text and the oral versions, 2) the narrative sequences that make up the printed text and the oral versions, and 3) the various resolutions presented by the oral tradition.

Narrators and Modes of Narration

One of the most striking differences between Moncayo's text and the modern oral versions is the narrator particular to each. In Moncayo's text, the narrator is omniscient, intrusive, and moralizing. His counterpart in the oral versions, in contrast, is self-effacing to the point of being practically invisible.

⁸ In making this statement, I am not including the fragmentary version from Alcazarquivir (Version 13), which is only twelve lines long.

In the printed text, the narrator is not simply a reporter who recounts events; rather he recites and interprets events of which he has a total understanding. It is notable, for example, that the narrator previews the central event of the ballad—the murder—several lines before it happens. In the 16 lines devoted to describing the three main characters (13-28), the narrator tells us of Angela's lineage, beauty, and discretion; then he adds, "Esta tal mato a su hermana" ["She killed her sister"] (19), which functions as a lead-in to the brief, two-line description of Argentina.

In addition to being omniscient, the narrator of the printed text is intrusive and moralizing. After Angela has killed Argentina, the narrator interrupts the flow of the narrative to address the audience directly: "mirad los enredos que haze / satanas que no dormia / al que halla muy vicioso / presto le da çancadilla" ["look at the snares set by / Satan who does not sleep / whoever he finds to be evil / he quickly trips up"] (77-80). In this comment, the narrator assumes the role of moral authority and interprets the story for the audience. He behaves in a similar manner in the concluding lines of the ballad: "cortaronle la cabeça / y pago lo que deuia" ["they cut off her head / and she paid her debt"] (209-10). Through this remark, the narrator lets the audience know that the dénouement—execution of the murderer—is a just and proper one.

The mode of narration typical of the modern traditional ballad is quite different. Modern traditional ballads have "un modo de representación esencialmente dramático" ["an essentially dramatic mode of narration"] (Catalán 1979:234). Ramón Menéndez Pidal describes it as follows (1968:I, 66): "La escena o situación presentada en los romances tradicionales no se narra objetiva y discursivamente sino que se actualiza ante los ojos" ["The scene or situation presented in traditional ballads is not narrated objectively and discursively, but rather takes place before our eyes"]. Stephen Gilman (1972) and Leo Spitzer (1945) likewise remind us that in these ballads events seem to unfold before our very eyes, and that we are led to believe that we witness and participate in what we only hear.

The modern versions of *La fraticida por amor* show how the oral tradition has gradually reshaped this ballad and changed it from a strict narrative of events to a dramatic re-presentation or re-creation of them. A good index to this change is the ratio of direct to indirect discourse, or of dialogue to narration. In the printed text, just 11 percent of the ballad (23 out of 210 lines) is direct discourse; each instance is introduced by the same comment from the narrator, "estas palabras dezia" ["he/she spoke these words"] (120,136,190). In the oral versions, there is considerable variability; anywhere from 13 percent to 43 percent is direct discourse, with

29 percent being the average.⁹ Consistent with this shift, the narrator plays a reduced role; he is no longer a manipulative force in the ballad. He ceases to be the moral authority who forces the correct interpretation of the ballad upon his listeners and becomes instead the vehicle through which the narrative reaches them.

Narrative Sequences: Printed Text and Oral Versions

In this section, I examine the stories told in Moncayo's text and the modern oral versions. My main concern is to discover which elements of the story have changed and which have remained the same since the printed text became part of the oral tradition and was subsequently modified by generations of singers. As a way of doing this, I will divide the narrative into *sequences*. For Diego Catalán, the sequence is the basic narrative unit of the ballad: "La secuencia puede definirse como la representación de un suceso que, al cumplirse, modifica sustancialmente la inter-relación de las *dramatis personae*, dando lugar a una situación de relato nueva" ["Sequence may be defined as the representation of an event that, upon completion, substantially modifies the relationships among the *dramatis personae*, giving rise to a new situation"] (Catalán et al. 1984:67). Below is a list of the sequences and the *frases secuenciales* (the sentences that express the modified relationship between the characters) (*ibid*:68) that make up the printed text and oral versions of *La fratricida por amor*.

MONCAYO'S TEXT

Exordium (1-28)

Disturbances of Nature, Auguries (1-12)

Setting (1-2, 14)

Description of Characters (13-14)

VERSION FROM TETUAN

Exordium (1-14)

Disturbances of Nature,
Auguries (1-12)

Setting (1-4)

Description of Characters(13-28)

SEQUENCES

1. *Love* (29-32)

Angela falls in love with Diego.

2. *Decision* (33-40)

1. *Love* (15)

Isabel falls in love with her
brother-in-law.

⁹ In these figures I am not including the version from Alcazarquivir.

- Angela decides to kill Argentina.
3. *Deception* (41-50)
Angela lies to Argentina.
 4. *Complicity* (51-56)
Argentina believes Angela's lie and goes to her room.
 5. *Murder* (57-82)
Angela kills Argentina.
 6. *Desire Fulfilled* (83-102)
Angela makes love with Diego.
 7. *Discovery* (103-108)
Diego finds Argentina's corpse.
 8. *False Arrest* (109-128)
Diego is arrested, accused, tried and found guilty of murder.
 9. *Confession* (129-152)
Angela confesses to the murder.
 10. *Conclusion: Punishment* (153-210)

Angela is executed.
2. *Murder* (16-18)
Isabel kills her sister.
 3. *Desire Fulfilled* (19-24)
Isabel makes love with Diego.
 4. *Discovery* (25-32)
Diego finds bloodstained sheets
 5. *False Arrest* (33-34)
Diego is arrested.
 6. *Confession* (35-38)
Isabel confesses to the murder
 7. *Conclusion: Punishment announced but not meted out* (43-44)
Isabel says she deserves to die but is not killed.

The Exordium (Moncayo 1-28; Tetuan 1-14). Although it precedes the narrative, the Exordium must be considered, for it communicates valuable information to the audience (see Catalán et al. 1984:114-22). I have divided the Exordium of *La fraticida por amor* into three segments: Disturbances of Nature and Auguries, Setting, and Description of Characters.

Disturbances of Nature and Auguries. Moncayo's text and the oral versions all begin with a series of formulas that show disruptions of the natural order and thus instill in the audience a sense of foreboding. Line by line, a world that is not functioning as it should appears before us: the moon is hidden by clouds, high winds blow, birds refuse to leave their nests, babies neither nurse nor sleep, pregnant women miscarry, fish come up out of the water, and so forth. These formulas, which indicate a world gone awry and presage death or disaster, are standard elements found in many ballads.¹⁰ Paul Bénichou has suggested that these disruptions of the natural

¹⁰ See, for example, the ballad about King Roderick and the loss of Spain which begins:

Los vientos eran contraries
La luna era crecida,
Los peces daban gemidos

[The winds were roused
The moon was full,
The fish made wailing cries

order are more than auguries (1968a:81): “[En *La fratricida por amor*] las señales no se explican sólo como presagios, sino, más retóricamente, como vergüenza de los elementos ante el crimen que se prepara” [“In *La fratricida por amor* the signs may be explained not only as auguries but also, more rhetorically, as the shame of the natural elements before the crime that is being prepared”]. A version from Tangier supports Bénichou’s contention especially well: “las estrellas en el cielo / su lindo rostro escondían / por no ver a esa doncella / doña Angela la decían” [“the stars in the heavens / hide their beautiful face / so as not to see that maiden, / doña Angela was her name”] (Version 3, 3-6). José Benoliel, who collected this version, commented in the margin: “Los primeros versos ya no son una simple descripción del estado del tiempo, mas la afirmación del horror que toda la naturaleza sintió por el terrible crimen cometido...” [“The first lines are now not a simple description of the weather, but an affirmation of the horror all of nature felt as a result of the terrible crime committed”].

Setting. The printed text situates the ballad in space as well as time. The line “que dentro en Malaga auia” [“that there was in Malaga”] (14) provides the location, while “El cielo estaua nublado / la luna no parecia” [“The sky was cloudy / the moon did not appear”] (1-2) indicates that the events about to be recounted took place at night. Although the Judeo-Spanish versions ignore the spatial setting completely, they all contain the temporal setting found in Moncayo, a dark and cloudy night. In fact, the line that provides one of the details of the temporal setting in the printed text—“la luna no parecia” [“the moon did not appear”]—carries over exactly into 16 of the 19 versions.

Description of Characters. In Moncayo’s text, Description of Characters takes up 16 lines (13-28). The narrator tells of Angela’s lineage, beauty, and good judgment (13-15). As I have already noted, in this passage the omniscient storyteller anticipates events by describing Angela at the outset as her sister’s killer. This sort of anticipation does not occur in the oral versions (compare Moncayo 19-24 with Tetuan 13-14 and 16-18). Angela’s sister, Argentina, is also presented to the audience (20-21) as is

Por el tiempo que hacía
 Cuando el rey Don Rodrigo
 Junto á la Cava dormía
 (Durán 1849-51, X:408-9)

At the wild weather
 When the good King Rodrigo
 Slept beside La Cava]
 (Merwin 1961:24)

For more examples of such formulas, see Bénichou 1968a:81-82.

Unusual natural occurrences that precede significant events, be they fortunate or disastrous, are common folklore motifs. See Thompson 1955-58:III, F960.6, *Extraordinary nature phenomena on night of fratricide*.

Argentina's husband Diego (24-28).

In the Sephardic versions, this segment is reduced to a two-line description of the protagonist: “Todo por una doncella / que Isabel se llamaría” [“All because of a maiden / who was named Isabel”] (Tetuan 13-14). The sister and brother-in-law will be described later as “una hermana que tenía” [“a sister that she had”] (Tetuan 16) and “cuñado” [“brother-in-law”] (Tetuan 15), respectively. It should be noted that the line “Todo por una doncella” [“All because of a maiden”], which occurs with slight variations in 12 of the 19 versions, is entirely the invention of the Judeo-Spanish tradition. While Moncayo's text refers to Angela as a *dama* [“lady”], these oral versions, by calling her *doncella* [“maiden”], introduce a new element to the story. Covarrubias defines *donzella* as “La mujer moça y por casar, y en sinificacion rigurosa la que no ha conocido varon” [“A woman who is young and yet to be married, and in the strict sense one who has not known a man”]. This change is significant, for Angela's virginity will be absolutely essential to the development and outcome of the Sephardic versions.¹¹

The description of Angela/Isabel immediately follows the augury, thus establishing a connection between the unnatural occurrences and her feelings and actions. The perturbations of nature occur because of her: “Por la mas hermosa dama / que dentro en Malaga auia” [“Because of the most beautiful lady / that there was in Malaga”] (Moncayo 13-14), “Todo por una doncella / que Isabel se llamaría” [“All because of a maiden / who was named Isabel”] (Tetuan 13-14). Thus we may interpret her feelings and actions as the most profound disturbances of all.

Love (Moncayo 29-32; Tetuan 15). The first sequence in all of the texts is Love. The oral versions express it economically and matter-of-factly in one line: “de amores de su cuñado” [“for love of her brother-in-law”] (Tetuan 15). In contrast to the oral versions Angela is presented as a suffering victim of love in the printed text. The pain and passion she feels are emphasized over and over again by the use of fire imagery.

Decision (Moncayo 33-40; Absent from Tetuan), **Deception** (Moncayo 41-50; Absent from Tetuan), **Complicity** (Moncayo 51-56; Absent from Tetuan). After establishing the motivation for Angela's actions, the omniscient narrator of the printed text details how she decides to commit murder, puts her plan in motion, and is unwittingly helped by

¹¹ In the three non-Sephardic versions, this change does not occur. The complete Catalan text (Version 20) describes Angela as a *dama*. There is no description of her offered in the published portion of Milá's text, though there might have been in the verses he edited out. In the Canary Islands version, she is not described.

her sister. None of these sequences are present in the Judeo-Spanish versions.¹²

The first sequence in this series is Decision. Again, Angela is presented as a woman suffering hopelessly from the burning pain and madness of love. There appears to be no remedy for her affliction, as “dolor que padecia” [“the pain she suffered”] (40), “que sosiego no tenia” [“she had no peace”] (30), and “Y no hallando remedio” [“And not finding a remedy”] (33) all indicate. Over the course of the eight lines that constitute this sequence, she comes to the conclusion that the only way to ease her pain is to kill her sister: “determinado tenia / para poder aplacar / el gran fuego en que se ardia” [“she resolved / in order to soothe / the great fire in which she burned”] (34-36).

The second sequence in this series is Deception. Angela lies to Argentina in order to lure her away from everyone and kill her. The ploy is successful and Argentina, “agena de la traycion” [“unaware of the betrayal”] (53), comes to her sister’s room late at night while the household sleeps. Argentina’s action constitutes the third sequence, Complicity.

As I noted above, all three of these sequences are missing from the Judeo-Spanish versions. One possible explanation for their omission is that they are not essential to the narrative. Whereas the printed *romances noticieros* tend to provide a wealth of detail, the modern oral ballads are typically far more economical in their presentation of the story and generally require the audience to fill in gaps. At later points in this essay, I will discuss other instances in which the oral tradition has eliminated non-essential elements of the narrative and greatly reduced others.

Murder (Moncayo 57-82; Tetuan 16-18). In Moncayo’s text, the account of the murder is lengthy (25 lines) and graphic. Angela is once again portrayed as a victim of love, as the description of how she strangles her sister makes clear: “ya sus manos blancas tiernas / para sanar honra y vidas / amor las haze verdugos / en el cuello de Argentina” [“now her tender white hands / made to cure honor and lives / love made them into executioners / around Argentina’s neck”] (69-72, emphasis added). Following the description of the murder, the narrator, in the role of moral authority, intervenes to inform the audience that Angela’s deed was inspired by the Devil: “mirad los enredos que haze / satanas que no dormia” [“look at the snares set by / Satan who does not sleep”] (77-78). If the listeners are not careful, they too may slip and fall under his power: “al que halla muy vicioso / presto le da çancadilla” [“whoever he finds to be evil / he quickly

¹² In the complete Catalan version (Version 20), Deception and Complicity appear.

trips up”] (79-80).

The Sephardic versions condense this scene into one line and present the murder unemotionally—“mató a una hermana que tenía” [“she killed a sister that she had”] (Tetuan 16). Morbid details are left to the audience’s imagination. Once again, the oral tradition has eliminated elements that are not essential to the narrative. The attenuation of violence observable here is typical of the Judeo-Spanish tradition (Armistead and Silverman 1960:237; 1979:134).

In Moncayo’s text, Satan is the force that motivates Angela to act. He is completely absent from the oral versions. Here, the motivation is more realistic, and it is human emotion, not supernatural control, that leads the protagonist to kill her sister. This modification is most likely the result of “de-Christianization,” that is, the “intentional or unconscious elimination or attenuation of Christian elements” (Armistead and Silverman 1975:21; 1982:127-47) frequently found in the Sephardic *Romancero*.¹³

In 18 of the 19 Judeo-Spanish versions, the darkness that is mentioned in the Exordium—“Nublado hace, nublado / la luna no parecía” [“It was cloudy, / the moon did not appear”]—is recalled as the murder is recounted: “Matóla una noche oscura / detrás de la su cortina” [“she killed her one dark night, / behind her curtain”] (Tetuan 17-18). The darkness of the night fulfills a definite purpose; it helps to hide the crime. The detail of the curtain, which hides the murder and/or the dead body, also carries over into 18 of the 19 versions.

Desire Fulfilled (Moncayo 83-102; Tetuan 19-24). Angela now goes to Diego’s bed and makes love with him. The oral versions present the first part of this sequence quickly and objectively—“Después de haberla matado / para su cama se iría” [“After she had killed her, / she went to her bed”] (Tetuan 19-20). The printed text, by contrast, takes six lines to describe this action. Moreover, it provides details that do little to advance the plot, but which pique the interest of the audience and add suspense. We are told, for example, that Angela is dressed in a seductive fashion, “en muy delgada camisa” [“in a thin shirt”] (84). When she enters the bedroom, she extinguishes the candle burning there. Instead of using a verb like *apagar* [“to extinguish or put out”] to describe this action, the poet opts for the

¹³ Interestingly, Satan disappears from the three non-Sephardic versions as well. The elimination of this supernatural element is probably due to the generally realistic, objective, and non-moralizing tone typical of the traditional ballad. Although Satan is absent from these versions, other Christian elements are present. In the Canary Islands version, for example, Diego declares, “Si yo de esa muerte sé / no salve Dios la alma mía” [“If I know about that death / may God not save my soul”].

more violent *matar* ["to kill"]. Just as Angela has "snuffed out" her sister's life, she now snuffs out the light that would reveal her identity.

Moncayo's text continues to portray Angela as a victim of sexual desire. She gets into bed with Diego "para cumplir sus desseos / *que mucho le perseguian*" ["in order to fulfill her desires / *that pursued her greatly*"] (91-92, emphasis added). The fire imagery, used earlier to signify passion, reappears in the description of Angela, who is described as having "ansias muy encendidas" ["very fiery longings"] (94). In the lines "desque ya apago sus llamas / y endemoniada porfia" ["until her flames were put out / and her devilishly-inspired insistence"] (99-100), sexual desire is clearly linked to Satan.

In the majority of the Judeo-Spanish versions, this sequence is not rendered nearly so explicitly as it is in the printed text, where we see Angela get into bed with her brother-in-law and make amorous advances toward him. However, in both the printed text and the Judeo-Spanish versions, it is the thoughts of Diego, related by the narrator, that indicate what has transpired: "Penso que era su muger / otorgo lo que pedia" ["He thought she was his wife / he granted what she asked for"] (Moncayo 97-98); "Creyendo que era su esposa / cumpli6la lo que queria" ["Believing she was his wife / he fulfilled her wishes"] (Tetuan 21-22).

Three of the oral versions (5, 12, 18) introduce a unique detail at this point in the story: a necklace that the sister is wearing. In Version 5, Bougeria kills her sister, removes the necklace, throws it into the kitchen, and then goes to her brother-in-law's bed: "Le quit6 su gargantilla / y la tir6 a la cozina. / Se fuera para la cama / donde Bougerio dormia" ["She took her necklace / and she threw it in the kitchen. / She went to the bed / where Bougerio was sleeping"] (9-12). In Versions 12 and 18, Isabel removes the necklace from her dead sister's body and puts it on herself before going to find the sleeping Diego: "Coyar que estaba en su cuerpo / en el suyo le vestia" ["A necklace that she was wearing / she put on herself"] (Version 12, 17-18); "Y acabara de matarla, / quit6la su gargantilla; / quit6la su gargantilla / y en su cuello la ponia" ["And having just killed her, / she took off her necklace / she took off her necklace / and she put it around her own neck"] (Version 18, 13-16). The necklace is probably an article the sister always wore; perhaps it is like a wedding ring or some other token of affection Diego might expect her to be wearing. In Versions 12 and 18, then, Isabel is more calculating and deliberate than in the other versions. She realizes that if she is to fulfill her desires, she must appear to be Diego's wife. This detail, another invention of the Sephardic tradition, further exemplifies the creative process (Bénichou 1968a:8) that is

an essential element in the transmission of the *Romancero*.

Once Angela/Isabel has made love with Diego, she leaves his bed. Her departure is registered explicitly in the printed text, where she leaves in a crazed state: “muy agena de si misma / de la cama se salia” [“out of control / she got out of the bed”] (101-2). It is also present in eight of the 19 Sephardic versions: “Doña Giyán se levanta / tres horas antes del día; / don Diego se levantaba / tres horas después del día” [“Doña Giyán gets up / three hours before dawn; / don Diego got up / three hours after dawn”] (Version 11, 11-14). In only one version does she remain with Diego: “Y encontraron a don Diego / con su cuñada dormida” [“And they found Don Diego / asleep with his sister-in-law”] (Version 3, 23-24).

Discovery (Moncayo 103-8; Tetuan 25-32). In the printed text, Diego realizes his wife is missing, searches for her, and discovers her body. In the Judeo-Spanish versions, something quite different happens. Diego does not discover his wife’s corpse; rather, he discovers that his bedmate could not have been his wife: “Halló su cama enramada / de rosas y clavellinas” [“He found his bed a bower / of roses and carnations”] (Version 6, 31-32). The roses and carnations mentioned here are a poetic description of bloodstains on the sheets, “pruebas de la virginidad de su compañera” [“proof of the virginity of his companion”] (Bénichou 1968b:255). This episode, the creation of the Sephardic tradition, takes us back to the description of Isabel as “una doncella” [“a maiden”] (Tetuan 13). This description, also the invention of the Sephardic tradition, begins to attain its full import once the “rosas y clavellinas” [“roses and carnations”] have been mentioned.¹⁴

The roses and carnations of the Sephardic versions may well have their origin in Moncayo’s text. When the narrator describes how Angela strangles her sister, he notes that the color leaves the victim’s face: “dexando el jazmin y rosas, / marchito en su cara fria” [“leaving the jasmine

¹⁴ In one Sephardic version, Diego discovers his wife’s body. When he sees the bloodstains, he cries out in surprise, goes in search of his wife and finds her dead:

—¡Ay! válgame Dios del cielo
¿qué es aquesto que yo vía?
Mujer de quinze años casada,
donzella la encontraría.—
Fuése a buscar y hallóla,
hallóla muerta tendida

[—Oh! My God in heaven,
what is this that I see?
After fifteen years of marriage,
I find her to be a maiden.—
He went in search of her and he found her,
he found her lying dead]
[Version 8, 17-22]

It is notable that in Moncayo’s text there is no indication that Diego ever discovers that the woman he made love with was not his wife.

and roses / withered in her cold face”] (75-76). Over time, the jasmine and roses found in this early scene may have been displaced to a later point in the story, their original meaning transformed in the process. Whether this hypothesis is correct or not, the passage remains striking testimony to the creative and poetic capacity of the oral tradition.

The initial lyricism established by the flower imagery is rapidly transformed into a grim kind of humor by Diego's exclamation: “después de quince años casada / doncella la encontraría” [“after fifteen years of marriage / I find her a maiden”] (Tetuan 31-32).¹⁵

False Arrest (Moncayo 109-28; Tetuan 33-34). In all of the texts, Diego is mistakenly assumed to be the murderer. In the printed text, this sequence is long (20 lines) and complicated: everyone in Diego's household is questioned; he is arrested and carted off to Granada to be tried and sentenced to death. The author takes advantage of the situation for more sermonizing. In the first instance of direct discourse in the printed text, the innocent Diego looks toward Heaven and declares that this world offers no peace: “O mundo engañoso y ciego / loco es quien en ti fia, / nadie en ti descanso espere / pues darselo no podías” [“Oh deceitful and blind world / he who trusts in you is mad / may no one hope for rest in you / since you cannot give it to them”] (121-24).

In the Judeo-Spanish versions, this sequence is reduced to a few lines: “Ya le prenden a don Diego / que culpa él no tenía” [“Now they arrest don Diego, / who is not guilty”] (Version 16, 27-18). Again, elements deemed unnecessary to the story—in this case, the interrogation of the servants, the trip back and forth to Granada and the trial—are left out. Moreover, in the oral versions, the heavy-handed, moralizing tone of the printed text is replaced by an unemotional, objective one.

Confession (Moncayo 129-52; Tetuan 35-42). Angela/Isabel comes forward to save Diego and confess to the murder. In Moncayo's text, the religious element comes to the fore once again. The omniscient narrator chronicles how Angela confesses and saves Diego because she realizes her soul is in jeopardy: “acusole la conciencia / de su alma que yua perdida”

¹⁵ We have found almost identical lines in a version of *Silvana* collected by Larrea in Tetuan. In this ballad, the king asks his daughter Silvana to be his mistress. Silvana and her mother, the queen, exchange clothes, and the queen then goes to sleep with the king. In this version, when the king discovers his “daughter” is not a virgin, he says, “Malhaya tú, la Silvana, / y la madre que te ha parido; / pensando de su doncella casada te encontrarías” [“Cursed be you, Silvana, / and the mother who bore you; / thinking you a maiden, / I found you to be married”] (Larrea Palacín 1952:337). For a summary of the ballad, see Armistead 1978, II:131-32.

[“the conscience of her soul, which was lost, accused her”] (131-32). This moralizing is absent from the oral versions, which reproduce the actions and words of the protagonist, nothing more: “Soltéis, soltéis a Don Pedro / que él culpa no tenía” [“Release Don Pedro, / for he is not to blame”] (Version 4, 29-30).

Summary

The division of the texts into narrative sequences has provided a framework for comparing the printed text with the oral versions of *La fratricida por amor*. Before discussing the various resolutions the texts propose, I will sum up the most important changes we have observed up to this point:

1) In the Exordium, a significant portion of the modern oral versions introduce a change in the description of the protagonist: she is a *doncella* rather than a *dama*. As a result, Diego receives different clues to his wife’s demise. This change also influences the resolutions.

2) Certain sequences—specifically, Decision, Deception, and Complicity—are absent from the oral versions. Their presence in the printed text contributes to suspense by showing all of the preparations for the murder while delaying the recounting of it. These sequences also contribute to the generally negative impression the narrator creates of Angela; she is portrayed here as calculating and deceitful. The oral texts, in contrast, go straight to the heart of the matter. Suspense, an important element of the Moncayo text, does not figure into the aesthetics of the traditional ballad. With the exception of the versions that refer to the dead sister’s necklace, the oral versions do not show Angela/Isabel plotting. The more favorable view they present of the protagonist may be a factor in the more merciful resolutions that predominate in the oral versions.

3) The murder is presented far more economically in the oral versions than in the printed text. I have suggested that the briefer, more objective, less bloody descriptions of the murder found in the oral versions are examples of the strong tendency to attenuate violence in the Sephardic tradition. What is more, the motivation behind the murder differs in the printed text and the oral versions: in Moncayo’s text Angela is pressed into action by Satan, but in the oral versions she is motivated only by love. Both the murder and the sequence I have labeled “Desire Fulfilled” are recounted more briefly and in less lurid detail in the oral versions. The wealth of information provided by the narrator of the printed text is related to the

moralizing message the text offers: sinners will be harshly punished in this world, but will enjoy God's grace in the next. The oral versions, belonging to the Judeo-Spanish tradition, are free of such didactic, religious complications.

4) The same sequence—Discovery—is instantiated differently in the printed text and the Judeo-Spanish versions. Whereas the Diego of Moncayo's text finds a corpse, the Diego of the oral versions finds bloodstains on his sheets. This change, which shows the creative capacity of the Judeo-Spanish tradition, is another example of the attenuation of violence and tragedy typical of the Sephardic ballad.

The Resolutions

Moncayo. In Moncayo's text, the final sequence is Punishment (153-210). This one sequence takes up approximately one-fourth of the ballad text, 57 out of a total of 210 lines. Angela is arrested and taken to Granada. She tells her story in court, a ghastly sentence is pronounced, she is returned to Malaga, and, after a torturous trip to the scaffold, she is executed. The narrator describes the entire process in great detail. Angela's final moments also include a speech she makes from the scaffold that is full of religious instruction directed to the audience reading or hearing the ballad. The final lines are: "y llamando al buen Iesus / y a la piadosa Maria, / cortaronle la cabeça / y pago lo que deuia" ["and calling out to good Jesus / and merciful Mary, / they cut off her head / and she paid her debt"] (207-10).

The Oral Versions. The oral versions present a wide spectrum of resolutions, ranging from execution to marriage. As I will show, the majority of the resolutions strive to restore order and to recuperate the character of Isabel and allow her to live.¹⁶

Execution (Version 1). Only one Sephardic version, a text collected in Tangier, retains the resolution found in Moncayo's text:

A los gritos que dio Diego,
presto llega la Justicia.
Allá sacan a la muerta
y a enterrarla llevarían,
y a la hermana llevan presa

[Upon (hearing) Diego's cries,
the authorities quickly arrive.
They take the dead woman away
and carry her off to be buried,
and they take the sister prisoner

¹⁶ In the discussion that follows I have left aside the fragmentary version from Alcazarquivir (Version 13) and the most recent Judeo-Spanish version (Version 18), which ends with the townspeople coming to Diego's house to see the blood on the sheets.

a quemarla el mismo día.

to burn her the same day.]

(Version 1, 23-28)

In this conclusion, the main concern is with justice, and it is exactly the type of justice found in the printed text, justice through retribution. Although the resolution is the same—the guilty party is executed—this version reaches it with considerably more objectivity and economy than the printed text and without any pathos or commentary from the narrator.¹⁷

Self-Condensation (Versions 3, 6, 8, 14). In the second ending offered by the Sephardic tradition, Isabel confesses to the murder and pronounces a grisly punishment. A version collected in Buenos Aires ends in the following manner:

—Yo la he matado, señor,
yo soy quien la mataría.—
La justicia que merece,
ella misma la diría:
que la corten pies y manos
y la arrastren por la villa.

[—I killed her, sir,
I am the one who killed her.—
The punishment she deserves,
she herself will pronounce it:
may her feet and hands be cut off
and may she be dragged through the town.]

(Version 8, 25-30)

Versions 6 and 14 conclude in almost identical terms; the only differences are that the protagonist declares that her hands and feet should be bound (the verbs used are *atar* and *amarrar*, respectively) and that she should be dragged along the road (*por la vía*).

Self-condemnation is not present in Moncayo's text. It is a completely novel resolution that the singers have borrowed from another ballad and incorporated into *La fraticida por amor* (Bénichou 1968a:255). This creative process, the synthesis of one ballad or elements of one ballad with another, is known as contamination.¹⁸ The ballad that is the source of this new conclusion is *La Infantina* ["The Enchanted Princess"]. As this ballad ends, the knight watches helplessly as the enchanted princess is borne away. Earlier he had thought of marrying her, but now it is too late. He chastises himself for his hesitation, saying:

"Cauallero que tal pierde

["The knight who loses such a thing

¹⁷ The two Catalan versions also end with execution.

¹⁸ For a discussion of contamination, see Silverman 1979. Bénichou characterizes contamination as "el procedimiento más constante y fecundo de la poesía tradicional" ["the most constant and fertile process found in traditional poetry"] (1968a:113).

muy gran pena merecía;	deserves a heavy penance;
yo mesmo sere el Alcalde	I myself will be the Judge,
yo me sere la justicia:	I will pronounce my own sentence:
que le corten pies y manos	let them cut off his feet and hands
y lo arrastren por la villa.”	and drag him through the town.”] ¹⁹

The logic behind fusing this conclusion to *La fraticida por amor* is easy to see. Something must happen to the guilty party and having her specify her own punishment is a satisfactory resolution.²⁰

Version 3, which I have included in this group, also closes with the protagonist’s self-condemnation. It does not, however, incorporate the verses from *La infantina*. In Version 3 Angela confesses to the crime and then says simply: “Matéisme, señor juez, / que la culpa fuera mía” [“Kill me, lord judge, / for I am to blame”] (Version 3, 33-34).

Within the context of the Sephardic versions, self-condemnation signals a transformation. In these versions, the first step toward reclaiming Angela/Isabel’s character is taken. She confesses to the murder (an element absent from Version 1) and as further acknowledgment of her guilt pronounces her own sentence. It is notable that two of the versions in this group (3 and 6) retain a plot detail that is missing from the Sephardic versions mentioned thus far (1, 8, 14) but that is included in Moncayo’s text: Diego is falsely accused of the murder and is arrested. Isabel admits

¹⁹ The sixteenth-century version cited here may be found in Rodríguez-Moñino 1967:255. My translation is based on Merwin 1961:71-72. For a summary of the Judeo-Spanish versions of *La Infantina*, see Armistead 1978:II, 256-60.

²⁰ Self-inflicted punishment is a well-known folkloric motif that occurs in other Spanish ballads as well. See, for example, Armistead and Silverman’s discussion of this motif in *Las cabezas de los infantes de Lara* [“The Heads of the Lords of Lara”] (1986:41, 58-59, 341). See also Bordman 1963:80:*Q400.1.

Self-Condemnation is the resolution found in the version from the Canary Islands. Like the Sephardic versions just discussed, this version also evinces the influence of *La Infantina*. After she admits to murdering her sister, “—Yo fui quien maté a mi hermana / yo fui quien maté a Agustina” [“—I am the one who killed my sister / I am the one who killed Agustina”] (Version 22, 25-26), the protagonist states (31-36):

la justicia que merezco	[I will sentence myself
yo me le sentenciaría:	to the punishment I deserve:
que me jagan cuatro cuartos,	may I be quartered,
me pongan de pies encima	may I be turned upside down,
o me jagan cuatro cuartos	or may I be quartered,
me pongan en cuatro esquinas	may I be placed at four corners]

her guilt in order to save him. The ballad comes full circle as the “amores de su cuñado” [“love for her brother-in-law”], which led her to kill her sister, now lead her to confess. The conclusion that follows is from Version 3:

<p>Agarraron a don Diego y en cárceles lo metían. —No le encarceléis, señores, que la culpa fuera mía. Que de amores que le tuve maté a mi hermana querida. La maté en la noche oscura, la metí tras la cortina. Matéisme, señor juez, que la culpa fuera mía.—</p>	<p>[They seized don Diego and they put him in jail. —Don't imprison him, sirs, for I am to blame. Because of the love I had for him I killed my beloved sister. I killed her in the dark night, I put her behind the curtain. Kill me, lord judge, for I am to blame.—] (Version 3, 25-34)</p>
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Life Goes On (Versions 4, 7, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 19). A third resolution, one that is even farther removed from the original, violent conclusion found in Moncayo's text, appears in seven Judeo-Spanish versions. As in the versions we just examined, Diego is arrested, and Isabel, in order to save him, confesses. In six of these versions (4, 7, 9, 16, 17, 19) she then specifies a hideous punishment for herself. Rather than ending the ballad at this point, however, the singers continue and add the lines, “Los muertos quedan por muertos, / los vivos paces harían” [“The dead remain dead, / the living make peace”] (Tetuan 43-44). This idea is formulated in various manners by different singers. One version collected in Tetuan concludes

<p>—No le prendáis a don Diego, que culpa él no tenía: yo la maté a la mi hermana, a mi hermana yo la mataría; el castigo que merezco con mi boca lo diría: que me amarren pies y manos y que me arrastren por la vía.— Todo el castigo dize, castigo no se le daría. El muerto queda por muerto y el vivo se alegraría.</p>	<p>[—Don't arrest don Diego, for he is not to blame, I killed my sister, my sister I killed the punishment that I deserve I will pronounce with my own mouth: may my hands and feet be bound and may I be dragged along the road.— She pronounces the punishment, no punishment is meted out to her. The dead remains dead and the living rejoices.] (Version 16, 29-40)</p>
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The shift away from violence and retribution has been made. The threat of future violence implicit in Isabel's self-condemnation (lines 33-36) is averted through the addition of the new concluding lines (37-49). In these versions, the oral tradition accepts the sequence borrowed from *La infantina*, but modifies it to express other concerns as well. What matters most in these conclusions is the restoration of harmony; what has been disrupted must be reestablished. This resolution, which is found in the greatest number of Judeo-Spanish versions, suggests that the most important task at hand is to insure that life goes on.

These various resolutions show an awareness on the part of the singers that this ballad presents several problems with which they must come to terms. First, and most obvious, are the moral questions. How does society respond to adulterous desire and fratricidal murder? It is the moral dimension, and only the moral dimension, that the printed text takes into account. There is also a more practical issue to address, the restoration of order. This is the problem that most concerns the singers. Is executing Isabel the most effective or practical way to set things straight? Most of these versions indicate that it is not. In fact, a version from Tetuan says so quite clearly: "Mujer que ella se confiesa / castigo no merezía" ["A woman who confesses / does not deserve punishment"] (Version 15, 25-26).

Marriage (Versions 2, 5, 10, 12). Another problem that is one aspect of the need to reestablish the social order is that Diego is without a wife. What will become of him? The gradual recuperation of the character of Isabel—her presentation as a *doncella* and the transformation of her feelings for Diego from Satanically-inspired lust to selfless love—provides the key to solving this dilemma. Her moral recovery is complete in the four Sephardic versions in which a fourth resolution is proposed: marriage.²¹

<p>A eso de la mañanita la Justicia se armaría. Lo muerto quedó por muerto y lo vivo en paz se iría. Pocos días son pasados con su cuñado se casaría.</p>	<p>[In the morning the authorities assembled. The dead remained dead and the living went in peace. After a few days passed, she married her brother-in law.] (Version 2, 23-28)</p>
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<p>Los muertos quedan por muerto[s] los vivos se arreglaría[n]. Otro día en la mañana con eya se casaría.</p>	<p>[The dead remain dead, the living put things in order. In the morning of another day, he married her.]</p>
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²¹ Only one of these four versions evinces contamination (Version 10).

(Version 10, 33-36)

This ending has surprised and perplexed scholars. Benoliel, who collected Version 2, sent it to Menéndez Pidal and wrote at the bottom of the page: “Poca verosimilitud y sobrada injustica ofrece este desenlace” [“This resolution offers little verisimilitude and great injustice”]. Bénichou expresses surprise at this ending, stating: “Lo raro es que todas las versiones, salvo la de Larrea 133 [Version 14] y la mía [Version 8], absuelven en fin de cuentas a la culpable.... El obstinado optimismo de los finales marroquíes llega aquí a extremos sorprendentes” [“What is strange is that all of the versions, except for Larrea’s 133 (Version 14) and mine (Version 8), absolve the guilty party in the end.... The obstinate optimism of the Moroccan endings reaches surprising extremes here”] (1968b:255).²²

This conclusion is, at first glance, surprising and extreme. However, I believe that the marriage of Isabel and Diego may well be the most practical of the four resolutions offered, for it reestablishes the family, an important element in the Sephardic Romancero, thereby restoring order without further weakening the social fabric and without further recourse to violence (Benmayor 1979:20).²³

Marriage is also the solution most in keeping with the Sephardic ballad tradition, in which there is, as I have already noted, a marked tendency to reduce, if not remove, violent episodes. In this tradition, the happy ending—particularly the wedding—is the preferred conclusion. Samuel Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman, discussing the wedding at the end of *Las quejas de Jimena* [“Jimena’s Complaint”], explain this resolution as part of the “tendencia universal de las versiones sefardíes, que prefieren la nota positiva, atenuando, siempre que pueden, las violencias y tristezas que tanto abundan en el Romancero” [“universal tendency in the Sephardic versions, which prefer the positive note, attenuating, whenever it is possible, the violence and sadness so abundant in the *Romancero*”] (1977:31). Diego Catalán has also commented on how the Sephardic tradition tends to substitute “unas cuantas fórmulas de *happy ending*” [“a few *happy ending* formulas”] (1970:9) for the original conclusion to a

²² Bénichou did not have access to all the versions I have seen. The larger corpus, however, supports his conclusion. The tendency of the singers is to try to save the protagonist. Of the seventeen complete Judeo-Spanish versions, there are only five (1, 3, 6, 8, 14) in which she is not absolved.

²³ See also the comments about the importance of the family in *La muerte ocultada* [*Hidden Death*] in Mariscal de Rhett 1979.

ballad.

Research on the Sephardic *Romancero* carried out by Rina Benmayor (1979) and Louise Mirrer (1986) further enables us to see how the happy ending in the Judeo-Spanish versions is ideologically characteristic of the oral tradition to which they belong. Benmayor writes that within the Sephardic community a tradition such as the *Romancero* “funcionaba para reforzar el sentido de grupo y la cohesividad interna, a la vez que ponía de manifiesto un deseo consciente por mantener no tanto una identidad hispánica sino una sefardí, separada y distinta de la de los demás grupos circundantes” [“functioned to reinforce the sense of group and internal cohesiveness, at the same time that it made manifest a conscious desire to maintain not just a Hispanic identity but a Sephardic one, separate and distinct from the other surrounding groups”] (1979:10). Similarly, in her discussion of *Tarquino y Lucrecia* [“Tarquin and Lucrece”], Mirrer shows how a particular ballad is used to “reinforce the Sephardic preoccupation with unity and cultural integrity within the realities of the modern world” (1986:128). Thus an ideological project underlies the storytelling in the ballad, the preservation of “the traditional values” (127) of the Sephardic community. Likewise, in *La fraticida por amor*, the marriage of Isabel and Diego contributes to the idea of unity and cultural integrity by preventing what anthropologists call “marrying out” (*idem*). It allows for the reestablishment of the ruptured familial and social orders without going outside of them. This solution insures stability and cohesiveness, both of which are necessary to the survival of the community.

Finally, although it involves a reversal of the sexes, the marriage of Isabel and Diego would seem to be the resolution prescribed by the levirate law set out in the Old Testament: “If brothers live together and one of them dies childless, the dead man’s wife must not marry a stranger outside the family. Her husband’s brother must come to her and, exercising his levirate, make her his wife” (Deuteronomy 25:5). Diego does not marry “a stranger outside the family,” but rather his dead wife’s sister. The levirate law, which prevents “marrying out,” insures the unity and cultural integrity that Benmayor and Mirrer see as central elements of Sephardic ballad texts. Of course, the levirate law in no way resolves the issues posed by the murder.

Conclusion

The late sixteenth-century ballad *La fraticida por amor* allows us to

observe the many and often startling changes that occur when a printed text is incorporated into the oral tradition. One of the most obvious changes in the case of this ballad is length. As a result of the condensation and/or elimination of episodes, the oral versions are far shorter than the printed text. This abbreviated length is more suitable for singing or oral recitation. It also means that the audience must participate in the construction of the story by filling in lacunae.

A comparison of the sixteenth-century printed text with the multiple oral versions shows that the mode of narration of the ballad has changed substantially. The oral tradition has substituted an objective, self-effacing narrator for the intrusive, moralizing narrator of the printed text. As a result, the oral versions are more dramatic than the printed text; a much larger percentage of the ballad is dialogue as opposed to narration and indirect discourse. This comparison further reveals how the story the ballad tells has changed as it has moved from one modality to another, from one genre to another, and from one culture to another. The oral tradition leaves out elements that are not essential to the story and greatly condenses others. It modifies the violent episodes of the printed text, lessening if not entirely omitting them. Attenuation of violence is especially observable, as is the process known as de-Christianization.

The oral tradition has also transformed *La fraticida por amor* through invention and contamination. In this respect, the creative capacity of the Judeo-Spanish tradition cannot be overemphasized. In the Sephardic versions unique elements occur that reshape the narrative and lead to completely unexpected (yet within the context of the versions, quite logical) resolutions. As a result of the creation and coordination of these new elements, the ballad's message changes radically. The original, printed version of *La fraticida por amor* is an overtly moralizing Christian tract. This story of illicit desire, fratricidal murder, and brutal, well-deserved punishment becomes something quite different in the hands of generations of Sephardic singers. The resolutions these singers propose—the progression from execution to marriage—allow us to observe their struggle to find viable, meaningful solutions to the problems that the ballad poses.

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Appendix 1: Texts

La fraticida por amor: 1591 Printed Version

From *Flor de varios romances nuevos. Primera y segunda parte, del bachiller Pedro de Moncayo*, printed in Barcelona in 1591 by Jaime Cendrat. Reprinted in Rodríguez-Moñino 1957.

El cielo estaua nublado,
 la luna no parecia,
 los ayres terribles suenan
 el mar se embrauecia,
 Los peces van sobre el agua 5
 sus bramidos se sentian,
 Los paxaros en sus nidos
 ninguno no parecia.
 Los galanes dan solloços

y las damas dauan grita	10
los niños que maman leche	
no maman en este día.	
Por la mas hermosa dama	
que dentro en Malaga auia,	
es muy hermosa y discreta	15
doña Angela se dezia,	
hija de doña Isabel,	
y el sobrenombre Padilla.	
Esta tal mato a su hermana,	
la bella doña Argentina,	20
muger de estremadas prendas	
por imbidia que tenia	
de amores de su cuñado	
que don Diego se dezia,	
muy dispuesto y gentil hombre	25
marido de la Argentina,	
moço gallardo y gracioso	
todo lo que ser podia,	
el qual mataua de amores	
que sosiego no tenia,	30
a doña Angela su cuñada	
que en viuo fuego se ardia.	
Y no hallando remedio	
determinado tenia	
para poder aplacar	35
el gran fuego en que se ardia,	
determino de matar	
a su hermana la Argentina	
para dar algun aliuio	
al dolor que padecia,	40
y hablandola en secreto	
dixo, descubrir queria	
la traycion que su cuñado	
contra ella hazer queria.	
Que esta noche quando todos	45
el mejor sueño dormian	
viniesse a su aposento	
sola y sin compañía,	
y alli podrian tratar	
lo que en esto conuenia:	50
venida que fue la noche	
que concertado tenian,	
agena de la traycion	
acudio doña Argentina,	
a donde la esta aguardando	55

doña Angela de Padilla,
 metiola en vn aposento
 el mas secreto que auia,
 y desde la tuuo dentro
 la puerta cerrado auia 60
 poniendo en execucion
 el intento que tenia
 sacando vn fiero puñal
 con animo y osadia
 le dio cinco puñaladas 65
 con peligrosas heridas,
 y atapandole la boca
 el alma a Dios ofrecia,
 ya sus manos blancas tiernas
 para sanar honras y vidas 70
 amor las haze verdugos
 en el cuello de Argentina,
 las que lo atan tan rezio
 sueltan el alma cautiua
 dejando el jazmin y rosas, 75
 marchito en su cara fria:
 mirad los enredos que haze
 satanas que no dormia
 al que halla muy vicioso
 presto le da çancadilla. 80
 Y desde la tuuo muerta
 cubriola en vna cortina,
 y despues de todo esto
 en muy delgada camisa
 se fue para el aposento 85
 donde don Diego dormia
 y entrando por la puerta
 mato vna vela que ardia,
 y acostandose con el
 sin ser de nadie sentida 90
 para cumplir sus desseos
 que mucho le perseguian
 dandole muy dulces besos
 con ansias muy encendidas
 despierta su amor don Diego 95
 que en dulce sueño dormia.
 Penso que era su muger
 otorgo lo que pedia,
 desde ya apago sus llamas
 y endemoniada porfia, 100
 muy agena de si misma

de la cama se salia.
 Desde despertó don Diego
 y no halló a doña Argentina
 buscála por el palacio 105
 muy ajeno de alegría.
 Y hallóla que estaua muerta
 cubierta en vna cortina
 y a las voces de don Diego
 entrado auía la justicia, 110
 pre[nd]en las dueñas de casa,
 pajes, lacayos, que hauía
 para hazer la informacion
 en la carcel los ponían
 todos jurando dixeron 115
 que don Diego lo sabía,
 prendieron a don Diego,
 aunque culpa no tenía,
 los ojos bueltos al cielo
 estas palabras dezía, 120
 O mundo engañoso y ciego
 loco es quien en ti fia,
 nadie en ti descanso espere
 pues darselo no podías.
 Lleuan el pleyto a Granada 125
 a la gran Chancillería:
 de allá vino sentenciado
 que le quitassen la vida:
 Pues quando vido doña Angela
 que a su cuñado perdía 130
 acusole la conciencia
 de su alma que yua perdida
 rabiosa como leona
 a la calle se salía,
 abraçando a su cuñado 135
 estas palabras dezía,
 O cuñado de mis ojos
 y espejo de mi alegría,
 yo soy la triste culpada
 yo cause tanta desdicha. 140
 Yo soy la que mate
 a mi hermana y tu Argentina,
 por gozar de tus amores
 puse mi alma cautiva.
 Tomaronla en juramento 145
 y ella declara y dezía
 que ella sola hizo el caso

don Diego nada sabia,
 y viendo la declaracion
 que la dama hecho auia, 150
 soltaron a don Diego luego
 y a doña Angela prendian,
 bueluen el pleyto a Granada
 de alla sentencia venia
 que segun fuero de hidalgo 155
 se le quitasse la vida,
 y la saquen arrastrando
 porque bien lo merescia,
 y que le saquen los ojos
 por su grande aleuosia, 160
 y que pongan su cabeça
 delante su casa misma
 encima de vna alta escarpia
 que de todos sea vista,
 vn Lunes por la mañana 165
 a las nueue horas del dia
 sacaron a justiciar
 a doña Angela de Padilla,
 su muy delicado cuerpo
 arrastrando en tierra yua 170
 a la cola de vn cauallo
 que de verla era manzilla,
 y en la su mano siniestra
 vn crucifixo traya
 y en la otra vna piedra 175
 con que sus pechos heria,
 alli va la Charidad
 los niños de la Doctrina,
 alli van frayles descalços
 que su anima regian, 180
 los pregoneros delante
 diziendo su aleuosia,
 y tañendo la trompeta
 que grande dolor ponía,
 la gente que la miraua 185
 lloran a gran bozeria.
 Desde que llegaron al puesto
 donde se ha de hazer justicia
 con boz que todos la oyeron
 estas palabras dezia: 190
 O hermanos de mis ojos
 suplicos [sic] en este dia
 rogueys por mi a Dios del cielo,

tambien a sancta Maria	
me perdone mis peccados	195
y las culpas que tenia,	
y no mire mis torpezas	
aunque infierno merecia	
sino el premio incomparable	
de aquella sangre diuina,	200
la qual derramo en la Cruz	
por dar a las almas vida	
y estando en este trance	
el verdugo le pedia	
el perdon acostumbrado	205
con termino y cortesia,	
y llamando al buen Iesus	
y a la piadosa Maria,	
cortaronle la cabeça	
y pago lo que deuia.	210

La fratricida por amor: An Oral Version

Recited by Simi Chocrón (37 yrs. old) and collected by Manuel Manrique de Lara in Tetuan in 1916 (Menéndez Pidal Archive, Madrid).

Nublado hace, nublado,	
la luna no parecía,	
las estrellas salen juntas,	
juntas van en compañía.	
Los pájaros de sus nidos	5
no salen en aquel día,	
criaturitas de cuna	
non sosiegan ni dormían,	
mujeres que están encintas	
en un día abortarían,	10
hombres que están por camino	
a su ciudad se volvían.	
Todo por una doncella	
que Isabel se llamaría.	
De amores de su cuñado	15
mató a una hermana que tenía.	
Matóla una noche oscura	
detrás de la su cortina.	
Después de haberla matado	
para su cama se iría.	20
Creyendo que era su esposa	
cumplióla lo que quería.	

Doña Anjívar se levanta
 dos horas antes del día.
 Don Diego se levantaba 25
 dos horas después del día.
 Halló su rosa ramada²⁴
 de rosas y clavellinas.
 —Acudid mis caballeros,
 veréis esta maravilla, 30
 después de quince años casada
 doncella la encontraría.—
 Ya pretenden a don Diego,²⁵
 que él culpa no tenía.
 —No pretendáis a don Diego, 35
 que él culpa no tenía.
 Yo la maté a mi hermana,
 mi hermana yo la mataría.
 El castigo que merezco
 con mi boca se diría: 40
 que me aten pies y manos
 y me arrastren por la villa.—
 Los muertos quedan por muertos,
 los vivos paces se harían.

Appendix 2: Modern Oral Versions

I am very grateful to Oro Anahory-Librowicz, Samuel G. Armistead, and Diego Catalán for sharing with me the versions of *La fraticida por amor* cited in this paper and listed here.

Versions 1-7 are housed in the Menéndez Pidal Archive in Madrid and are catalogued in Armistead 1978, II:101-3.

1-3. Versions from Tangier collected by José Benoliel in Tangier between 1904 and 1906. As Armistead (1978, II:101) notes, part of Version 3 was published in Menéndez Pidal 1958:171 (no. 90).

4. Version from Tangier, recited by Messodi Azulai (24 years), collected by Manuel Manrique de Lara in Tangier, 1915.

²⁴ In this line the singer anticipates the roses in line 28. In most versions line 27 reads “Halló su cama....”

²⁵ In this line and in line 35 the singer uses the verb *pretender* rather than the more frequent *prender*.

5. Version from Tangier, recited by Estrella Bennaim (18 years), collected by Manuel Manrique de Lara in Tangier, 1915.
6. Version from Tetuan, sung to Manuel Manrique de Lara in Tetuan, 1915.
7. Version from Tetuan, recited by Simi Chocrón (37 years), collected by Manuel Manrique de Lara in Tetuan, 1916.
8. Version collected in Buenos Aires, published in Bénichou 1968b:254.
9. Version from Tetuan, sung by Rachel Nahón (75 years), collected by Samuel G. Armistead and Israel J. Katz in Tetuan, 5 August 1962.
10. Version from Tetuan, sung by Luna Farache (78 years), collected by Samuel G. Armistead and Israel J. Katz in Tetuan, 7 August 1962.
11. Version from Tetuan, sung by Moisés Benadiba (73 years), collected by Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman in Tangier, 12 September 1962.
12. Version from Tetuan, sung by Alegría Bunán (49 years), collected by Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman in Tangier, 13 September 1962.
13. Version from Alcazarquivir, collected by Juan Martínez Ruíz in Alcazarquivir between October 1948 and June 1951, published in Martínez Ruíz 1963:168.
- 14-17. Versions from Tetuan, collected by Arcadio de Larrea Palacín, published in Larrea Palacín 1952:310-16.
18. Version from Tetuan-Tangier, recited by Clara Benchimol (67 years), collected by Oro Anahory-Librowicz in Montreal, Canada, 15 December 1981, published in Anahory-Librowicz 1988:61-62.
19. Version from Tetuan published in Alvar 1966:89.
20. Version from Catalonia collected by Manuel Milá y Fontanals and published in Milá y Fontanals als 1896:261.
21. Version from Catalonia in Menéndez Pidal Archive.
22. Version from La Gomera, Canary Islands, recited (?) by Prudencio Sánchez Conrado, collected by Maximiano Trapero and Elena Hernández Casañas in La Gomera, 25 July 1983, published in Trapero 1987:180-81.

Appendix 3: Folklore Motifs

All motifs are from Thompson 1955-58 and Bordman 1963. Motifs found in Bordman are indicated by an asterisk (*).

F. Marvels

F960.6 Extraordinary nature phenomena on night of fratricide.

Q. Rewards and Punishments

*Q400.1 Self-inflicted punishment.

Q413.4 Hanging as punishment for murder (Version 21 only).

Q414.0.13 Burning as punishment for fratricide (Version 20 only).

S. Unnatural Cruelty

S73.1.4 Fratricide motivated by love-jealousy.

Isochrony in Old English Poetry: Two Performances of *Cædmon's Hymn*

Miriam Youngerman Miller

In an argument for the development of a specifically oral poetics, the anthropologist and ethnopoeticist Dennis Tedlock concludes that “oral poetry begins with the voice and an oral poetics returns to the voice” (1977:517). Tedlock insists that the restoration of ancient oral poetry must be participatory: “Before the Renaissance, to ‘read’ or to ‘study’ a text meant *pronouncing the words aloud*, and that is what philologists must now do with ancient . . . texts” (516).¹ This stress on the centrality of oral performance as the touchstone of critical discourse about oral literature, that is, that an ancient text “must be judged not on the basis of its acceptability as silent written literature, but on the basis of how it sounds when read aloud . . .” (516), has important implications for students of Old English prosody (among many others, and including folklorists, classicists, and anthropologists).

Tedlock’s position is supported by the folklorist Richard Bauman (1986:8; emphasis added):

. . . the essence of oral literature, including its artfulness, is not to be discovered in folklore texts as conventionally conceived, but in lived performances. In respect to form, for example, a performance orientation has led to discoveries of patterning principles realized in performance but obscured by older notions of verbal texts—features of *prosody* and paralinguistic, of dialogue construction, of oral characterization.

Indeed, as Ruth Finnegan stresses (1977:133):

¹ In a long and closely argued essay, Paul Saenger demonstrates by means of documentary and iconographic evidence that silent reading gradually became the norm during the High Middle Ages (the eleventh through thirteenth centuries) (1982:384), stimulated by the development of scholasticism (383). For the early Middle Ages, the period with which we are concerned here, Saenger concurs with Jean Leclercq and Giles Constable that “monks . . . of the earlier Middle Ages had habitually read aloud even when they read privately” (368).

. . . *performance* in oral art . . . is what distinguishes it from written forms, and it is here, *as well as* in the bare text, that one must look for the stylistic characteristics of a genre of poem or an individual poet's art. It is also in the aspect of performance . . . that one can find the constraints [in this case, prosodic] and opportunities according to which an individual poet produces his compositions and his audience appreciates them.

From the days of Eduard Sievers and Andreas Heusler to the present, critical opinion about the nature of the Old English metrical system has been sharply divided, particularly over the key issue of isochrony, that is, whether or not the two measures in each verse or halfline are to be performed with equal duration.² In an attempt to "return the voice" to this controversial area, I have made a technologically-assisted study of two modern performances of *Cædmon's Hymn* to determine whether such a study might be able to shed some light on this longstanding difference of scholarly opinion.³

Only in the last few years have reliable technological means for studying the prosodic features of spoken language become available, and little has as yet been done to apply these new techniques to the analysis of oral performance of literature, and, in particular, of poetry. Therefore, initially I chose to work with the older, well-established, readily accessible technology of the sound spectrograph, developed by Bell Laboratories. This device makes speech visible by analyzing complex sound waves recorded on magnetic tape, one band of frequencies at a time. The simple oscillations separated out from the complex wave are transcribed side by side by a stylus attached to the filter output and resting on electrically sensitive paper wrapped around a rotating drum. The result is a tracing of varying shade (rather than an oscillating line) that is a visible pattern of the three fundamental dimensions of sound—frequency or pitch, intensity or

² For accessible, concise reviews of the theories and controversies concerning the scansion of Old English poetry, see Ogilvy and Baker 1983:111-25 and Hoover 1985:ch. 1 *passim*. Hoover, in particular, contrasts the major isochronous theories with the major non-isochronous theories. Hoover himself belongs to the second camp, regarding isochronicity as "improbable" (3) and positing that the sole metrically significant feature of Old English poetry is alliteration.

³ It is not my purpose here to argue the merits of the isochronous and anisochronous theories of Old English metrics, but rather to bring a new methodology to bear on this old controversy and to explore its potential fruitfulness for the study of this issue and (eventually) other questions pertinent to the understanding of Old English prosody.

amplitude, and duration.

The use of the sound spectrograph for my purposes had its drawbacks. First, it was quite difficult to learn to recognize significant patterns in what appears at first glance to be a series of random smudges. Second, the spectrograph indicates amplitude by the darkness or lightness of the smudge in question, leaving the analysis of sounds close in intensity a matter of judgment. Awkward as the sound spectrograph is, it has occasionally been used in studies of interest to those involved in the analysis of performance. For example, George E. McSpadden used the sound spectrograph to analyze the speech rhythms of the poet Jorge Guillén's reading of his poem "Gran Silencio." This study identifies in one five-line poem eight distinct rhythmical patterns that are, virtually without exception, "accurate to a hundredth of a second," leaving McSpadden to conclude that this "precise timing" is due not to "any forced effect on the part of the poet," but in all likelihood is inherent in the language itself, in this case Spanish (1962:227).

Because, then, of the deficiencies of the sound spectrograph, I chose to pursue this study using a much more recently developed technology, the Visi-pitch, an inexpensive way to abstract pitch and amplitude from a sample of speech.⁴ Unlike the sound spectrograph, which provides the fundamental frequency plus all harmonics in a series of bands, the Visi-pitch yields but two separate oscillating lines, one tracing amplitude over time and the other, fundamental frequency. While it does not provide the harmonics (an unnecessary refinement at this stage of the investigation of the sounds of orally performed literature), the Visi-pitch has several real advantages. It is relatively inexpensive; its output of two simple oscillating lines is easy to interpret; it works in real time. Therefore, the tracings of an entire performance of *Beowulf* could be made in little more than the time required to read the poem. The manual interpretation of the resulting data is a simple task, although if the performance to be analyzed is not brief, such analysis undertaken manually could be time-consuming and tedious. (Computer software is available to facilitate the analysis of lengthy samples.)

Therefore, in part for its brevity, I have chosen the Moore MS version of *Cædmon's Hymn* (MS Cambridge, University Library, KK.5.16),

⁴ I have been fortunate in obtaining the assistance of Professor George Herman of Bowling Green State University and of the engineers of Kay Elemetrics and Voice Identification, Inc., who have processed tape recordings for me without charge so that I can assess the utility of this technology in addressing the questions of performance that interest me.

rather than, say, *Beowulf*, as the text for my pilot project.⁵ This choice enabled me to interpret the Visi-pitch data without resorting to computer assistance.

Cædmon's Hymn, moreover, is nearly ideal for my purposes from a theoretical point of view as well. First, it is the “earliest documented oral poem in Old English” (O’Keeffe 1987:1) and the only Old English poem (with the possible exception of Bede’s “Death Song”) for which a context describing the processes of oral composition and performance exists. No matter how we interpret the apparent miracle of angelic intervention in the genesis of this poem, we can confidently consider it a work intended from its beginning for oral performance. Second, unlike almost all other Old English poems that are extant only in single manuscripts and those frequently damaged, *Cædmon's Hymn*, by virtue of being embedded in Bede’s very widely circulated *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, has come down to us in fourteen manuscripts, copied in England over a period of four centuries in two dialects (*ibid.*:2). I have specifically chosen to work with the Northumbrian Moore MS text (CUL KK.5.16), because, as O’Keeffe points out, CUL KK.5.16 (along with Leningrad Q.v.I.18) is the earliest surviving manuscript of Bede’s work and, as such, is of critical importance as witness to the original language of the poem (9).

In the future it will, of course, be possible to compare readings of the *Hymn* in Northumbrian and West Saxon, an exercise that might possibly be enlightening given O’Keeffe’s contention that the variability noted in the *AE group of West Saxon texts of *Cædmon's Hymn* stems from their appearance in a purely vernacular environment, a “vernacular whose character as a living language kept it close to the oral status which until fairly recently was its only state” (15). She judges the variants found in the written texts of *Cædmon's Hymn* to be “metrically, syntactically, and semantically appropriate” (16). Technologically assisted comparisons of these variant texts may perhaps shed light on the metrical appropriateness that O’Keeffe finds in the various alternative readings found in the texts, although it may well be that the dialectal differences are too minor to have any detectable impact on the underlying metrical patterns of the poem.

For my present purpose, which is primarily to test the feasibility of the Visi-pitch technology as a suitable methodology for approaching the problems posed by the study of Old English metrics, I have limited my sample to two recordings of *Cædmon's Hymn* made specifically for this project by Professors Thomas M. Cable of the University of Texas-Austin

⁵ See Appendix A for text.

and Robert P. Creed of the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.⁶ I selected these two readers because they are both well-known theorists in the field of Old English metrics. Each was asked to perform the text in the light of his own theoretical assumptions, and the resulting performances vary markedly in aesthetic impression.

Although the Visi-pitch tracings made of both readings provide data on frequency and amplitude as well as on duration, I have chosen to limit myself at this time to an analysis of duration, since the controversial issue of whether or not Old English poetry is isochronous seems to be the aspect of Old English metrics most amenable to exploration by the specific technological means at my disposal. While it is obvious that Old English poetry and indeed all extant early Germanic poetry is not isosyllabic, it is nonetheless a matter of vigorous disagreement whether metrical units, notwithstanding their irregularity in number of syllables, could possibly be pronounced in regular periods of time. Most recent arguments for the isochrony of Old English poetry have been based largely on John C. Pope's theory of performance as expounded in *The Rhythm of Beowulf* (1943), which holds that light measures, those with few syllables, were filled out with rests, such rests being marked by strokes of the lyre, so that all measures were thus equal in elapsed time and further that all measures must begin with an accent, again a lyre-stroke being supplied if the measure would otherwise begin with a syllable incapable of bearing an accent.

Pope's lead has been followed by Robert P. Creed, one of the two metrical theorists who performed for this study, who states in an essay published in 1966 (24) that:

Every measure theoretically requires the same speaking time as every other, no matter how many, or how few, syllables it contains. . . .

The stress-patterns are imposed on these isochronous measures. The stress patterns do *not* vary according to the *number* of syllables in a measure. . . .

Creed then agrees with Pope in proposing two equivalent measures per halfline of Old English poetry, each beginning with a primary stress with lyre-strokes providing the ictus whenever an initial word cannot bear stress

⁶ The recordings and the sound spectrograms and Visi-pitch analyses made of them remain in my possession and are not available commercially. I am, of course, exceedingly grateful to Thomas M. Cable and Robert P. Creed for their generous assistance in this project.

and filling out a measure that lacks a final stressed element.⁷

In 1982 Creed stated his position even more categorically (27):

It is now possible to say that, theoretically, *every measure in Beowulf is equal to every other measure*. . . . Every measure is equal to every other both in the perceived time it takes to perform it *and also in its structure*.

As is clear from the above, Creed assumes “that the *measure*, not the verse, provides the most significant clue to the simplicity of Old English prosody” (1966:23).

In his most recent statement on Old English prosody, *Reconstructing the Rhythm of Beowulf* (1990), Creed reaffirms his support for Pope’s “conjecture” about the nature of Old English metrical practice and claims to have “developed a way of turning Pope’s conjecture into a hypothesis and testing it” (203). In order to do so and simultaneously to recover and verify the editorial principles used by John Mitchell Kemble, who provided the lineation upon which all modern editions of *Beowulf* are based, Creed developed a computer program that would lineate the manuscript (which was, of course, not lineated) according to a series of fixed rules that he extrapolated from Kemble’s printed line divisions.

Creed argues logically that all modern attempts to scan *Beowulf* are based on the lines and halflines as printed in modern editions, not on the poem as it in fact appears in the manuscript, and that if this lineation (based ultimately on Kemble’s editorial decisions) is incorrect, then all attempts to explicate the principles of Old English prosody are invalid (6-7):

The assumption that underlies every other study of Beowulfian prosody is this: the prosodist performs his or her operations upon the so-called verses of the poem as they appear in acceptably edited texts. Thus the prosodist can consider each verse in isolation from its verse line, that is, apart from the verse with which it is paired by alliteration . . . this assumption has produced confusion.

Creed’s computer program does indeed elicit verse lines that overwhelmingly accord with Kemble’s, and from these verse lines he systematically derives halflines (verses), and halflin constituents (HCs) or measures, each halflin containing two or occasionally three measures (the so-called hypermetric lines). Thus far, Creed reaffirms traditional thinking. However, he goes a step further and analyzes each measure into two Fine

⁷ Cf. Foley 1978:72. For a full explanation of Foley’s views and a comparison and rationalization of various metrical approaches, see Foley 1990:ch. 3.

Parts, the first Part containing a “stressed syllable about 80 percent of the time” and the second containing “far more often than not . . . an unstressed syllable or syllables” (6). According to Creed, these two Fine Parts per measure mark a duple rhythm that has important implications for the performance of Old English poetry and for resolving the issue of whether or not Old English poetry is isochronous.

Indeed, Creed uses the test of performance as partial support for his hypothesis (203) that “a simple two-part rhythm controls the distribution of every syllable in the poem”:

There is at least one other piece of evidence for a simple, two-part rhythm beginning with a down-beat; it is possible to *perform* the poem effectively according to this rhythm (205).

Another piece of evidence that Creed cites for his hypothesis is the variability of the number of syllables in the measures or halfline constituents (204; emphasis added):

The number of syllables in a single measure ranges from one to six. Giving every syllable equal length results in an “irrational” or prose rhythm; giving stressed syllables more length to accentuate their importance also results in an irrational rhythm. Neither of these choices is...necessary. On the contrary, the performer can learn to perform so that the syllabic and nonsyllabic [Creed’s “empty” Fine Parts that correspond to Pope’s rests or lyre-strokes] material, despite the varying length and weight of the former, create [*sic*] a sense that *the time it takes to perform one measure is equal to the time it takes to perform another*.

Thus, Creed’s reexamination of Old English prosody reaffirms his original position that Old English meter is isochronous.

On the other hand, Thomas Cable, the second metrical theorist who performed for this study, argues in his 1974 study, *The Meter and Melody of Beowulf*, that the Pope-Creed theory of two isochronous measures in a halfline, each beginning with an accent, either stressed syllable or lyre-stroke, is anachronistic, based on an analogy with the music of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁸ Cable points out that Gregorian chant,

⁸ In *Reconstructing the Rhythm of Beowulf*, Creed explicitly maintains Pope’s musical analogy (1990:202):

. . . although his quasi-musical notation is unnecessarily precise, he has found the proper term for what I have been calling HCs. The HCs are the *measures* of the halflines. . . .

The use of the term *measure* . . . indicates important features of these

the only music contemporary with Anglo-Saxon poetry about which we have any detailed knowledge, is, in fact, not isochronous (15-16). Further, Cable raises an objection to the requirement that the lyre-stroke, a non-linguistic element, be considered a necessary and integral part of the Old English metrical pattern, stating that the use of a non-linguistic feature as part of a prosodic system has no other example “in any language, ancient, medieval, or modern” (17).⁹ In short, Cable rejects the position that the anisosyllabic lines of Old English poetry must be read isochronously, with the help of the lyre when necessary. The alternative pattern Cable proposes is based, not on equivalent time-units, but on a pattern of four levels of relative pitch.¹⁰

In his more recent work, *The English Alliterative Tradition* (1991), Cable has somewhat modified his position (39):

The picture that resulted [in *The Meter and Melody of Beowulf*] was more specific than the evidence warranted: a picture of the poet carrying around a stock of five melodic formulas to which he set words. The picture that

constituents. A musical measure is a clearly marked segment. The onset of 80 percent of the measures of *Beowulf* is marked by the occurrence of the most heavily stressed syllable. A musical measure can contain a varying number of notes. A measure of *Beowulf* can consist of as few as one or as many as six syllables.

Geoffrey Russom, in his recent study, *Old English Meter and Linguistic Theory*, finds “Pope’s use of present-day musical notation . . . quite compatible with the linguistic structure of Old English metrical texts” (1987:7). Russom derives the standard Old English metrical foot (Sx) from the trochaic word, arguing that “in many familiar meters, the foot corresponds to a stressed simplex word” (28-29). In his view, “the central role played by the trochaic word . . . suggests a trochaic rhythmical norm like that of later Western music” (7), thus countering Cable’s charge of anachronism.

⁹ Paul Zumthor, however, describes Ainu epic verse as having “accents that the singer emphasizes by hitting some object” (1990:137). On a more theoretical level, Zumthor states (131):

The prosody of an oral poem refers to the prehistory of the spoken or sung text, to its prearticulatory genesis, the echo of which it interiorizes. For this reason, most performances, whatever the cultural context, begin with a nonvocal prelude, the beating of an object . . .; the frame is thereby exposed, where voice is going to be deployed.

¹⁰ Since the Visi-pitch provides data on frequency or pitch, it would be possible to use Visi-pitch tracings to investigate Cable’s suggestion, but that is outside the scope of this essay.

emerges from the present study is that the contours are indeed real, at least for the overwhelming majority of verses, but, like the Five Types, they are derivative, not paradigmatic.

Thus, while deemphasizing the centrality of four levels of relative pitch as the key to Old English metrics, Cable still sees his work as a refinement of Sievers's system of five basic line types, each composed of four members or *Glieder*.

In his survey of the competing approaches to Old English prosody, Cable observes that all of the theorists (Sievers, Bliss, Keyser, Heusler, Pope, Creed) "deal with an abstract, idealized" pattern, no effort being made "to record the accidental features and idiosyncrasies of an individual performance" (13). As we have seen, the attempts to discern the "abstract, idealized" principles of order that underlie Old English poetry have yielded at least two fundamentally opposed basic constructs, each with a collection of sub-theories and refinements. No one has so far been able to synthesize the opposing points of view or to advance any new approach that has met with scholarly consensus.¹¹

I will now consider what the technological analysis of performance can reveal about the important matter of isochrony. At the outset, it must be conceded that human beings are not metronomes: one can hardly expect any given performance to be isochronous to the last hundredth or even tenth of a second.¹² Perhaps Cædmon's performance would show the same degree of regularity of rhythm as Guillén's, but, not surprisingly, neither reader's does. One might expect Creed's reading to exhibit more isochrony in the pronunciation of measures than Cable's, since Creed holds Old English poetry to be isochronous and presumably performed accordingly. On balance, Creed's performance is indeed somewhat more isochronous than Cable's, although perhaps not significantly so. Creed's measures vary in length from 0.3 to 1.3 seconds, while Cable's vary from 0.4 to 1.7. Both, however, tend toward a basic measure length of 0.7 to 1.1 seconds. Creed read four halflines (of a total of 18) with identical measures, while Cable read only one halfline with two identical measures. Just over half of

¹¹ However, Russom suggests the possibility of synthesis when he notes in his brief remarks on meter and rhythm that his own analysis of the "linguistic properties of reliably attested verse patterns" independently supports the performance-oriented "rhythmical interpretations of Pope . . . and Creed," particularly in regard to Pope's analysis of Sievers's types B and C (1987:6-7).

¹² But see McSpadden 1962.

Creed's halflines have measures within 0.2 second duration of each other, while about one-third of Cable's halflines fall within this tolerance.¹³

The very short measures in both readings are, of course, those like "uerc" in the halfline "uerc ulderfadur" ("glory-father's work"), for which Pope and Creed posit a compensatory lyre-stroke. Interestingly, Creed did not in fact punctuate his reading with lyre-strokes or (according to the evidence of the Visi-pitch tracing) with the precisely timed pauses he suggests in the event of lack of access to an Anglo-Saxon lyre (1966:26). The longest measures in both readings tend to occur at the ends of whole lines (Creed's verse lines) and particularly at the very end of the poem. However, this does not occur regularly enough to suggest that either performer felt the consistent need to draw out the final measure to act as a line-marker.

When we turn our attention from the measure to the halfline, we find both readings to be more nearly isochronous. Cable's halflines run from 1.5 to 2.3 seconds (the 2.3 seconds being the time expended on the last, drawn-out halfline), but two-thirds of his halflines last from 1.8 to 2.1 seconds. Perhaps surprisingly, Creed's halflines range even farther, from 1.0 to 2.2 seconds (again the last line is the longest), but again two-thirds of his halflines are clustered between 1.4 and 1.8 seconds, Creed's reading being generally slightly faster than Cable's. In the halfline as in the measure, Creed's performance is somewhat more isochronous than Cable's. Two of his lines are composed of halflines identical in duration, while only one of Cable's lines exhibits this characteristic. Two-thirds of Creed's lines contain halflines differing in duration by no more than 0.2 second, while just under half of Cable's lines fall into this category.¹⁴

These data would suggest two conclusions—or rather two avenues for further investigation. First, both readings give some support to the notion that the halfline, and not the measure as Creed posits, is the relevant metrical unit, as Sievers implied with his famous five types. Second, a certain amount of variety in duration seems to be a significant part of Anglo-Saxon poetic technique. Both readers have a core of recurring measure

¹³ Since Creed's elaborate computerized re-lineation of *Beowulf* essentially confirmed the lineation of Kemble's (and all subsequent) editions, I felt comfortable using the traditional editorial lineation of *Cædmon's Hymn* (see Appendix A for lineated text) for this study. Creed's definition of *measure* coincides with Pope's and even (much of the time) with Sievers's (1990:202), so again I used traditional measure boundaries for my analysis.

¹⁴ See Appendix B for complete data.

lengths (fourteen—of a total of 36—of Creed’s measures are 0.9 second in duration; thirteen of Cable’s are 0.9/1.0) and halflines durations (Creed’s cluster around 1.6 seconds; Cable’s around 2.0), the measures admitting of more variation at the extremes than the halflines. These recurrent durations provide a basic pattern around which both readers insert occasionally shorter or longer segments, adding a welcome variation that nonetheless does not obscure the underlying regularity. Interestingly, Creed suggests (1990:207) that the duple rhythm that he sees as the core feature of Anglo-Saxon prosody allows the “modern performer” to

develop a degree of control that permits him or her to play with stress—to raise or lower somewhat the stress of a particular syllable—so long as he or she does so within the constraints of the rhythm. This . . . offers to the modern performer . . . something like the same degree of freedom that the Anglo-Saxon *scop* exercised during the first performance of the poem.

A *scop* may have enjoyed similar freedom in regard to duration as long as his performance contained a core of roughly isochronous metrical units (be they measures or halflines).

It may be argued that my experiment in analysis of the performance of Old English poetry has an element of circularity—that Creed’s reading will probably demonstrate a greater degree of isochrony (which it in fact does) because he will have been at great pains to validate his theory and that Cable’s will likely show four levels of pitch, again because he will expend his efforts in that direction. In this case, each reading may, to some extent, serve as the control for the other: what they have in common may be more important than their differences and may, however dimly, reflect the nature of Cædmon’s original performance despite the vast linguistic and cultural gulf that lies between his time and ours. And certainly I realize full well that two readings are far too few to produce any statistically significant correlations. Based on this necessarily tiny and unrepresentative sample, any observations I make can merely be suggestive of possible lines of inquiry for a full-scale investigation in the future.

It may also be helpful to place these initial and highly tentative observations in a larger context. The debate over isochrony has not been limited to students of Old English metrics. Indeed, the rhythmicity (that is, isochrony) of spoken Modern English is very much at issue among linguists, so much so that “hardly any present-day textbook of English phonetics (or phonology) fails to mention rhythmicity as reflected in the

(approximate) isochrony [of] ‘interstress intervals’.”¹⁵

Among the several competing positions on this issue, the theory of English speech rhythm propounded by the Scottish phonetician David Abercrombie has perhaps the most interest for students of Old English prosody. He describes two aspects of the production of the air-stream used to fashion speech—one a series of “chest-pulses” generated by contractions of the intercostal muscles and the other “a series of less frequent, more powerful contractions of the breathing muscles,” the stress-pulses. Each chest-pulse corresponds to a syllable of speech, while the stress-pulses occasionally “coincide with, and reinforce, a chest-pulse,” causing “a more considerable and more sudden rise in air pressure” (1964:5-6). These physiologically produced speech rhythms inherent in all languages can be coordinated in different ways. Either the stress-pulses or the chest-pulses (not both) must be in isochronous sequence. If the stress-pulses are isochronous, we have a stress-timed language such as English; if, on the other hand, the chest-pulses are isochronous, we have a syllable-timed language, for example French. Abercrombie claims that the “stress-timed rhythm of English is the basis of the structure of English verse” (7), explaining why poets do not need a prosodic theory to compose, nor listeners and readers to appreciate.

Abercrombie goes on to make several additional points relevant to the reconstruction of the sound of Old English poetry. He states that the rhythm of speech is primarily the muscular rhythm of the speaker and must therefore be “empathised” by the hearer who identifies himself with the speaker, an identification probably possible only if the hearer and the speaker are using the same mother tongue (7-8). If so, this phenomenon may lie at the root of the difficulties that have arisen in seeking a consensus concerning the rhythms of Old English.

With obvious relevance to Pope’s contributions to the study of Old English metrics, Abercrombie emphasizes that a “stress-pulse can occur without sound accompanying it,” either initially in an utterance or medially. These silent stresses are inherent in language, occurring frequently in conversation, in prose read aloud, and in verse, and are perceived as such by both speaker and hearer (8-9). Pope has, of course, postulated “rests” marked by “hearpan sweg” (“the sound of the lyre”; 1943:*passim*) that may correspond with Abercrombie’s “silent stresses” and that should fit closely

¹⁵ Jassem et al. 1984:204. An excellent historical survey of studies of English speech rhythms and, in specific, of studies of isochrony, can be found in Adams 1979:ch. 2. In particular, Adams places the matter of isochrony in Old English poetry into the larger context of isochrony in English speech in general.

into any measured pattern of rhythm in Old English poetry.¹⁶

Recurrent stress-pulses in English give rise to feet, defined by Abercrombie as “the space in time from the incidence of one stress-pulse up to, but not including, the next stress-pulse.” Further, “all feet within a piece of English verse are of equal length or quantity” (1964:10). The number of syllables and their quantities may vary from foot to foot, such syllable quantity being “entirely distinct from stress” (12)—a possible explanation for the widely varying number of syllables per halfline in Old English verse.

Abercrombie’s views on the distinction between stress-timed and syllable-timed languages have more recently been challenged by Peter Roach. Roach notes that students of phonetics frequently have difficulty assigning languages to one or the other of these two categories. No clear rules for such assignments exist, and teachers of phonetics traditionally answer that “the ability to make such decisions comes through undergoing a certain amount of training with an expert phonetician” and that “such a question does not necessarily need to be answered with a statement that can be tested experimentally” (1982:73). If we remember that Abercrombie asserted that speech rhythms must be “empathised” by the hearer, one possible conclusion is that “the distinction between stress-timed and syllable-timed languages may rest entirely on perceptual skills acquired through training” (74).

Roach set up an experiment to test two of Abercrombie’s specific claims: a) “there is considerable variation in syllable length in a language spoken with stress-timed rhythm whereas in a language spoken with a syllable-timed rhythm the syllables tend to be equal in length”; and b) “in syllable-timed languages, stress pulses are unevenly spaced.”¹⁷ Briefly, Roach recorded single speakers of six languages, three categorized by Abercrombie as stress-timed (English, Russian, and Arabic) and three as syllable-timed (French, Telugu, and Yoruba). Intensity meter traces were

¹⁶ It is noteworthy that Joshua Steele in *An Essay towards establishing the melody and measure of speech*, published in 1775 at the request of the Royal Society and perhaps the earliest assertion of a theory of isochrony in spoken English, argued that the rests of silent periods must be considered in any examination of the rhythm of English speech:

They [the pulsation of emphatic and remiss] must be continued, by conception in the mind, during all measured rests and pauses, as well as during the continuance of either uniform, articulated, or modulating sounds (quoted in Adams 1979:27).

¹⁷ Roach here is quoting Abercrombie’s statements from *Elements of General Phonetics* (1967:98).

made from the recordings of two-minute samples of spontaneous, unscripted speech from each speaker, and these traces were manually segmented.

The segmentation and analysis of these samples posed a number of problems. Since there is as yet no instrumental means of syllabification and stress identification, these tasks must be done auditorily by a phonetician, and disagreements do arise among phoneticians about such decisions. Further, there is no consensus about how to measure inter-stress intervals, that is, where such intervals begin and end. More important for consideration of isochrony in Old English poetry, the beginnings and endings of tone-units pose particular measurement problems (Roach 1982:76-77):

Tone-units often begin with unstressed syllables that could only be counted as belonging to an inter-stress interval if the implausible notion were adopted that they were preceded by a “silent stress”. . . or “silent ictus”. . . . Syllables that are final in the tone-unit are commonly lengthened considerably, both in English and in other languages. . . .

Of course, the Pope-Creed school of thought on Old English prosody has as a key feature the “silent stress” that Roach dismissively labels “implausible” without further explanation. The Visi-pitch tracings of the two sample readings of *Cædmon’s Hymn* do corroborate the general tendency to elongate final syllables, this tendency complicating any attempt to determine whether Old English prosody is essentially isochronous, unless, of course, final syllables are simply not reckoned, just as Roach discards them from his study.

Roach’s experimental results “give no support to the idea the one could assign a language to one of the two categories on the basis of measurement of time intervals in speech” (78). He concludes that “the basis for the distinction is auditory and subjective” (*idem*). Although there is thus no experimental support for the notion of stress-timed and syllable-timed languages, Roach does concede that this distinction as it has made its way into phonetic theory depends “mainly on the intuitions of speakers of various Germanic languages all of which are said to be stress-timed.” That is, certain languages are perceived as syllable-timed or stress-timed, and such perceptions might be based on whether particular languages have simpler or more complex syllable structure or whether they typically “exhibit vowel reduction in unstressed syllables” (*idem*).

Likewise, experimental research to date indicates,¹⁸ as common sense would probably dictate, that while “*absolute objective isochrony* does not exist in English”(Adams 1979:53), the subjective perception of isochrony may well be another matter. Adams cites the work of E. A. Sonnenschein, who stresses that when we speak of rhythm, we really mean the subjective impression made by the objective acoustical reality, rather than the acoustical reality itself. That is, the human mind is unable to discriminate very slight differences in the duration of sounds, and thus the absolute duration of sounds measured technologically may differ from the human perceptions thereof. Listeners may smooth out slight inequalities in duration and perceive isochrony, or they may recognize as different sounds that are in fact absolutely isochronous as measured by the most accurate instrumentation available.

Over the past fifty years researchers have attempted by experimental methods to determine whether English is an isochronous language (as has often been claimed), and if so whether isochrony is primarily a phenomenon of production or perception. In her review of the research on this subject, Ilse Lehiste presents the net results of numerous studies (1977:259):

. . . there exists a tendency to hear spoken English as possessing a certain degree of isochronicity. First of all, many actual differences in the duration of interstress intervals may be below the perceptual threshold. Second, listeners tend to impose a rhythmic structure on stretches of sound and thus subjectively to perceive isochrony even in sequences where the durational differences should be above the perceptual threshold. There is nevertheless some evidence that speakers also have a tendency to aim at isochrony in production. This emerges from the way they treat durational constraints in production.

Of course, all of these experiments were performed using Modern English spoken by native speakers, and most were performed using prose sentences as the samples of speech. However, the specific results of these experiments correspond rather closely with the results I obtained from analyzing samples of Old English poetry (read, of course, by native speakers of Modern English). W. A. Lea’s study of the lengths of interstress intervals, for example, shows “both a fairly large amount of clustering around certain mean values and a large amount of variability,” leading Lehiste to conclude that the “regularities” were “quite apparent,

¹⁸ For a review of experimental research on isochrony, see Lehiste 1977.

even though absolute isochrony could not be found” (255). This is paralleled by the findings of the Visi-pitch analysis of both Creed’s and Cable’s readings described above. The work of Fonagy and Magdics “showed that a syllable at the end of an utterance is longer” (*ibid.*:260), an observation again borne out by examination of Creed’s and Cable’s readings. Lehiste (258) cites George D. Allen’s conclusion that

listeners have a general tendency to adjust their perception of time interval durations towards some central, or average, duration; this, in addition to the tendency to impose a rhythm on any sequence of intervals, contributes to the perception of regular rhythm in languages with stress accent.

Since both Old and Modern English are stress-accented languages and both performers are native speakers of Modern English, it is not surprising that the analysis of performed Old English should yield results similar to those obtained when analyzing spoken Modern English. (It may be helpful in future to analyze the performance of a native speaker of a syllable-timed language, say, French.)

E. A. Sonnenschein, who concurs that isochrony is largely a matter of perception, goes so far as to claim that “in so far as English ears are insensible to distinctions of quantity, any pair of syllables is actually felt to be equal in duration to any other pair” (cited in Adams 1979:41). As applied to questions of prosody, this means that when a foot is brief in duration and is composed of two unaccented syllables, it may be compensated for in the longer duration and heavier stress of an adjacent foot. The example Sonnenschein provides is from *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*:

The ploughman lost his sweat, and this green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain’d a beard. (II.i.95-96)

In this example, the defectively brief and light foot “and this” is balanced by the two long and heavily stressed syllables “green corn” in the next foot, the two together being about twice the length of a normal foot like “The plough–.” This compensatory juxtaposition in Shakespeare of feet markedly below and above the normal duration may be similar to the observed tendency in the two performances analyzed here of the measures to vary more widely in duration than the halflines, a long measure combining with a short to produce a halfline equivalent in duration to a halfline composed of two measures average in duration.

Thus, the experiments that bear on the issue of isochrony clearly

demonstrate that raw acoustical data (such as can be derived from technological devices including the Visi-pitch) and human perception of that raw acoustical data do not necessarily coincide. Whether we consider this discrepancy a matter of “perceptual skills acquired through training,” as Roach argues (1982:74), or whether along with Sonnenschein we see this as an inability of the human mind to make fine discriminations between acoustical signals (Adams 1979:42), we might want to investigate what cognitive science can tell us about how the conscious mind processes sensory input (such as the duration of sound as objectively measured by mechanical means) and in so doing creates perceptions that differ substantially from that raw input.

In particular, the work of Ray Jackendoff (alone and in concert with Fred Lerdahl), derived in part from Gestalt psychology and from Chomskian generative linguistics, can provide us with insights generally relevant to an understanding of perception and specifically relevant to the perception of isochrony in human speech. Jackendoff and Lerdahl agree with the claim of such Gestalt psychologists as Wertheimer and Koffka that “perception is not simply a product of what is in the environment: the viewer [or the listener] plays an active, though normally unconscious, part in determining what he perceives” (1983:303).

One of the key principles that Jackendoff and Lerdahl use to further our understanding of the processes involved in perception derives from the work of Heinrich Schenker: “The listener attempts to organize all the pitch-events of a piece into a single coherent structure, such that they are heard in a hierarchy of relative importance” (106). They go on to say that a “consequence of th[is] claim is that part of the analysis of a piece is a step-by-step simplification or *reduction* of the piece where at each step less important events are omitted, leaving the structurally more important events as a sort of skeleton . . .” (*idem*). While Jackendoff and Lerdahl state this hypothesis of Schenkerian reduction in terms of pitch, it is also applicable to the issue of duration that concerns us here, as they explicitly indicate when the note analysis of pitch is not sufficient to understand the perception of a piece of music (119):

The solution, then, lies in the proper integration of criteria of pitch stability with rhythmic criteria based on . . . grouping and metrical components. Schenkerian reductions rely heavily on a tacit knowledge of these areas. Indeed Schenkerian analysis is workable at all only because the analyst himself supplied (consciously or unconsciously) the requisite rhythmic intuitions.

To apply Schenkerian analysis to the perception of isochrony, it is necessary to understand the principle of grouping referred to above:¹⁹

The process of grouping is common to many areas of human cognition. If confronted with a series of elements or a sequence of events, a person spontaneously segments . . . the elements or events into groups of some kind. The ease or difficulty with which he performs this operation depends on how well the intrinsic organization of the input matches his internal, unconscious principles for constructing groupings. For music the input is the raw sequences of pitches, attack points, durations, dynamics, and timbres in a heard piece. When a listener has construed a grouping structure for a piece, he has gone a long way toward “making sense” of the piece. . . . Thus grouping can be considered as the most basic component of musical understanding.

The grouping principle that pertains most closely to the perception of isochrony is Grouping Preference Rule 5 (Symmetry): Prefer grouping analyses that most closely approach the ideal subdivision of groups into two parts of equal length (49).

Jackendoff’s later and more general work, *Consciousness and the Computational Mind*, speaks directly to the question of isochronous groupings in both music and language (1987:254):

It has sometimes been claimed that musical meter is a natural outgrowth of biological periodicities. . . . But such an explanation is overly facile, for two reasons. First, it does not explain how one can choose an arbitrary tempo, unrelated to biological rhythms, and maintain it over time. The regularity of musical rhythm is more likely to be attributed to an ability to replicate intervals of time . . . independent of preexisting physiological rhythms.

Second, the essence of musical meter is not just periodicity but *hierarchical* periodicity. . . . It is the notion of hierarchical periodicity that is expressed by the use of a metrical grid in both music and language.

The linguistic grid differs from musical meter in that it is not usually isochronous; that is, there are not identical intervals of time between adjacent pairs of beats. . . . Though there may be some tendency toward rough isochrony in ordinary language, the strict isochrony in music applies to

¹⁹ 1983:13. While Lerdahl and Jackendoff are concerned explicitly with an analysis of the perception of tonal music, they indicate in Chapter 12, “Psychological and Linguistic Connections,” that their arguments are also valid for questions of prosody. They observe elsewhere that “more than any other component of the musical grammar, the grouping component appears to be of obvious psychological interest, in that the grammar that describes grouping structure seems to consist largely of general conditions for auditory pattern perception that have far broader application than for music alone” (36).

language only in the recitation of certain kinds of poetry, such as nursery rhymes, limericks, and (it is thought) *Beowulf*.

Thus, Jackendoff's principle that "perception does not send a multitude of half-baked analyses on to a higher capacity for adjudication" (279) leads to the positing of a "*selection function* that continually attempts to restrict the number of structures under consideration and that at each moment marks a particular candidate as most stable or salient" (259). For the perception of isochrony "in the recitation of certain kinds of poetry," most particularly *Beowulf*, that selection function appears to be the grouping preference rule of symmetry that argues that the listener will tend to perceive equal time-spans, thus filtering out objectively measurable durational variation. Donald K. Fry's (1990:73) metaphor may not be inappropriate here: "Perception is a screen pierced by holes shaped like the mind's forms, a screen we hold up to outside material. Data which fit enter easily through a hole; data which do not fit must be altered [grouped?] to the shape of an opening."

After considering the cognitive approach that ultimately leads Jackendoff to agree with those who hold that Old English poetry is isochronous, we can return to the prosodist Thomas M. Cable, who reaches the same conclusion from a different direction. Having reviewed "the various experiments [that] have clocked the performance of utterances and measured their perceptual effects and acoustic correlates," Cable concludes that "the speeding up of consecutive weak syllables is a widely recognized pattern of Modern English, whatever the clocked differences in perceived qualities might be" and asserts that "patterns of metrically unstressed syllables which require this speeding up continue to figure prominently" in the meters of Middle English and Modern English, and indeed that the "intrusion of what can be called the 'strong-stress mode' into more regularly alternating modes is one of the most salient features of English poetic rhythm from its origins to the present" (1991:36-37). He also observes that the "extended dip—with its variable numbers of unstressed syllables—is the feature that accounts for the strong-stress feel of Old English poetry" and argues further that while "all poetry in English and the other Germanic languages has strong stresses . . . what is special about strong-stress meter is the varying number of weakly stressed syllables between the heavy stresses—and the sense that the heavy stresses occur at equal intervals of time" (28).

Having considered what technology and the work of linguistic theorists and cognitive scientists can tell us about the objective qualities of the production of human speech and of the subjective qualities of the

perception of human speech, we must, in our efforts to restore the cadences of our ancient oral poetic text, return our attention to our modern oral performances of those few ancient lines. Can we really consider Robert P. Creed and Thomas M. Cable to be credible surrogates for that reluctant poet who long ago crept into a byre to avoid the psychological trauma of poetic performance?

As Jeff Opland has observed (1980:5),

The idea that a study of modern phenomena can inform us about past ages is not new: the great school of British folklorists, a group that included Alfred Nutt, Andrew Lang, and E. B. Tylor, perceived the potential value of a study of analogous phenomena and made it an integral part of their methodology.

In support of his own comparative study of the oral performances of contemporary Xhosa and Zulu eulogistic poets and the Anglo-Saxon oral poetic tradition, Opland quotes Tylor's comments in *Primitive Culture* (1871; *idem*):

Look at the modern European peasant using his hatchet and his hoe, see his food boiling or roasting over the log fire, observe the exact place beer holds in his calculation of happiness, hear his tale of the ghost in the nearest haunted house, and of the farmer's niece who was bewitched with knots in her inside till she fell into fits and died. If we choose out in this way things which have altered little in a long course of centuries, we may draw a picture where there shall be scarce a hand's breadth of difference between an English ploughman and a negro of central Africa.

While Tylor's nineteenth-century condescension to both English ploughmen and to the inhabitants of central Africa grates on late twentieth-century sensibilities, nonetheless the point is well-taken. "The student of a dead oral tradition can . . . find relevance in the study of living oral traditions" (Opland 1980:7), as has been demonstrated in the case of Anglo-Saxon studies by Opland's own work, as well as by the well-known comparisons of contemporary South Slavic oral epics to the ancient epic in Old English (and Homeric Greek), inspired by the groundbreaking work of Milman Parry and Albert B. Lord.²⁰

But, while the current study does rely on modern performance to illuminate ancient poetic practice, the modern performances are not those of practitioners of a living oral tradition like the Xhosa *imbongi* or the South

²⁰ See the summary of Parry-Lord research in Foley 1988.

Slavic *guslar*, but rather those of modern critics and scholars. Opland cites the archeologist Sir Leonard Woolley on the appropriateness of modern scholarly interpretations of ancient artifacts (8):

It might be urged that the man who is admirably equipped to observe and record does not necessarily possess the powers of synthesis and interpretation, the creative spirit and the literary gift which will make of him a historian. But no record can ever be exhaustive. As his work in the field goes on, the excavator is constantly exposed to impressions too subjective and too intangible to be communicated, and out of these, by no exact logical process, there arise theories which he can state, can perhaps support, but cannot prove: their proof will ultimately depend on his own calibre, but in any case they have their value as a summing up of experiences which no student of his objects and his notes can ever share.

Opland then argues that “it is precisely these [firsthand] ‘experiences’ of a scholar working in a thriving oral tradition that enables [*sic*] him to make reasonable assumptions about classical or medieval oral literatures” (8). While Creed and Cable have not immersed themselves in “thriving oral traditions” in the same way that Lord and Opland and other scholars who have followed Parry’s lead have done, nonetheless they bring to their performances of *Cædmon’s Hymn* many years of experience and experimentation with Old English prosody.

The present analysis is not the first time the performances of modern scholars have been used to comment on medieval texts. Betsy Bowden, in her recent book *Chaucer Aloud* (1987), used tapes by thirty-two Chaucer scholars (of which, it happens, I was one), made between 1979 and 1983, to “understand more precisely how early readers and current ones understand Chaucer” (4). She claims that these oral performances, “data unprecedented in literary studies, provide audible proof that Chaucer’s text does indeed sustain widely divergent interpretations by equally qualified readers.”²¹ Placing the birth of performance analysis in the 1970s, a birth “attended by an assortment of folklorists, rhetoricians, musicologists, actors, and

²¹ *Idem.* Bowden indicates that in 1980 Paul Zawadski, a member of the Speech Department of Pennsylvania State University, “put through a speech synthesizer several performances” of lines from *The Canterbury Tales*, which Bowden then analyzed for emotional content (10). In May, 1979, I gave a paper, “Sound Patterns in *Cædmon’s Hymn*: A New Methodology,” at the Fourteenth International Medieval Congress, Western Michigan University, in which I discussed, in very preliminary terms, the Visi-pitch analyses of Creed and Cable’s performances of *Cædmon’s Hymn* that form the basis for this study. Because of my demonstrated interest in the oral performance of medieval literature, Bowden asked me to be one of the readers for the *Chaucer Aloud* project.

linguists” (*idem*), Bowden notes that performance analysis has yet to develop a fixed methodology. She suggests that New Criticism is an appropriate source for the technical vocabulary needed to describe the aural effects of oral performance, since New Criticism is the “description of the performance each critic hears while silently reading the text” (5). While that statement may be arguable in the context of New Criticism, the role of oral performance in the study of Old English prosody is not arguable. Inevitably, every theory of Old English prosody rests on the oral performance of a modern critic, going back to Eduard Sievers, who must have pronounced to himself the lines of *Beowulf* in order to generate his famous five types.

Bowden also claims to “test ways of analyzing taped performances..., starting with scientific objectivity to make it entirely clear that science has no final solution” (4). After discussing what the field of oral interpretation can bring to performance analysis, Bowden observes that “oral interpreters presumably would shudder at a suggestion that machines be used to analyze truth and wisdom” (9). I too would shudder at such a suggestion. The Visipitch and its precursor, the sound spectrograph, can only provide an objective analysis of acoustic reality, of pitch, intensity, and duration, and as the work of the linguists and cognitive scientists cited above amply demonstrates, such raw data must be interpreted with due caution to appropriate ends.

Bowden refers to the work of Grant Fairbanks, who in the 1930s analyzed from wax records and films the performances of trained actors reading identical passages in order to determine the emotional content (grief, contempt, anger, fear, and indifference) of each reading. Following his lead, Bowden used analyses made by a “speech synthesizer” (it is not clear precisely what device is meant) of several performances of line 150 in the Prioress’ portrait and the Host’s reply to the Pardoner (*PardT* 955). Each performance apparently included eight readings of the passages in question, intended to demonstrate contempt, viciousness, joking, teasing, mocking, anger, calm insult, and thoughtful distaste.²² After examining the voiceprints, Bowden concludes that although each looks different, collectively they demonstrate only that “each Chaucerian’s voice has its own distinctive characteristics, including pitch” (10). She goes on to say that while “the speech synthesizer, linguists’ most advanced technology, may

²² It should be noted that Bowden’s explanation of her methodology is somewhat ambiguous. It is not clear, for example, whether the performers were told to convey these particular emotions, or whether Bowden listened to the performances and then labeled each as conveying this emotion or that.

compare two readings by the same person, . . . it simply does not display similarities in two readings when the same emotion is conveyed by different readers” (*idem*). It seems to me that Bowden’s essay into the world of technological analysis of human speech is qualified by her apparent expectations that acoustical reality and emotional expression can somehow be equated. The Visi-pitch (and similar devices) can provide us with reliable data on pitch, intensity, and duration; it cannot tell us anything about contempt, anger, and distaste.

Further, although Bowden is very much concerned about intention, she does not deal with the issue of perception, as we have seen a key factor in using technological data for any sort of literary interpretation. She observes (14):

A tape emits a pattern of sounds, put there by one human mind and voice and understood by a different human ear and mind. What about the potential gap between intention and execution, or the one between product and description? In the first case, the performer may intend one meaning but convey another; in the second, two listeners, each with different expectations, may construe what they hear differently.

The rest of Bowden’s introductory remarks enlarge on her question: are we not seeking, ultimately, Chaucer-the-man’s intended performance of Chaucer-the-author’s text, which creates the voice of Chaucer-the-pilgrim? Nowhere does she follow up on the problems with performance analysis inherent in the differences of human ears—and, most particularly—of human minds.

Just as, of course, we can never join the courtly audience depicted in the famous miniature (MS CCCC 61) as they gathered to hear Chaucer read *Troilus and Criseyde* aloud, so too we can never have the pleasure of hearing Anglo-Saxon poetry performed by the Anglo-Saxon *scop* who composed it. At best we can only indulge in the process that Dennis Tedlock calls “ethnopaleography,” a technique that “involves taking a text back to the descendants of those who produced it in order to draw analogies with contemporary spoken arts and obtain commentaries from contemporary readers” (1983:16). Tedlock applies this technique specifically to a Quiché Mayan text first transcribed in the sixteenth century that, when performed and commented on by a contemporary Quiché priest-shaman, immediately revealed layers of meaning hitherto unsuspected by scholars.

In the case of Anglo-Saxon poetic texts and performance techniques, we cannot expect, of course, to find in some isolated corner of England an

informant who has access to an unbroken poetic tradition. Because of the historical break in the continuity of Anglo-Saxon poetic tradition, students of Old English metrics (and of all other aspects of Anglo-Saxon culture) face problems in interpreting the scant and fragmentary evidence that has survived the more than 900 years since the Norman Conquest. Anglo-Saxonists have as a result all become accustomed to working under a burden of uncertainty, striving to develop the most defensible hypotheses possible from the tantalizing shreds of evidence we have inherited.

If then the *scops* have left no direct lineal heirs, we must conduct our own version of ethnopaleography by consulting the only heirs they have left: native speakers of Modern English, particularly those knowledgeable in Anglo-Saxon poetics. Although we do not have an unbroken chain of *scops*, we do have an unbroken chain of native speakers of English. It is necessary, however, to consider whether the language that has been passed down to us over the more than nine hundred years since the Norman Conquest does in fact retain, however altered, the essential phonetic contours of Old English.

In his recent book on the English alliterative tradition, Thomas M. Cable issues a warning that it may be anachronistic to speak, as he quotes Paul Fussell, of “our own Anglo-Saxon instinct to hear stress” and of “the powerful Germanic accents of the Old English language.” Cable in fact suggests that on the matter of stress-timing (as we have seen, a notion important to the discussion of the isochronicity of English) an examination of the “specific phonetic, phonological, and lexical structures that contribute to the impression of stress-timing” demonstrates that “Modern English is different from Old English on several counts.” The features that Cable cites as particularly relevant are the abundance in Modern English of reduced syllables and polysyllabic Romance lexical items (both rare in Old English) and the loss of phonemic length, “a central part of Old English phonology.” The reduction of unstressed vowels to schwa in Modern English heightens the difference between stressed and unstressed syllables, thus contributing to an increased impression of stress-timing. Polysyllabic lexical borrowings from Romance languages provide more opportunities for reduction to schwa than do words of Anglo-Saxon origin. Thus, the possibilities of such reduction are more limited in Old English than in Modern English. As for phonemic length, Cable cites R. M. Dauer, who pointed out that in stress-timed languages there is substantial difference in syllable length and goes on to observe that the “occurrence in English of long and short vowels and the relevance of phonemic length help to moderate these differences” (1991:31-32).

Despite Cable's important caveats, there is some evidence for a continuity of Old English poetic performance and metrical patterns, however changed, beyond the Norman Conquest and into our own day, thus enabling modern speakers of English to have some credibility as performers of Old English poetry. Indeed, Cable's underlying "assumption is that neither the rhythms of the English language nor the structure of the human mind has changed enough in ten centuries to make patterns that were perceptible then inaccessible to us now" (134).

In his 1969 essay "Old English Prosody," Samuel Jay Keyser explores the issue of the survival of Old English metrics in Middle English alliterative verse (specifically *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*) and in children's verse (nursery rhymes). Following the lead of Tolkien and Gordon, who claim in the introduction to their edition of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (*SGGK*) that "the structure of these [unrhymed] lines is similar to that of the OE alliterative verse from which it has descended through an unbroken oral tradition," Keyser proceeds to analyze the two meters, demonstrating that, by and large, even those differences in stress and alliterative patterns noted by Tolkien and Gordon are in fact overstated (352). In Keyser's view, the principal differences between the meters of *Beowulf* and of *SGGK* are that the Middle English meter permits five-stress lines and that all stresses in the Middle English poem can alliterate. Of possible significance in establishing a continuity of oral performance from Old to Middle English (and thence to Modern English) is Keyser's observation that the *Gawain*-poet follows the Germanic stress rule that assigns stress to initial syllables in the unrhymed alliterative stanzas and the Romance stress rule that assigns stress to the ultimate, penultimate, or antepenultimate syllable in the rhymed bob-and-wheel.²³ Thus, despite the changes in English brought about by contact with Norman French that Cable rightly calls to our attention, here is evidence that the original Old English (Germanic) patterns can survive beside the newer patterns developed after the Conquest.

Keyser then proceeds to establish a continuity in oral tradition from Old English through Middle English to Modern English by examining the nursery rhyme. Citing W. P. Lehmann's description of the Germanic poetic line—"There is no problem about the predominant elements of the line. These are four syllables, two in each half-line, which are elevated by stress, quantity, and two or three of them by alliteration"—Keyser elaborates on Robbins Burling's observation that "except for the

²³ See Halle and Keyser 1971 for a somewhat altered version of this theory.

alliterations, nursery rhymes and popular songs preserve the very characteristics that Lehmann considers to be exclusively ancient, and they appear to perpetuate a very old tradition” (355).

An example of a nursery rhyme relevant to a discussion of isochrony is “Pease Porridge Hot.” Arranged according to modern editorial conventions for Old English poetry, “Pease Porridge Hot” looks very much like two lines of Old English poetry (if, of course, one disregards the end rhyme—although end rhyme does very occasionally and perhaps coincidentally occur in Old English verse):

Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold,
Pease porridge in the pot, nine days old.

We can see here that each halfline (save the last) is a Sievers type E (/ \ x /). (The on-verse in the second line, unlike Old English halflines, has three alliterating syllables—as is possible in Middle English alliterative poetry.) We can also see that the halflines, like those of both Old and Middle English verse, are anisosyllabic. How are these lines customarily performed by children who are the inheritors of this little bit of ancient oral tradition? If my childhood memories are representative, this verse is always performed isochronously, childish chanting hastening over the three unstressed syllables “-ridge in the” and slowing perceptibly over the three consecutive stressed syllables “nine days old.” Thus, it might be argued that anyone who learned “Pease Porridge Hot” in infancy is the recipient of a long oral tradition stretching (maugré William the Conqueror) back to Cædmon and beyond, and is therefore not an unfit example for an ethnopaleographer’s attention.

Despite, then, the obvious shortcomings of modern performances of ancient oral poetic texts—and of any analyses of such performances, technologically assisted or not—I must agree with Dolores Warwick Frese’s comments on Robert P. Creed’s performance of *Beowulf* (1982:43):

Hearing may not be believing, as it was for the Abbess Hilda, but it is certainly essential to understanding any metrical or scansional idea. . . . We should not be quick to dismiss the importance of such ear-witnessing when we construct any history of theory of scansion for *Beowulf*. What goes down in scansion must first go up in performance, a concluding observation with which . . . Hilda would surely concur.

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Appendix A

Cædmon's Hymn (Northumbrian Version)
MS Cambridge, University Library, KK.5.16 (Moore MS)

Nu scylun hergan hefænricæs uard,
metudæs mæcti end his modgidanc,
uerc uulderfadur, sue he uundra gihuæs,
eci dryctin, or astelidæ.
He ærist scop ælda barnum
heben til hrofe, haleg scepen;
tha middungeard moncynnæs uard,
eci dryctin, æfter tiadæ
firum foldu, frea allmectig.

Appendix B

Reading Times in Seconds by Measure and Halfline

	<u>Cable</u>			<u>Creed</u>		
line 1	2.2	1.6	1.6	1.5		
	1.3	0.9	1.0	0.6	0.7	0.9
					0.9	0.6
line 2	1.9	1.6	1.6	1.4		
	0.9	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.9
					0.7	0.7
line 3	2.2	2.0	1.0	1.8		
	0.6	1.6	0.9	1.1	0.3	0.7
					0.5	1.3
line 4	1.9	2.1	1.6	1.6		
	0.8	1.1	0.8	1.3	0.5	1.1
					0.6	1.0

	1.5		1.8		1.3		1.7	
line 5	0.4	1.1	0.8	1.0	0.4	0.9	0.9	0.8
	2.1		2.1		1.8		1.9	
line 6	1.1	1.0	0.9	1.2	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0
	1.5		1.8		1.4		1.4	
line 7	0.5	1.0	1.2	0.6	0.5	0.9	0.9	0.5
	1.8		1.9		2.0		1.9	
line 8	0.7	1.1	0.9	1.0	0.9	1.1	0.9	1.0
	1.9		2.3		1.8		2.2	
line 9	1.0	0.9	0.6	1.7	0.9	0.9	1.1	1.1

“O Bride Light of My Eyes”: Bridal Songs of Arab Women in the Galilee

Mishael Maswari Caspi and Julia Ann Blessing

Introduction

Oral poetry is rapidly becoming a new field of interest for many scholars. Of particular interest are the problems of the whole tradition of oral transmission and the influence of oral tradition on written tradition. Though oral poetry was an acceptable form of literature in the past, it has been only recently recognized by scholars as a source for study of tradition in literature. Recognition came when the assumption that oral literature was produced largely by non-literate people was proven incorrect when applied to certain regions.

Among the Nabati in Arabia, for example, there are both literate and non-literate poets of oral tradition (Sowayan 1985). The same is true of the poets in Ladino, and among the women of the Yemenite communities of Israel (Armistead and Silverman 1982). The world today is a place where non-literate and literate peoples co-exist, and there are some indications that this co-existence inevitably leads to interaction between oral and written poetry. At the same time, the world is changing rapidly. Developing countries are increasingly becoming industrialized, and thus oral tradition is disappearing. Oral poetry is becoming scarce as a result of these changes, and traditional poets, who were once essential to the promulgation of oral literature, are depicted as primitive. Hence, folk literature, folk songs, and oral poetry are considered to be part of a lower stratum of society by many literary critics. However, if one delves into the history of Arabic poetry it becomes clear that it is not a product of inferior circles.¹ In early times the composition of oral poetry was a normative practice in most spheres of Arab culture and not necessarily linked to the aristocracy. Nor was poetry exclusively the domain of small circles who kept to themselves, but rather was regarded as a common form of expression by most of society. It is

¹ See, e.g., the special issue of *Oral Tradition* on “Arabic Oral Traditions” (4, i-ii, [1989]).

likely that the majority of individuals knew innumerable verses of poetry by heart.

The scholar who pursues the study of oral tradition first must ask the meaning of the term *oral*. Albert Lord suggests that oral poetry is a people's medium: "poetry composed in oral performance by people who can not read or write... as literacy spreads throughout the world at a now rapid pace, oral poetry is destined in time to disappear" (1965:591). Indeed, it is difficult to define the medium of oral poetry; however, it is generally accepted that the term designates poetry composed on location during actual performances. Some scholars give oral poetry an even broader definition by extending its meaning into the medium of epic narrative form.

This definition may be further developed by including the aspect of oral transmission. The mode of transmission is related to the mode of performance, one example of which has been described by Parry and Lord in their analysis of South Slavic epics. Although the possibility exists that the act of composition or the process will take place before the performance itself, in some traditions the singer may also choose to improvise or modify most of the prepared text prior to the actual performance. While oral transmission may be defined as the process of transmitting a song by word of mouth, it does not necessarily require that the exact text performed on location at one point will be performed in an identical manner in another place at another time. Indeed, this mutability is one of the artistic imperatives of oral poetry. Tradition allows for many versions of the same motif, while at the same time enriching the genre of oral poetry and helping to make it a universal medium. An example of two different versions of the same motif is found in a poem from Yemenite women in Israel and another from Arab women of the Galilee:

I do not want an old man
 Even if he shaves his beard
 And he cuts his mustache....
 I wish to have a young one
 To squeeze all the bones in me. (Caspi 1985:49)

I wish not an old man, I wish not
 His beard like a horse's tail
 I wish a young one
 His teeth like a file. (Caspi 1985:155)

Oral poetry is made more complex by virtue of the fact that the definition of the medium itself is unclear. We have suggested certain

characteristics: it is performed on location; it is passed on from one generation to the next via oral transmission; and improvisation is peculiar to its form. Yet we still have not fully defined what oral poetry is. It was in an effort to further understand the discipline and importance of the study of orality that we undertook field research in the Galilee. By collecting proverbs and bridal songs reflecting social phenomena of traditional and modern Arab culture, we could examine and discuss in detail the unique characteristics of oral literature, with specific focus on the ability of Arab women as singers to weave traditional with modern customs. This weaving allowed us to delve into the communicative qualities and contexts of oral literature exemplified in various festive events surrounding traditional, classic, and modern customs. In addition, it provided us with new and valuable insights about the nature of orality per se.

Aspects of Bridal Songs

From the day of marriage, a woman in Arab Galilee is in some ways considered the property of her husband; however, we must correct a misperception concerning this dimension of Arab society.² Generally speaking, Western society perceives Arab women as being bought by their husbands, an act that signals his ownership and control of her. This perception is highly superficial and is a result of certain studies conducted outside the field of women in Arab society. In addition, much of the information is misleading because it reflects nothing other than the viewpoint of the man in Arab society. Arab society is patriarchal and emphasizes the importance of the man in the family or tribe, but the common Western perception is a simplistic vulgarization of the true Arab family structure.

An Arab proverb states, “‘Al ’ibn mawlid, wal-job mardūd wal-’akh mafqūd” (“The son is born, the husband comes again, but the brother has no substitute”). This proverb adverts to the remaining traditional social structure of Arab society, emphasizing the dependence of the female upon her father during childhood, when she is under his protection. If the father dies, she is put under the protection of her first-born brother. In the case of his death, she is placed under the protection of another brother; and if she has no brothers, she is placed under the protection of her father’s brother

² The following section of this essay is revised from Caspi and Blessing 1991:16-37.

(*'Ammaha*). They are responsible for the woman, her honor, and her welfare; negotiations relating to her marriage can take place only with the man who is responsible for her. When the woman is married, her father (or the surrogate father) is no longer responsible and she is placed under the care of her husband. Should her husband die, she is then cared for by her sons. If she does not have any sons, or if they are still young, she returns to the protection of her father. (The same is also true if she divorces her husband.) Because of this rigid structure, most scholars tend to believe the woman passes from the protection of one man to another without any legal rights or recourse to legal action. Again, this is the perception of scholars who are familiar theoretically with what is depicted in the proverbs like the one above, but who have not lived within the Arab community or conducted field research in Arab society.

Proverbs like “*'al marah bala ḥaya kat'am bala milḥ*” (“a disgraced woman is like cooked food without salt”) or “*'al 'azāyah lil-marah min al-jannah*” (“the rod to the wife is from paradise”) circulate widely in the male society. These proverbs project men’s hidden fear of the power of women. From this perspective we propose that while men possess physical strength and consequently are responsible for family matters such as honor (particularly the honor of women), the spiritual and familial power of women is significant and becomes mystified under the physical strength of men. For example, the woman is in charge of everything that pertains to the household. She is glorified and praised for her talent in caring for and educating her children.

The following proverbs relate how a man is not required to ask his wife’s permission or consult with her in any regard: “*'an-niswan 'alahun nuṣ 'aql*” (“a woman has only half intelligence”) and “*'ily bism'a min'al-marah biḥuṭ qad thalātha*” (“he who listens to a woman’s advice pays three times more”). Once again the subliminal implication of these proverbs is the existence of a male society afraid of women, and because of this fear unable to relate to them in a positive and appreciative manner. Such proverbs, viewed by scholars from a theoretical standpoint and judged according to the values of the twentieth century, would fail to make manifest the underlying and paradoxical relationship between male physical strength/hidden fear and female spiritual strength/oppressive condition.

With relation to the tradition of bridal songs, it is important to note the manner in which men and women address one another in public and within the context of the family. The woman is required by societal values to respect her husband; thus, in public she calls him *ya-sidi* (“o, master”) or

ya-shaikh (“o, sheik”) or *ya-’ibn ‘ammi* (“o, my beloved cousin”).³ Sometimes she calls him by the name of her first-born son, *abu ‘Amar* (“the father of ‘Amar”). In public, the husband calls his wife *ya-marah* (“o, woman”) or *ya-masturta* (“the condemned one”) or *ya bint ‘an-nas* (“o, daughter of people”). Sometimes he even calls her *walid* (“unnamed woman”). When he refers to his wife outside of her presence, he adds to the expression the words *ba‘id minak*, meaning literally “far from you” and implying an apology on the part of the man for mentioning her name in conversation. At home the man may call her *’ukhti* (“my sister”), *bint ḥalal* (“a proper or distinguished woman”), *bint ‘ami* (“my beloved or my cousin on my father’s side”), or *ya shikka* (“a lady”). Sometimes he refers to her as the mother of his first-born, *’um ‘Amar* (“the mother of ‘Amar”). However, he does not call her the mother of ‘Amar in her presence; instead, he calls her *jarat baiti* (“the lady of the house”) or *’um ‘awladi* (“the mother of my children”). Such expressions denote the relationships between husband and wife and are used exclusively by them within the family, household, and public contexts.

Other proverbs affirming the importance of the role of the woman in keeping the family together include:

’Al joz wa’anah zawyah wal ‘ielah wa’anah ghaniyah,
’Al jiran wa’anah saḥiyah.

[With the husband I am strong, with the family I am rich, and with the neighbors I am generous.]

’An jai yashhad lil ‘arusa, ghair ‘umha
wakhālatha wa’asharah min haratha.

[Look who came to testify in favor of the bride: her mother, her aunt (from her mother’s side), and ten more members of her family.]

This last proverb alludes to the unreliability of testimony. It also suggests that one who associates with dubious people may become like those people. Furthermore, the proverb demonstrates the deep regard Arab society holds for familial relationships. In fact, because family relationships are regarded with such respect, not everyone who testifies in favor of the bride is considered a worthy source. To determine the validity of testimony, evaluation and judgment must proceed with great care. Priority in the

³ This last expression refers to the custom of marrying one’s cousin from the father’s side.

marriage process is always given to the family of the father. To insure an ideal arrangement, a cousin, either the daughter of the uncle from the father's side of the family (*bint 'ammo*) or the son of the uncle from the father's side (*'ibn 'amah*) is always considered first. The following Arab proverb supports this type of marriage arrangement and regards it as a blessing: “’ibn al ‘amm biqimaha min ’al faras” (“the cousin takes her off, even from the back of a horse”). This expression lays stress upon the fact that the cousin may take the woman off the back of the horse she is riding on the way to her groom's house. The idea is that the cousin has an inherent right to marry the woman if he so chooses, and he may do so in light of his own self-interest, disregarding any intentions of others. Another proverb strengthens this notion: “’awal hubāl ’ili ya’atī bint ‘ammo lr-rijal” (“only a fool among fools allows a stranger to marry his cousin”).

Marriage between relations represents a solution to the dilemma of class dynamics. In this way, the character and standing of the family members are clear to all. However, some of the complications relating to the marriage of women to other family members are expressed in many popular sayings that identify family troubles. For instance, the phrase “al banat jalabat” states simply that “daughters are problems.” Most often, the complications involve land inheritance. According to Islamic law, a woman receives half of the man's property with the exception of estates, which are not usually permitted to transfer from one family to another and so are redeemed with money. Another way to prevent an unlawful transfer is to arrange marriage between relatives, so that all the properties and possessions remain in the extended family. Overall, marriage between relations is restricted by certain rules: for example, a man is not permitted to marry his father's mother, mother's mother, sister, father's sister, mother's sister, niece of either his brother or sister, a woman that has nursed from his mother's milk, or the daughter of his wife while the latter is still living.

In an effort to prevent future difficulties within a family and because certain families may wish to extend and reinforce the friendship between themselves, some families declare the engagement of their daughter at birth or during her childhood. One well-known proverb observes, “maqṭu’ surrītaha ‘ala ’ismo” (“the child's umbilical cord was cut from the mother in the name of the declared husband”). In some cases, the event of the cutting is blessed by reading certain verses from the Quran. These customs endure for reasons pertaining to inheritance and/or economics. Occasionally a family does not wish the marriage of their daughter to another family member. The rationale for this stance is that the family does

not want to give up a substantial dowry, especially if their daughter is beautiful and healthy. Another technique for preventing an unwanted marriage is for a male member in the groom's family to demand a large sum of money that the bride's family cannot afford. Consequently, a marriage between a young woman and an old man is likely to occur because he can afford the sum requested; often such marriage arrangements are contrary to the will of the woman. Some balladic poems, distinguished by their happy endings, have been composed about these cases. Here are a few examples from this tradition:

Bidish 'al shaib bidish
 Lahyato danbat qdish
 Bidi 'al shabb
 'Isnāno zai al mibrad.

[I do not wish an old man, I do not wish
 His beard, like a horse's tail
 I wish a young one
 His teeth like a file.]

Bidish 'al shaib wlaw 'aṭ'amni 'asal
 Bidi 'al shabb law 'aṭ'amni bazal.

[I wish not the old man, even though he feed me honey
 I wish a young one, even though he feed me onion.]

The dowry was and continues to be a significant problem in Arab society. It is generally viewed as a form of appreciation and a way to honor the family of the bride-to-be, but in most instances the dowry is considered a burden. This is especially true in rural society because money and presents must be offered not only to the bride, the bride's family, and various relatives, but also to the honorable people and the matchmaker who successfully arranged the marriage. If the young woman is from another village, the custom is that presents should be given to the young men of her home village as a token of gratitude for allowing her to leave and marry someone else. All of these expenses are in addition to those of the customary feast and the wedding celebration, and prevent many young men from marrying. In Egypt our informants told us that such expenses cause migration of many young men to the cities, where the traditional customs no longer play such an important role. Another consequence of the exorbitant costs associated with weddings is seen in the proclivity toward incestuous relationships.

In some cases a man may be interested in marriage—“ḥaṭ ‘an waḥidah” (“he laid his eyes on her”)—but the woman’s family is not interested in him and they do not grant him this right. To effectively prevent him from marrying her, they triple the sum of the dowry. A popular saying images this situation: “ḥal bidosh y‘ati binto biyaghli mhārha” (“he who does not want to give his daughter in marriage increases her dowry”).

Ironically, among women there are sayings that express their desire to leave the father’s house. Many proverbs uttered by women disclose their preference for the household of their present or future husband as opposed to that of the father. Most likely, this attitude stems from the greater social and personal power a woman possesses in the household of her husband. Her power may not be apparent in public, but at home she undoubtedly sets the tone. Her authority relates not only to her status as mother, educator, and central mediator, but also as a member of the work force. In addition, she achieves recognition through the laws that entitle her to half of her husband’s estate in the case of death.

Another celebrated women’s proverb depicting her preference is “nar jozi wala jannat ‘abuya.” The implication and meaning of this saying is that the fire of her husband is better than the paradise of her father. Generally, however, the power of Arab women is not mentioned, and scholars have mistakenly thought of women in Arab society as degraded and devoid of any political and economic influence. Nevertheless, we suggest that proverbs and sayings divulge the true underlying nature of male-female relationships in Arab society. Many of the proverbs reflect social phenomena that are an integral part of Arab life, such as the saying “khud ‘al‘azīlah walaw ‘ala l’ḥazīrah” (“take the noble one even if she is on the mat of hay”). This phrase implies that it is ethically preferable to marry a woman of noble character, regardless of whether she comes from a rich family or a poor one. Although the above-mentioned proverb is a common one, there in fact tends to be a wide gap between its intended impact and reality.

The situations described above show that it is not rare for a father to request a large dowry, thereby preventing the marriage of his daughter. One outcome of this action was the development of exchangeable marriages, that is, a practice by which any unmarried female (daughter, sister, or cousin) may be exchanged for the daughter, sister, or cousin of another family. Such marriages do not require a dowry but rather a *siaq*, which is understood to include anything relating to clothing, jewelry, gifts, and the wedding feast, these items and expenses being most often the

responsibility of the groom. In this kind of marriage everything proceeds on an equal basis, and guidelines are provided concerning which items and expenses are exchangeable. For example, a female virgin, and/or a healthy woman, and/or a beautiful woman may be exchanged for a woman with the same characteristics. If such an exchange is not possible, then the two families will discuss the differences between the women, agree upon a sum of money as compensation, and subsequently one family pays the other to complete the exchange. If the marriage subsequently becomes difficult, a woman may choose to run away to the home of her father. She is then referred to as *hardānah*, which literally means a runaway. The husband then proceeds to take back the woman for whom his wife was exchanged. The saying that expresses this situation is “Fish ḥada ’ali yikhbizlahu” (“there is nobody to bake bread for him”). The only way to bring back the *hardānah* is by taking the exchanged woman away from her home.

Once a woman reaches the age appropriate to marriage, and if she is free from marital obligations, her name is circulated among the members of the community. In early times the names of the eligible women would be mentioned beside the local well, then considered a common meeting place. Sometimes her name is circulated prior to her readiness as seen in the proverb: “Dawer libintak kabl ma t’dawer la’ibnak” (“look for your daughter before you look for your son”). If a woman is sought by a man from the same village, and if she is known to be eligible for marriage, the man’s family may ask some honorable members of the community to conduct the appropriate negotiations. If she is from a distant village, the family begins by gathering information about her. As previously noted, special attention is paid to lineage in Arab society, as is evident in the proverb, “In kan ’abuha thum wa’umaha baḥal minen ar-riḥa ’il maliḥa?” (“if her father is a clove of garlic and her mother an onion, how can she be of a pleasant fragrance?”).

It is then the responsibility of the honorable community members to go to the village of the eligible woman and ask her parents for her hand in marriage. In the past this ceremony was conducted in a particular fashion in accordance with certain customs. More recently, we found the ceremony to have undergone significant changes. Most of the traditional rituals are no longer maintained, and those that are preserved are maintained in the interest of the family that desires the match. The proper response to the honorable members of the community is “she is still young and has time before she needs to be considered for marriage.” This answer is an element of the negotiating process and is understood as a sign of respect to the woman and her family. In fact, those who approach the family requesting

the woman's hand in marriage do so not once but a few times, with the negotiations continuing until an agreement is reached concerning the dowry, jewelry, and expenses for the wedding feast. The bride-to-be has no say concerning these matters and no right to interfere in the negotiation process; in the past she was not even aware of the man chosen to be her husband. In urban society today the prospective couple tend to know each other well, and even in rural areas they are familiar with each other from the village or school.

In one village where we conducted our fieldwork we heard a description of the negotiating process related to us by elderly informants who remember the tradition well. They observed that young people today meet each other at social events like weddings, visitations, and school. Years ago they met at the local well, but modern plumbing eliminated the need for wells and the tradition lost its relevance. Initiation of the marriage process as a parental responsibility, however, is still the rule today. Some villages now allow limited visitations by a man to the family of an eligible woman, on the condition that such meetings are held in the presence of her relatives. When the parents of a young man decide to request the hand of an eligible woman in marriage they must speak with her parents. Usually the following manner of addressing the woman's parents is employed:

The man's parents: "We respectfully ask for the hand of your daughter to marry my son [his name], and hope that they will have good luck to live together."

The woman's father responds:

"Give me time to get some advice and think."

The woman's father does not give the final word immediately; if he did, it would be considered a sign of disrespect to his daughter and the entire family. The next step is the father's advising his wife and daughter of the marriage proposal. He then discusses it with his brothers. If he and his brothers agree to the proposal, then upon the return of the prospective groom's parents, approximately a week later, he says to them: "You have luck with her. It was decreed that we will be relatives." At the same meeting they agree upon a day to announce the engagement. On this day the man's parents and some guests come to the house of the woman and ask the woman's father to declare his agreement to the marriage before those assembled. Next, the groom chooses his best man and the bride selects her maid/matron of honor. Both the best man and the maid/matron of honor

hold jars in their hands while the *imam* (religious leader of the community) reads some verses from the Quran. In this way *'al 'aqid*, the betrothal, is confirmed and the engagement is made formal. Interestingly, the only element necessary to complete their marriage is a prayer recited at the wedding ceremony. After the engagement ceremony is finished, sweets are distributed and the party leaves for the groom's father's house. Some families employ another ceremony called *fathah*, "connection" or "binding," a technique used for the benefit of the bride and groom to get to know one another better. It is a special ceremony and common to the Druse community.

The amount of the dowry depends largely on the bride's parents. As previously noted, the dowry generally continues to be an issue of great importance in Arab society. This is not the case, however, in the Druse community, where the social and religious norm is that the father has no right to request the dowry himself. Traditionally and currently, the families agree jointly upon the details, including the sum of money to be given to the bride-to-be; she then uses this sum to purchase items she will need in the future. In addition, the families agree upon a sum that will be paid to her in case of divorce. In some cases, the family may request *zdaq raqbatha*, literally a "fee for the bride's neck." An agreement is reached whereby approximately one third of the woman's *mhar* or dowry goes to the father, brother, or other family members who serve as her guardians. In recent years the Druse and Christian custom of giving the entire dowry to the bride has significantly influenced the Muslim tradition. As a result, the custom of the father receiving a third of the dowry is no longer the norm. Once again, all negotiations are conducted by the parents of the bride and groom with the guests as witnesses.

In Druse society there is a difference between *'al 'aqid* and the *fathah*: the former is a promise of marriage, while the latter is read aloud, signaling "these two young people are bound temporarily (until their marriage) in order that they may get to know each other better and decide whether or not to marry." Once they decide to marry, the groom's parents call upon several honorable members of the community, along with their own relatives, to accompany them to the house of the bride, where the *'al 'aqid* is confirmed. Afterwards the entire group follows the bride to the groom's house. This ceremony does not include the wedding feast, which is held after the couple's home is ready and fully furnished. The period of betrothal usually lasts anywhere from six months to two years. In rural Arab society the marriage ceremony or *'aqid al-khitbah* is performed by the *imam*, the *sheikh* of the village, or the *qadi* (religious teacher) of a

nearby town. Some communities conduct *al-khitbah* on the same day as *'al-'aqid*. Others choose to perform the ceremony, *'al-'urs*, in a quiet setting in the presence of only a few guests. The reasoning behind this latter type of ceremony is avoidance of the evil eye (a symbol of bad luck).

The following is a description of a wedding ceremony:

The father, the brother, the uncles, the religious leader, and the guests who serve as witnesses approach the bride's room and ask her: "Do you wish to marry this man?" They expect her to answer, "Yes." (In some remote places where this ceremony is performed, they pinch the bride until she answers, "Yes.")

The second question asked the bride is: "Whom do you appoint to arrange the betrothal?" She answers, "You, my father" (or brother, or uncle). This part of the ceremony is repeated three times.

Next, they turn to the person who was appointed by the bride and ask him:

"Do you agree to marry this bride and groom?" He responds, "Yes," and this part of the ceremony is also repeated three times.

At this point they turn to the groom's family and ask the father:

"Do you wish your son to marry this woman?" He responds, "Yes, I do." This is repeated three times.

Now they turn to the witnesses and ask:

"Have you heard these words? Can you act as witnesses to what you have heard?" The witnesses respond, "Yes" three times.

Then the religious leader confirms these vows in writing by requesting the signatures of the bride, the groom, and the witnesses upon the marriage document, after which he reads certain verses from the Quran.

In some areas it is customary for the groom's father to present the bride's father with the *hudum* (clothing and other gifts). From this time forth, the bride is considered the groom's wife and he is permitted to take her to his home. This bond can be broken only by the husband in the presence of a religious leader/teacher or as a result of the death of one of the partners. After the marriage ceremony, if the man must travel far from the village the woman must stay in her father's home until he returns. If he does not return, she must remain at the father's house until witnesses can

confirm that her husband has died.

Before the wedding feast is held, families spend time gathering enough money to buy gifts, clothing, and jewelry for the bride's family, the honorable guests, and the negotiators. Careful attention is paid to the preparation of linens, blankets, featherbeds, rugs, and jewelry, which most often includes necklaces, bracelets, rings, and earrings. In some areas it is customary for the groom to bring the bride *hirğah* or *mandıl*, a veil or kerchief made from blue or colorful silk. It is used to cover the woman's head and extends down her back to the waist. To demonstrate his love for the bride, the groom ties the fringes of her veil, symbolizing their bond. The bride shows her love for him by embroidering a purse made of silk or velvet, which he uses to store his *kufiya* or head dress. Likewise, she ties the fringes of his head dress as a sign of their bond.

Traditionally, the bride's wedding dress is very colorful; in contrast, it is not unusual to see the modern bride in white. This is another sign of the changes occurring in contemporary Arab society. Characteristic of the Persian Gulf area is the bride clothed in green with embroidery from the neck of the dress to the waistline, and from the sleeves to the thighs. In some villages it is customary to wait for the groom while he goes to a large city to buy presents for the bride and her relatives. Upon his return they stand in front of him with a *zarifah*, a beautiful doll, dressed in women's clothing—a custom performed to confuse *shiṭan* or *iblis*, Satan, and to prevent him from harming the bride or groom's family. Here is the song the wedding party sings on this day:

'Arisana ya nas
min qal 'anu 'aşmar
'Aṭra min jibnah
Wa 'aḥla min sukkar.

[Our groom, o men
Who said he is black?
Fresher (he is) than cheese
Sweeter than sugar.]

'Arisana ya nas
min qal 'anu shan
'Aḥla min sukkar
wa 'aḥla min qutein.

[Our groom, o men
Who said he is ugly?
Sweeter (he is) than sugar

Sweeter (he is) than dry figs.]

When all preparations are complete and all arrangements concerning the dowry, gifts, house, clothing, and furniture are in order, the wedding feast is held, generally at the end of the summer season. In accordance with the lunar calendar, it is held at the time of the crescent moon; as the moon increases within its cycle it symbolizes the increase of good fortune, abundance, and plentifulness of the newly married couple. The wedding itself is also an opportunity for relatives from many places to come together and meet one another. Indeed, weddings are very important family events, and in spite of the tremendous expense involved it is considered an honor to attend one. The night before the ceremony, known as *lail al ḥinna*, it is customary for the family of the bride to stand beside the entrance to the house and welcome the guests. Women arrive wearing their finest clothing and adorned in their most expensive jewelry and carrying money in their hands in the form of bills or gold and silver coins. They spread the money over the bride's clothing and put coins in the henna dough to bless each other and be blessed by the wedding ceremony. On this day the bride is seated in what is called *al-higleh*, a room enclosed by curtains made from velvet or silk and adorned with gold. Usually the women arrive at the bride's house following the evening prayers. They are greeted with sweets, and the hosts spray the female guests with perfume—a sign that they are welcome. Spraying perfume is an old practice that still exists in Arab communities in Saudi Arabia, the Persian Gulf, Morocco, and other regions where the sense of this tradition still prevails in the midst of modernization. The common theme for songs on this evening is love:

ya nur, ya nur, ya nur 'inaya
raḥat ya nur tistaki 'alaya

[O light, light, light of my eyes
She went, o light, to complain about me]

Another song:

She took off my white (garment) and wore hers
Went to the *qadi* to complain about me
She took off my yellow (garment) and wore hers
Went up, the beautiful one, to adorn herself
She took off my blue (garment) and wore hers
And almost drowned in the sea of Tiberias.

A song peculiar to certain places (Caspi and Blessing 1991:29):

Do not go up the stairs, o henna box
 Do not believe the bachelors, they are from us
 Do not go up the stairs and ask about me
 The fire of love, uncle, is from paradise
 Do not go up the stairs, o coffee tray
 Do not believe the bachelor, he is lusty.

In some places it is customary to hire a special band to sing and orchestrate the evening. The character and reputation of the band depends upon the status of the family. If the family is respected and wealthy, the band tends to be well-known, reflecting the prestige of the family; if they are not wealthy, the women of the village conduct the evening. In some Arab villages the guests spread henna on the bride's hands and feet: in the Persian Gulf, Saudi Arabia, northern Yemen, and a few other areas, it is customary to paint delicate and beautiful designs on the back of the bride's hands and feet. Besides the placing of the coins in the henna dough, it is sometimes customary to adorn the henna with green leaves of *alias*, a fragrant plant found in the Persian Gulf. In the groom's house the same ceremony is performed; however, the henna is placed on his hands and feet only symbolically to represent his participation in the happiness of his bride. Today such customs have all but disappeared as a result of the influence of modernity, or they have been altered in some way as reported to us by an elderly person from the village of Ġasr al Zarqa near Zihkron Ya'akov in Israel, where some brides still dip their hands in the henna dough but cover them with plastic to keep from getting "dirty."

If the bride comes from far away, then she and her assembly leave the village the morning after the *lail al ħinna*. In the past it was natural for them to leave in the morning because they traveled by camel or donkey; today they leave by car. Before they depart it is customary to break an egg on the head of the animal or the top of the car, an act symbolic of sending away the *iblis* (Satan). In some places they slaughter chickens for the same purpose. After breaking the egg they walk through the streets of the village singing. If they come to a house of one who is in mourning, they stop singing temporarily as a sign of respect. Long ago, when they reached the village of the groom, it was customary for the bridal procession to request gifts for an uncle or another respected individual whose name did not appear on the "appropriate" list. Such requests were considered a sign of the procession's respectful disposition as well as an indication that the bride was not from a household of common people. At this moment the bride's

father would say:

'innana ma 'a'aṭanakish linas ḥa-yalla
'innana 'a'aṭinaki linas masium 'alaihūm

[We have not given you just to people (common folk or people of low social stratum). We have given you to honest and important people.]

The bride would respond:

ya ba wasa' bab betak liziarat wa-lilḥardāneh

[O father, open the gate of your home to visitors and to the runaway.]

The implication of the bride's response is that should she run away from her husband, her father will accept her into his household and protect her. The father would answer:

beti wasi' ubabu wasi'

[My house is open and its gates are wide.]

In some places the bride's uncle (the father's brother) approaches her and says, "Ride without fear as long as I wear my *kufiyah* and I have a long sword." After this dialogue some women offer advice concerning what to do and how to behave in a new place. Mostly, they emphasize that the bride should be obedient and respectful toward her mother-in-law.

The morning after the *lail al ḥinna*, the groom's parents go to the mosque and write down the marriage agreement known as *mulkah*, recorded in the presence of the *imam* and the bride's family. From this day forth, the woman is considered the man's lawfully wedded wife. This day is called *dukhlah*, meaning the entrance; the bride is entering another realm in her life. The first night of married life is called *lail al-dukhlah*, denoting the first night she enters her husband's house. In some villages, like Uman, it is customary to lead the bride from her father's house to the house of the groom while she carries the Quran on top of her head. When she enters the house, her feet are washed with perfume to symbolize steadiness in married life. One of the guests, usually the *sheikh* of the village, then reads verses from *Surat al-Nur (The Light)* in the Quran (Sura no. 24). If the bride comes from the same village as the groom, she is placed on the back of a horse driven by the groom; however, if she is a widow or divorcee, this ritual is not allowed. Due to the influence of modern technology, a car

substitutes today for a horse, and the bride rides on top of the car, which is adorned, and is driven around the village. In the past it was customary for the groom to step on her foot when she entered his house after the ride. This was done to demonstrate his authority in the household. Then many people would pour water or perfume on the bride's foot as a symbol of abundance and blessing. During the first days of married life both husband and wife remain at home. (It should be noted that in the village this period corresponds to the time between reaping the grain and plowing the earth for a new season.) While the husband takes a break from his work and enjoys his vacation, the wife begins her work at home. One week after being married she returns to her father's home for a visit. This custom seems to have been developed to give her time to adjust to life in her new house and to the family of the groom.

Motifs in the Bridal Song

The songs that are sung before the bride employ different motifs. Most of these songs point to the separation of the bride from her parents' home, family, and friends. Some contain only a single line and some are composed of a few lines. Characteristic of most songs is their shortness and expression of sadness and joy; separation causes sorrow, while anticipation of a new home, family, and praise brings joy. In Arab society, marriage is considered a serious event and an obligation everyone must fulfill; bachelorhood is condemned and viewed as shameful. A man must marry; consequently, the women receive a great deal of attention from men. Special attention in the form of passionate love is not expressed in public, however, such affairs remaining confined to the privacy of the home.

Motifs depicting the nature of love in society are common to Arabic poetry. For example, during the henna ceremony (where the bride and groom are anointed with henna), several songs are recited that describe the joy of the bride and the honor of greeting the wedding guests. At the same time these songs include the theme of sorrow over her separation from the family. This duality is exemplified in the following song:

O mother, o mother, gather the pillows and
leave the house
I have not said farewell to my sisters

Other songs serve as a warning to look out for those who might be jealous and wish to cause a separation of the newly married couple:

He lowered his eyes and stretched his arm
 They will anoint him with henna
 His loins (waist) are narrow and with a kerchief
 they wrap him
 O my beautiful one, he who separates us will be blind

In other songs concerning the night of the henna, the motif of leaving the house is prominent:

Do not go out of my house, the wind from the west
 Do not go out, o my beloved, you hurt my heart
 Do not go out, o spoiled one, o spoiled one
 Do not go out of my house, the wind from the east
 Only death and separation hurt one's heart

Another song says:

Tears will not help you
 And if there is a nail in your father's house
 Take it and bring it with you

While the groom takes part in his own henna ceremony, his name is mentioned in the house of the bride. The following song describes him as one who bends down to pluck flowers:

Tonight they anoint the groom, o peace and halo
 Open the garden's rose, o groom, at night

Or:

Tonight they anoint the groom, o Na'im
 Open the garden's rose, o groom, pick it up

The bride is described in the above songs as a flower about to be plucked (deflowered) by the groom. An informant from the village of al-Yamin in the district of Jenin in the West Bank described the special beauty of the bride as follows:

Arise and ride, arise the one with the kerchief
 Your hair is long, cover the street of Jenin

Arise and ride, o bride, the car⁴ is waiting here

This song is sung the day the wedding procession leads the bride to the groom's house. The motif of the car is seen in another song reflecting the modern influences on Arab society:

Your father is the *sheikh* of the village
I do not think he will be obstinate
Arise and ride, o bride, the car is waiting

Your father is the town's *sheikh*, he is not stubborn
Arise and ride, o bride, o white one⁵
And your hair is long, cover the street

The dualism mirroring the sorrow of separation and the joy in the virtues associated with the woman's role as wife and mother is seen in this song:

With peace, o sweet one, the road on the right
We did not say farewell to you and return months ago
We did not branch off from you in Beirut, o beautiful
The beloved and beautiful one, worth of two thousand⁶
We did not branch off from you in Haifa

The assembly waits for the bride at the entrance to the house, and upon her arrival the singers greet her as follows:⁷

Arise with us, o bride, they are waiting for you
The candles and the crowd waiting by the gate
Arise with us, o bride

⁴ The car functions as an image of modernity, an example of the singer's improvisation.

⁵ Refers to her beauty.

⁶ Refers to the dowry.

⁷ Recorded in an Arab Christian village.

in the life of your uncle⁸
 Your groom, the moon,⁹ is waiting for you
 by the church

The above song seems to be sung to hasten the process of separation of the woman from her family. The groom's family usually emphasizes their concern about the length of time the entire process takes, and the family of the bride then responds with a song:

Peace with you, she who leaves us
 O dear and beloved one
 Tell us what you wish to have
 And she will not live far from us
 God will please you with blessings
 And He will arrange life for us

Songs like this one are still sung in villages of the Galilee and some larger towns, and through such songs the people have managed to preserve the spirit of antiquity. Indeed, one of the unique characteristics of oral poetry is its ability to retain the vitality of the past while adapting to modern ideals. Folk traditions passed from one generation to the next are apparent in the motifs of this very visual song:

The lions in the forest call upon (Maḥmud)¹⁰
 He does not resist and continues to ride
 He rides the horses of glorious Abu Dhill

The song above compares the groom to the legendary character, Abu Dhill, with the implication that the rider (groom) is a courageous warrior and an extremely valiant horseman.

On the day of the wedding, the mother of the bride is an especially happy woman. From this day forward the daughter's every action is a reflection of the mother's success as nurturer, educator, and preparer of the daughter as wife and mother. The importance of the mother is reflected in the motif of the "queen" in the following song:

⁸ The father's brother.

⁹ An image of beauty.

¹⁰ Refers to his bravery and courage.

O the bride's mother, o the queen
 The pearl in the net
 Let us bless our bride

Next the groom's family turns to the bride's mother and the bride herself prepares to leave the house of her father. Prior to her exit both the groom's family and the guests bless the bride's family for the honor they have received in the bride's house:

Thank you and God will increase your health
 We wish not to have any relatives but you

Another important motif that recurs throughout bridal songs is the one expressing the relationship between the mother and daughter, which in Arabic poetry knows no geographic boundaries. For example, the Arab poet Ibn al-Khafilib writes:

O mother, so am I made miserable
 Yet my lover lives in my vicinity

Interestingly, similar descriptions of this type of relationship are found in the oral poetry of many cultures. Consider this passage—

O my mother, I wish I could be
 A chip in your pile of wood
 When the woodcutters come back from the forest
 Ask them: "Where is my daughter?"

—or:

O mother who bore me
 Your heart knows me no more!
 Is it because of the distance
 Or the sons that you since bore?

In another poem the mother is represented by the speaking voice:

Said the mother of the daughters,
 "O, I wish I would die,
 I raised the daughters—
 They were plucked from my garden."

From the examination of proverbs, and in particular of traditional,

classical, and modern motifs in the bridal songs, our thesis concerning the duality and true underlying nature of male-female relationships in Arab society becomes visible. Many of the proverbs reflect social phenomena in Arab society. On the surface women appear to be passive objects with a total lack of identity; underneath that superficial appearance, however, women are honored and appreciated by men, and praised by family relations. They control their lives in light of tradition. As for the bridal songs, in weaving together joy and sorrow they constitute an inseparable part of both wedding customs and associated festive events. And alongside the traditional practices there is a new and dynamic reality in Arab society as expressed in the motifs of modernity. The recently inaugurated custom of hiring a band to entertain the guests at the wedding celebration, as opposed to the tradition of the active wedding party, is among one of the many changes seen in rural society today. We may question whether these developments will eventually lead to the disappearance of the traditional Arab wedding. Are such developments a foreshadowing of the changes in the tradition of oral poetry? One young informant named Rudaina 'Uthman Abu Yunis summed up the situation in the following words: "In our village of Sakhnin, in which two communities live, one Christian and one Muslim, we still try to preserve the early traditions. There are still women who learn to sing the folk songs by heart, and they pass these songs on to those who are interested. I do not know how long this will last, but as long as the tradition exists, let us keep it."

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Sowayan 1985

Saad Abdullah Sowayan. *Nabati Poetry*. Berkeley:
University of California Press.**Appendix: Bridal Songs**

1.
 Spread the henna O mother spread it
 Light the candle and dance with me
 Spread the henna over me O mother with perfumed leaves
 My beloved will go tomorrow and won't come back
 I seek that one who is the only son of his mother
 And who has no sister
 To put me on his bed
 And all night long he plays with me
 I want one Jew to play for me the *ud*¹¹
 One who will put his arms on my arms
 And all night long he'll play with me
 Spread the henna with *na'na*¹²
 My beloved one goes and has not come back
 And still has not come back yet

2.
 Your brightness O bride is beyond compare
 And your groom O bride there is no one like him
 At night he comes and goes alone¹³
 What else could you want O cherished one?
 I wish for you long life and health
 I will be your hiding place all my life

3.
 Let the cherished bride step softly
 She is the beloved and favored of her uncles

Let the bride walk in honor
 She is precious to her brothers

¹¹ A stringed musical instrument.

¹² Mint leaves.

¹³ Implies bravery in watching over her each night.

Let her walk on the magic carpet of the sky
She is the virtuous daughter of her esteemed father

Let the bride be carried on the sea
She is the most dear to her mother

Let her walk upon the ground
How dear the bride to her family

Set the adorned carpet beneath her feet
She is the honored one so dear

4.
Light of my eyes
Your groom is worthy and you are beautiful

She wore the maxi dress then took it off
And stepped into the decorated taxi
She set aside the dress, olive green
Then put it on once more
And came into my house, this elegant one

She took off the dress, deep blue
Then put it on again
And almost drowned in Tiberias Sea

The white dress lay at her feet
She drew its splendor about her again
And went to the judge to complain about me

5.
We have brought the taxi, arise O fragrant one
I am afraid for you even from the perfume and the fragrance

We have brought the taxi, come out O beautiful one
I tremble at your beauty, from jealous eyes

We have brought the taxi, arise O cherished one
I am afraid you'll get wet in the morning dew

6.
Tell the groom's mother to spread the tapestry

They told a bride¹⁴

The bride is passing by¹⁵
Tell his mother to prepare the room

The gracious bride is passing by
Perfume the chairs with fragrance and henna
The bride is coming to us

7.
Dance O beautiful one¹⁶ O daughter of the honorable one
Dance *taghlayah*¹⁷

Arise and go on to your bed
Arise and get out of your bed

The dove sings for you O bride
The dove sings for you O bride

Come on and keep walking
And my eyes will follow you

Your groom hired someone to build a shower for you
And put a faucet in every room

Arise so we may see your height
O the one with the watch and the glasses

Your groom hired a wagon with a horse
O beautiful

8.
O light O light of my eyes

¹⁴ The text suggests singing the particular name of the bride who is to marry.

¹⁵ The singer mentions the name of the groom.

¹⁶ The text twice suggests *allah*, which we translate “O beautiful,” since in this context it is not the name of God but an exclamation relating to her beauty.

¹⁷ A dance in which the women hold small candles and dance around the bride while she dances with two long candles held in her hands.

Your groom is worthy and you are beautiful
She took off the white dress and put it on
And went to the judge to complain about me
She put on the blue dress and took it off
She almost drowned in the lake of Tiberia
She put on the green dress and took it off
She walked by my house, that pretty one

9.

O mother O mother Gather my pillows
I went out of the house and did not say goodbye to my sisters
O mother O mother Gather my handkerchiefs
I went out of the house and did not say goodbye to my friends
O mother O mother Gather my pillows
I went out of the house and did not say goodbye to my loved ones

Homer and the *Roland*: The Shared Formular Technique, Part II

William Merritt Sale

In the last issue of *Oral Tradition*, (8/1 [1993]: 87-142), I outlined the history of statistics as it has been applied to the study of Homer and the *Song of Roland*, and continued the application by making, at some length, the following three points:

1. We can define the term “formula” in a way that is consistent with Milman Parry’s definition, but more precise, more useful to statistics, and employ it for both Homer and the *Roland* without alteration or adjustment as we go from one author to the other. A formula for our purposes is a noun-verb or noun-epithet phrase that is either a) exactly repeated (same words, same grammatical case, same place in the line of verse), or b) repeated with slight variations (different position in the verse, extended by an added word, inflected, having its parts separated or inverted), or c) partly repeated by including a generic epithet or verb (a word used in identical metrical circumstances with at least two nouns of the same metrical shape), or d) partly repeated by including a patronymic. We then distinguish “regular formulae” from “infrequent formulae”: regular formulae are exactly repeated six times or more in a given poem; infrequent formulae are either exact repetitions occurring less often, or formulae that are repeated inexactly in certain precisely defined ways. Armed with these definitions, we isolate 190 nouns in Homer (113 in the *Iliad*, 77 in the *Odyssey*), and 22 nouns in the *Roland* that display at least one regular formula; we also construct a Homeric set of 70 nouns, closer in size to the *Roland* set, and base our comparisons on all three sets. We then calculate the percentage of formulaic occurrences (out of total occurrences) for all the nouns thus isolated, and discover that the nouns in Homer have about the same formularity as those in the *Roland*; most of the Homeric nouns cluster around 74.8% formularity, those in the *Roland* around 70.5%. This fact enables us to construct linear equations for each of our three sets (Homer’s 190 and 70 nouns, the *Roland*’s 22) relating **formulaic occurrences** and **total occurrences** (the bold print is used when the phrases

refer specifically to mathematical variables). These equations indicate a very high correlation in each set between the two variables; also the parameters (slope and y-intercept) of the Homeric equations are very nearly the same as those of the *Roland* equation. We can feed data for **total occurrences** for the *Roland* into the Homeric equation, and come up with close predictions of the **formulaic occurrences** that each of the nouns in the *Roland* will display.

2. We can also construct equations that enable us, following a similar procedure, to predict, also from **total occurrences**, the number of **different formulae** that each noun in the *Roland* (or, if we choose to go the other way round, in Homer) will display. These equations, though still linear, are more complex and entail the introduction of new variables, but the predictions are extremely close. We note that variations in the number of **different formulae** from one noun to another are mostly due to variations in the number of **infrequent formulae**; most nouns tend to display between one and three different **regular formulae**, and no more. From this observation we can argue that a considerable number of infrequent formulae were coined in the course of a given performance.

3. We can then plot a **formulae-occurrences** curve for Homer: the x-axis reads, "formulae that occur once only, that occur twice, that occur three times, etc.," and the y-axis gives the appropriate number of formulae for each place on the x-axis: 673 formulae in Homer occur just once, 490 occur twice, 194 occur three times, and so on. The resulting curve is not linear, but hyperbolic: there is a very sharp left-hand tail, a bend that runs from $x = 6$ to $x = 11$, and a very gradually descending right-hand tail. This hyperbola confirms the decision to use "exactly repeated 6 times" as our quantitative criterion for a regular formula, and enables us to set out qualitative criteria as well: regular formulae mostly fall in a major colon (1-5, 1-5.5, 5-12, 5.5-12, 7-12, 8-12, 2-8, 3-8), are noun-epithetic, and meet frequent needs; infrequent formulae mostly meet needs that we can demonstrate to be rare; infrequent formulae that meet needs that arise frequently are classified as "accidental infrequent formulae." If we subtract from our totals the non-accidental infrequent formulae, the formulae that meet needs that are demonstrably rare, we no longer have a hyperbola but a gently descending, uneven linear curve; the hyperbolic nature of the hyperbola is due to the non-accidental infrequent formulae, those that address demonstrably rare needs.

In an appendix to this first portion of the article I described in detail how infrequent formulae in Homer come into being.

VI. The Formulae-Occurrences Curve in the *Roland*

In turning to the *Roland*, we are looking for a hyperbola to confirm the distinction between regular formulae and infrequent formulae, and this is what we get on Graph F-O5. (The numbers on the x-axis give the scale; they do not correspond to any points on the graph.) To make the graph clearer, I have omitted $x = 0, y = 299$, that is, non-formulaic occurrences, which obviously would occur where we expect it to if we had included it. The equation for this curve is $y = 122/x - 10.1, r = .97, s = 7.0$.

Graph F-O5 : Formulae-occurrences curve, *Roland*

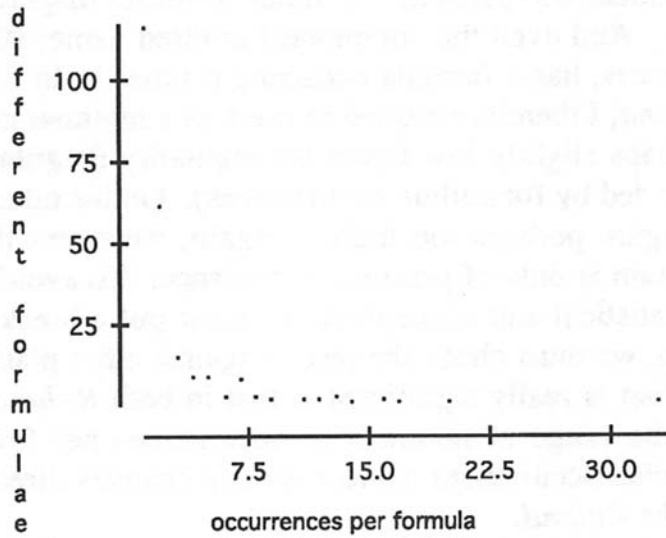


Table F-O5: Formulae-occurrences, *Roland*

x:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	20	33
y:	116	62	15	9	9	3	8	3	2	0	2	2	3	1	0	2	1	1	1

The range for the minimum number to determine a regular formula is evidently from $x = 4$ to $x = 8$. Before encountering this curve, I had thought that a lower minimum of 4 occurrences for regular formulae would be appropriate for the *Roland*, which is only a third the length of the *Odyssey* and a fourth the length of the *Iliad*. And a minimum of 4 can be defended, as we can see from the figures on Table F-O5. There is a

flattening after $x = 4$ that corresponds precisely to the flattening after $x = 6$ on the Homeric 190-noun hyperbola; and the rather sharp drop (from 9 to 3) between $x = 5$ and $x = 6$ is very like the steep drop between 7 and 8 on the Homeric hyperbola. Moreover, several *Roland* formulae that occur 5 times look like formulae that would have occurred more often in a longer poem: “ço sent Rollant,” “Guenes li quens,” “ço dist Marsilie,” “arcevesque Turpin,” and just possibly “paien s’en fuient.” Of course looks can deceive: there is a fair number of formulae in Homer that look as if they ought to occur frequently and do not (see Sale 1989:392). Against the choice of 4 as a minimum number is the fact that the curve reaches a bottom at $x = 6$; the fact that in a relatively short poem such as the *Roland* the minimum of 6 is even plausible is most arresting. It is also striking that if we do choose 6 for a minimum, all the character names in the nominative that occur often enough for statistical comparisons (13 times or more) display at least one regular formula. And even the commonest omitted name, Blancandrin(s) with 12 occurrences, has a formula occurring 6 times.¹ In organizing the data for the *Roland*, I therefore elected to use 6 as a minimum; this decision produced a perhaps slightly low figure for regularity (**regular formulaic occurrences** divided by **formulaic occurrences**). On the other hand, using 5 produced a figure perhaps too high.² Again, we stress that the *exact* choice of minimum is only of practical importance. To avoid burdensome complexities, statistical and conceptual, we must put a break somewhere; and when we do, we must check the results against other plausible choices in any case. What is really significant is that in both *Roland* and Homer there is a definite range of numbers of occurrences per formula during which the formulae-occurrences curve radically changes direction: 6-11 in Homer, 4-8 in the *Roland*.

Again we have two tails. Again there are many more infrequent formulae than regular formula, 202 as opposed to 29. Again the infrequent formulae are answering to poetic needs that individually arise rarely, but that belong to one of many types, each of which has many members.

¹ Blancandrins would have 14 occurrences if we could count the doubling formula “Guenes e Blancandrins,” but these were ruled out for Homer whenever the doubling alone made the occurrence into a formula, on the grounds that it was hard to know which set to put them in.

² With a minimum of 6, the mean regularity for the *Roland* is 52%, for Homer’s 190 nouns 54%, for Homer’s 70 nouns 55%. The figure for the *Roland* is certainly not uncomfortably low. When the minimum is 5, the *Roland*’s regularity is 58%, which is obviously not an improvement.

“Quan(t) Rollant veit” occurs just twice, but it belongs to the type “Quan(t)...v(e)it” and “Quant v(e)it...” that occurs 21 times, and there are many similar types. The number of different infrequent formulae, and the fact that there are only 5 places on the x-axis where infrequent formulae can fall, again means that there must be at least a large bulge on the left-hand side of Graph F-O5. Again we are looking for a force that produces the steady sharp decline on the left, and again that force must be entropy. The reasons why it is likelier for a formula to occur once than twice, twice than three times, and so on, are still valid. And again we are looking for a constraint upon randomness that lets the regular formulae occur freely, that produces the change in shape between the tails.

In Homer, the change takes place because the pressure to occur in major cola is beginning to dominate: almost all the formulae that occur above the minimum for regular formulae belong to Parryan systems. In the *Roland*, of course, we cannot appeal to Parryan systems as such. Instead we find a similar principle at work: the tendency of formulae, and especially regular formulae, to fall precisely in the first hemistich.³ Almost all the regular formulae, the formulae on the right-hand tail, fall here; the three that do not are interesting, since they turn out to have been designed specifically to be alternatives to first-hemistich formulae. One is “li emperere Carles,” a variation on the first-hemistich minimal formula “Li empereres”; another is “C(K)arlemagne(s)” in 5-8 for “C(h)(K)arles li magnes” in 1-4; and the third is “li quens Rollant” running from 5-8 instead of from 1-4. For these two characters who are mentioned the most often, we find that regular formulae are supplementing regular formulae.

As with the major cola in Homer, the constraint imposed by the first hemistich is not so much causative as enabling: many a first hemistich needs to be filled with something other than a regular formula, if for no other reason than that something unusual needs to be said. The frequency of occurrence of a regular formula is actually *due* to four other factors (not five as in Homer; see Part I:123): the number of times the noun itself occurs, the localization of the noun, the syntax and meaning of the regular formulae, and the existence of other regular formulae for the noun. (The regular formulae of the *Roland* are not extended.) The phrase “Li quens Rollant” occurs 33 times, more often than any other noun-formula. It owes this frequency to the fact that the noun occurs so often, 119 times; only Charles occurs more often. It owes it to the noun’s localization, much

³ On the importance of the first hemistich, see Duggan’s chapter on “*Roland*’s Formulaic Repertory” (1973: espec. 110-12, 117-22).

higher than that of Charles; “Rollant” strays much less often into positions where the regular formula is unusable. It owes it to phrase’s being noun-epithetic and to the epithet’s being context-free; though the *Roland* has a much higher percentage of noun-verb regular formulae than Homer, they are still restricted by the fact that they refer to both a person and an action, not just a person. Our formula seems challenged by the existence of 3 other regular formulae for the noun; but two of these are noun-verbal, not really competitive, and the other is “li quens Rollant” itself in the second hemistich, probably therefore not reducing the number of its possible occurrences in the first. The verse form is perennially prepared to receive regular formulae, and that preparation makes it almost as likely for a regular formula to occur 33 times as 6 times.

In beginning to look at the job performed by infrequent formulae in the *Roland*, we plot the number of formulae that fill, or fail to fill, the space from position 1 to position 4 at the various x-values for the *Roland* formulae- occurrences hyperbola (Graph F-O5), and we obtain Graphs F-O6 and F-O7. (Again, the unequal size of the graphs is due to my wish to preserve the scale, and bring out the shallower decline on Graph F-O7.) The corresponding numbers are given in Tables F-O6 and F-O7. The number of those not in the first hemistich plunges until it hits $y = 2$, $x = 3$, and then peters out entirely at $x = 8$. The number of those that do fall in the first hemistich declines steadily from $x = 1$ to $x = 6$, then spikes suddenly at $x = 7$ and drops at $x = 8$. In general, the behavior reflected on these two graphs is nearly identical to what we saw on the corresponding graphs for Homer.

The left-hand tail of Graph F-O6 is shaped by entropy, by the fact that these formulae do not fall within the protective constraint of the first hemistich. The left-hand tail of Graph FO-7 therefore cannot be shaped by entropy. It owes its existence mostly to a factor that contributes heavily to the left-hand tail of Graph F-O3 (Homer’s major-colon infrequent formulae): a large number of noun-verb formulae that occur just once (there are 36) or twice (21). It is true that in the *Roland* quite a few actions are repeated often enough to create noun-verb regular formulae; 17 of its 29 regular formulae, 59%, are noun-verbal. But it still has a great many more noun-verbal infrequent formulae than this (there are 138), and it has them for the same reason that Homer has them: so many actions necessarily occur only once or twice.

Graph F-O6: Formulae not in 1st hemistich

Graph F-O7: First-hemistich formulae

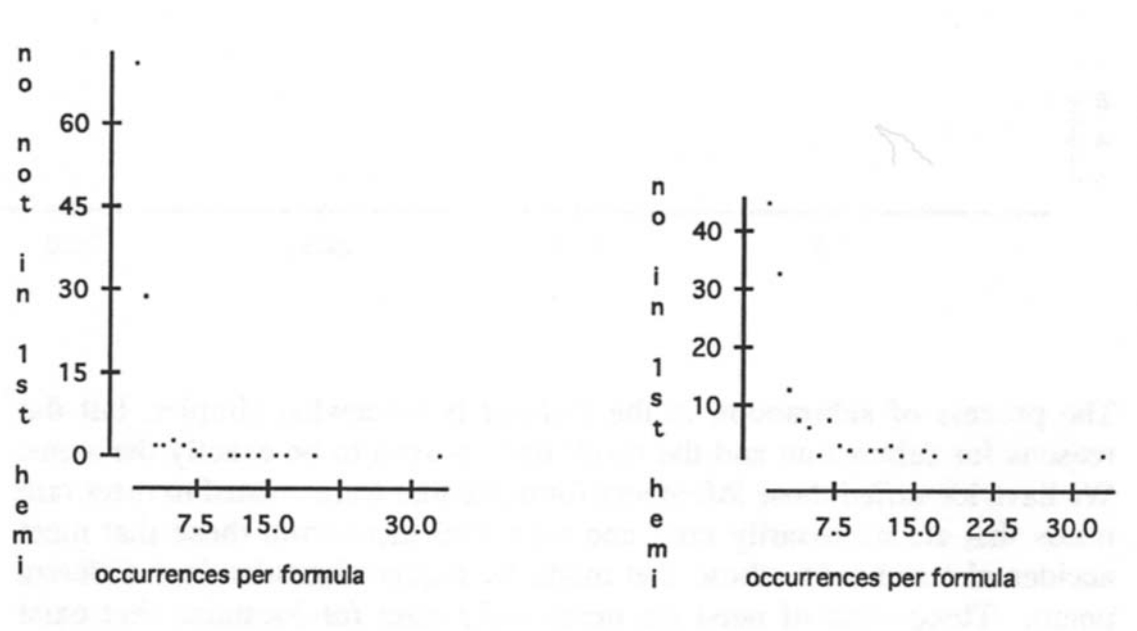


Table F-O6: Non-1st-hemistich formulae

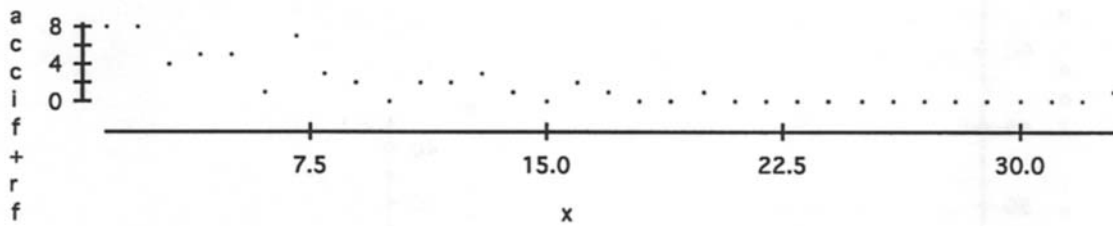
Table F-O7: First-hemistich-formulae

x:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8...
y:	71	29	2	3	3	2	1	0

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	11	12	13	14...
	45	33	13	7	6	1	7	3	2	2	2	3	1

If we subtract the first-hemistich noun-verbal formulae from the rest, we are left with a very shallow and irregular left-hand tail for first-hemistich noun-epithetic formulae. Of the 28 infrequent formulae in this company, 8 seem specific to the context: “ceste bataille,” for instance, is said during a particular fight; “trestut le cors” is comparable to formulae with Greek πάντες; “nostre rei,” but not yours; and so on. If we subtract these 8, and add some 10 noun-verb formulae that might conceivably have been regular formulae in a different poem, the left-hand tail has gone, and we now have on Graph F-O8 an irregular and gently descending linear curve very similar to the curve on Graph F-O4, the Homeric curve with major-colon regular formulae and accidental infrequent formulae.

Graph F-O8: Accidental infrequent formulae and first-hemistich regular formulae, *Roland*



The process of subtraction in the *Roland* is somewhat simpler, but the reasons for subtraction and the result have proved to be exactly the same. We have identified those infrequent formulae that were created to meet rare needs that are necessarily rare, and separated them from those that meet accidental rare needs—those that might be regular formulae in a different poem. Three sorts of need are necessarily rare: for formulae that exist outside the first hemistich (that fall in a minor colon in Homer), for formulae referring to actions that occur rarely in the course of a poem, or for formulae specific to a given context. Exactly as in Homer—only in Homer we added noun-epithetic infrequent formulae that occupy rare major cola, that are used for special effect, or that simply were puzzling. The conclusion seems inescapable that the formulary technique of Homer and the *Roland* have a great deal in common.

We argued in Part I of this article that there was a close connection between the principle of right-justification observed by Indo-European poetry generally and the tendency for regular formulae in Homer to fall in the last half of the line. In the *Roland*, in contrast, the regular formulae fall in the first hemistich, and we have left-justification. This is exceptional, but there is a good reason for it. Infrequent formulae are linked to the second hemistich by the assonance, which causes formulae to be altered frequently. Duggan notes several such alterations: among others, from “hostur mué” to “hostur muables” (by the principles I am employing, a change in inflection producing a different infrequent formula), from “qu’en ferat carier” to “que carier en ferez” (inflection and inversion), from “la lei de crestiens” to “la crestiene lei, la nostre lei plus salve” (inversion, extension, and inflection with a change in part of speech). It is only because Charles and Roland are mentioned so often that they are able to display a regular formula in the second hemistich. The need for assonance is comparable to the needs that lead to infrequent formulae: a certain sort of need arises commonly, but for a particular noun the need arises rarely.

for the minimum number of occurrences for a regular formula in Homer and the *Roland* is very nearly the same: 6–11, 4–8; it is interesting that our statistically necessitated choice should reasonably have fallen on 6 both times.

VII. Conclusion

It is evident from all of these close statistical similarities between the *Roland* and Homer that there must be a deep similarity in the compositional techniques of all three poems. To these we can add two others. First, the *Cantar de Mio Cid*, composed between A.D. 1099 and 1207 in Spain. Research that I have carried out in detail, but not yet published, reveals that this poem displays exactly the same mathematically demonstrable properties as the other two: the predictability of formulaic occurrences and different formulae from total occurrences, and the formulae-occurrences hyperbola; a minimum of 6 exact repeats for a regular formula works very well. The mean formularity is 76.7%, slightly higher than Homer's. The Homeric equations give good predictions: Equation 1A has a mean error of 3.8, not quite as close as for the *Roland*; Equation 4A is also slightly higher, with a mean error of 1.4.

Second, *The Wedding of Meho, Son of Smail*, a poem the length of the *Odyssey* dictated by Avdo Međedović to Parry's assistant Nikola Vujnović in 1935. Using a minimum of 6, I have so far located 69 words possessing regular formulae—compared to 22 for the *Roland*, 25 for the *Cid*, 113 for the *Iliad*, 77 for the *Odyssey*. The **formularities** of the nouns are less uniform than they are in the other poets, though the mean formularity is the same; the **formulaic occurrences/total occurrences** equation has a somewhat lower correlation coefficient, .93. As a result, the Homeric formularity equation, Equation 1A, predicts Avdo's formulaic occurrences less well than it predicts the other two.⁴ The correlation between **different formulae** and **total occurrences** (modified by **localization** and **occurrences per formula**), on the other hand, is just as high as in the others. The Homeric equation, Equation 4A, predicts Avdo almost as accurately as it does the others: the mean error is 1.6, as opposed

⁴ This is probably due to the extremely rigid structure of the Serbo-Croatian line: precisely 10 syllables, the caesura precisely after 4. Variety is needed, and achieved by avoiding regular formulae and even infrequent formulae where possible. Thus, though the mean formularity is high, the formularity for the two most frequently mentioned characters is rather low.

to 1.2 for the *Roland*, and 1.4 for the *Cid*. The hyperbola reveals that a minimum of 6 exact repetitions for a regular formula works well.

In drawing, or at least suggesting, conclusions about Homer and the *Roland*, it is useful to keep Avdo and the *Cid* in mind: for one thing, doing so dramatically reduces the possibility that similarities are accidental; for another, it makes even more forceful our awareness of *differences* in technique between the Greek and the Frenchman when we see the Spaniard and the Yugoslav differing from both of the others. This is not the place to discuss those differences: they include the Greek multiple caesurae versus the French, Serbo-Croatian, and Spanish single caesura; the fact that the Spanish line can vary the number of syllables from 10 to 20, the Greek from 12 to 17, the French from 10 to 12, while the Serbo-Croatian must maintain 10; the fact that the Greek alone must worry about syllable length, but need not think about assonance, unlike the Frenchman and the Spaniard. The mathematical similarities obtain despite these dissimilarities, suggesting overarching or more fundamental principles.

If now we ask how these similarities came about, we can begin, I think, by dismissing the theory that Homer influenced the other three poets. The *Roland* refers to Homer, to be sure; but even if Tuoldus knew how to read French, he could not read Greek; and whatever medieval Greek oral tradition there was, it was not engaged in preserving Homer; and even if it had been, Tuoldus could not have listened with understanding to one of its singers; and even if he could have, it is hard to see how he could have extracted from it the technique we have been laying bare. Similarly for the Spaniard. It is barely possible that he could have learned his technique from a French singer—not from French poetic texts alone, where the mathematical relationships are too obscure to be observed without statistical methods, but conceivably from direct training, where by following the Frenchman's practice he might produce a similar result. I would not want to entertain a theory that depended upon the assumption that such training actually took place; in any case it would not account for the similarity with Homer. Avdo could not read or write; if Homer influenced him, the influence was very indirect.

Nor does it seem possible that each poet invented the style by himself. Of course the same circumstances (such as the demands of oral composition) can have called forth (I think did call forth) the same technique, but the technique is too elaborate for four men working independently to have evolved it by themselves. It is far more likely to have been evolved by four *traditions* responding (probably) independently to identical circumstances. Those circumstances, moreover, cannot have

been merely the need to compose epic verse about heroic warriors (or, as in the *Odyssey*, wanderers and questers). Virgil, Apollonius, and Quintus Smyrnaeus composed epic verse with just such themes, and their practice simply does not conform to the techniques we have been examining. Apollonius has roughly 5800 lines: I have found only 3 regular formulae (out of 54 nouns studied); the mean formularity of these nouns is only 42%, and would have been lower if I had included frequently occurring nouns entirely lacking formulae, as I did not; Homer's Equations 1A and 4A, when applied to these 54 nouns, not surprisingly give poor predictions. Virgil has roughly 9900 lines: I have found just 12 nouns with regular formulae, with a total of 13 regular formulae (out of 40 nouns studied); the mean formularity for these 12 is only 38% (for the total of 40 it drops to 35%, and again would have been lower had I included frequently occurring nouns with few or no formulae); Homer's equations give poor predictions, even when restricted to the nouns with regular formulae. Aeneas himself has two regular formulae, *pius Aeneas* and *pater Aeneas*, a situation that looks promising; but both run from 2-5, and thus overlap metrically, unthinkable for a Homeric character.⁵ Turnus, on the other hand, has no regular formulae, and indeed it was with difficulty that I persuaded myself that he had any formulae in the nominative. Quintus of Smyrna, who is a remarkable imitator of the Homeric style, is much more subtle at revealing his disparity. He has roughly 8000 lines: I have found 22 nouns with regular formulae (out of 99 studied); the mean formularity for these 22 is a healthy 67%, and the Homeric equations provide good predictions (for these 22). Where Quintus gives himself away is his overall lack of regular formulae and regular formulaic occurrences. The 99 nouns I chose for preliminary study occur frequently (the average **total occurrences** is 32), and occur in contexts where formulae would be expected. If Quintus really had employed the Homeric style, at least three-fourths—not fewer than

⁵ The supposed regular-formula overlap, Θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη (Βοῶπις πτόνια), would be comparable if it were a violation of economy, but it is not: Θεὰ is a generic that *extends* the regular formula λευκώλενος. The supposed overlap ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων (Διὸς υἱός) is not comparable, since the latter may well be an accidental regular formula (it occurs just 7 times) and is in any case the third of four regular formulae (Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων is the most frequent). And of course elision is possible before ἐκάεργος (*Iliad* 22.15), though we do not happen to find it in this formula; scholars therefore usually cite both formulae in their extended form with ἄναξ as the true violators of economy. But when formulae are extended with such generics as Θεὰ and ἄναξ, there is no loss of economy, since these generics are part of the generic store in any case. See also Sale 1989:391.

one-fourth—of these 99 nouns would have displayed regular formulae; there would have been at least 160 regular formulae, not 34.

The formulaic characteristic that most blatantly and importantly differentiates Homer, the *Roland*, the *Cid*, and Avdo from Virgil, Apollonius, and Quintus (and countless later poets) is the *consistency* with which the poets in the first group are formulaic: most of their nouns maintain a uniformly high formularity; most nouns have regular formulae; and most nouns fit the Homeric equations. When we then ask why Homer, Tuoldus, Avdo, and the Spaniard were so consistent, while the others were so sporadic, it is hard to avoid the answer that the former faced the problem of composing oral verse in performance, the latter did not.

Naturally, we cannot be content with a conclusion based on our inability to find any other solution. We turn, therefore, to the nature of the technique that Homer, Tuoldus, Avdo, and the Spaniard shared. One aspect of it has been thoroughly explored for Homer by Parry, the existence of regular formulae (not Parry's term) that belong to *systems* defined by the metrical and syntactical properties possessed by those formulae. Homer has, for instance, a system of regular noun-epithet nominative formulae that fall in position 9-12; then there are narrower systems defined by the nouns of various shapes that help to make up these formulae—a sub-system for bacchiacs with regular formulae in 9-12, one for monosyllables, one for spondees. Parry believed, I think correctly, that such systems were traditional, that no one poet could have devised anything so elaborate in a single lifetime. He also thought that all, or almost all, of the formulae themselves were traditional and existed before Homer lived.⁶ For our

⁶ Parry also thought that the poems themselves were to a large degree traditional; the most he wanted to allot to Homer seems to be said in the following passage: "If the tale is old, and, as is usually the case, regarded as more or less true, the singer may tell it just about as he heard it... the good singer will keep what is striking, and even add, on the pattern of other poems, *lines* which he knows will please, and *new incidents*, or give a *fuller tale* with many such borrowings. He may even have heard the same tale told by a singer living at a distance who inherited it from a different tradition; then he will *fuse the poems*, using the best in each" (1971:334-35, emphasis supplied). To which we should add, as implying greater freedom: "the event may be new, but it will be told in the traditional way on the pattern of passages from other poems, and in more or less the same phrases as were used in those passages, so that the only difference between the poem made about the present and that which tells of the past is that the former will be made from the memory of a larger number of different poems" (1971:334). Parry's "only difference" cannot be quite right: a different event is a different event, and may entail different material objects, feelings, beliefs, and so on, all of which may require new formulae. That is one of the reasons why I find Albert Lord's model for composition (espec. 1960) more

purposes here we need not go so far; we need only assert that the systems and many of the formulae existed before the *poem* was *composed*. Let us nominate these formulae, and the systems to which they belonged, the “regular store” of phrases that the poet had on hand before he began to compose his poem, or his version of it. We then ask why this regular store existed: what possible purpose was served by having on hand sets of formulae that are designed to fall into certain fixed places in the line of hexameter verse? No one has had any success at refuting the answer that they allow poets to compose rapidly: the portion of the line they fill will come out right metrically, and the portion they do not fill can be filled by matching formulae, or by material that can readily be constructed to imitate such matching formulae. The poet is free to concentrate on what he wants to say, and not worry unduly about how to say it. But why should poets want to compose rapidly? Can there be any reason other than the need to compose in performance? Legitimate dispute has arisen over whether Homer himself composed orally with this equipment, but there has been no persuasive attempt to dispute the original intent of the equipment itself. Systems of regular formulae for Turoidus, the Spaniard, and Avdo have not, to my knowledge, been isolated as such; but all three of them display regular formulae, and it is reasonable to suppose that all three had a regular store.

The aspect of the shared technique most relevant to the current study, however, is not the regular-formula systems. It is the mathematical relationships, together with the distinction they imply between regular formulae and infrequent formulae, and it is the formation of infrequent formulae. Let us begin by analyzing the latter, without assuming oral composition.

Infrequent formulae are produced partly out of a supply of words of a certain kind, and partly as the result of a certain kind of training. The *words* include, first of all, generic verbs and epithets, in the form either of individual words, or of words embedded in model formulae. It is reasonable to suppose that most of these existed as poetic tools before the final version, at least, of the poem was composed. We make this supposition partly because such words are ubiquitous; they pervade every corner of the texts in which they are found. But the main reason is their generality: their meanings do not belong to specific people or gods, but to the characters of epic poetry generally. And their metrical forms correspond: they are of just the right shapes to combine with nouns so as to produce formulae that fill the various cola, minor and major. They have

satisfactory.

been carefully chosen, not for a poem, but for a *style*. Let us call these the “generic store.”

The supply of words also probably included flexible formulae not drawn from the generic store that could be counted on to produce what we call Hainsworth-alterations when such were needed: formulae that were mobile, or separable, or could be inflected or inverted or extended. We do not need to assume that such formulae existed prior to the poem’s composition, but many probably did; let us term those that did the “precompositional distinctive store,” since Parry used the term “distinctive” in contrast to “generic.”

The poets’ *training* will have included the ability to create such alterations easily. If they had the formulae in stock, they could change them as needed; if they did not, they knew how to coin an alterable phrase, and alter a phrase that they had just coined. They were of course trained to use the generic words when needed. They were also trained to repeat themselves precisely, and without alteration, since a phrase once used during the process of composition to solve a certain metrical, semantic, or aesthetic problem was something to be cherished and repeated as often as it might be useful, not something that cried out for variation or even avoidance. As a poet composed, he fashioned a store of such phrases that remained with him until he reached the very end of the poem. There are so many of these phrases, and so many that are specific to the situations in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and *Roland* and *Cid* and *Wedding of Meho*, that we can be quite sure that there must have been a supply created during composition. The non-generic formulae coined during the compositional process, both the exact repeats and the inexact (the Hainsworth-alterations), let us term the “compositional distinctive store.” In the case of Homer we should add a patronymic store.⁷

The above discussion implies that there were three distinct phases in

⁷ It is at least theoretically possible that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, perhaps even the *Roland* and the *Cid*, were traditional poems, orally preserved and handed down to Homer and the others, and passed along virtually unchanged by them; such a model of composition would be even more traditionalist than Parry’s. Even so, it is probable that the poets were trained by acquiring stores of words and phrases, and techniques for creating and handling such stores; they will have added a trace of their own poetic selves. In that case, we picture the composition as taking place over generations and centuries, and instead of a poet who composed we must speak of poets. But the principle of composition remains the same. Every time an infrequent formula was created (not just preserved), it arose from a generic store, or from a precompositional distinctive store, or else it repeated (exactly or inexactly) a phrase in the inherited poem that thereby became a member of the compositional distinctive store.

the overall poetic process of composing with infrequent formulae: a training phase, a precompositional phase, and the phase of composition itself. In the training phase the poet will have learned how to use generic epithets and verbs, how to make Hainsworth-alterations with flexible formulae, and how to create a distinctive store. Before he composed, the poet had on hand (besides his regular store) a generic store and a precompositional distinctive store, either compiled from traditional materials, created *de novo*, or (most probably) both. In the course of composing he used (besides his regular formulae) his generics and his precompositional distinctive store; he created a compositional distinctive store; and he altered his regular formulae, his flexible distinctive formulae, and occasionally his generic formulae, so as to create and employ infrequent formulae in such a fashion that the appropriate mathematical ratios were (consciously or unconsciously) met.

Why did this equipment, these stores and this training, exist? The answer, obviously, is so that at any point in the process of composition, at any point in the poem, no matter what the poet was talking about and what he was saying about it, he could compose with a formula if he wanted to. And about 75% of the time that he was employing most of the nouns, he wanted to. And why does a poet want to compose with formulae so frequently? The old answer still seems the right answer: because the formulae fit the meter and the meter fits the formulae. And why is a poet so anxious to have on hand material that fits the meter? Again the old answer: because otherwise the task of composing rapidly in performance—while composing clearly, elegantly, beautifully—is simply too difficult.

Even if a poet is largely re-creating what he has heard, he must be thoroughly steeped in the technique that created what he is re-creating if he is to re-create well. The technique does not exist for mere memorizing. The *raison d'être* for a context-free epithet is to allow you to use it in any context, not to help you memorize it. The *raison d'être* for a generic adjective is not to help you remember what comes after it, which it obviously will not do; it is to allow you to put a word of your own choosing after it. The purpose of a mobile formula is to enable you to move it when you want to—that is, when you are composing. The purpose of a separable formula is to let you separate it when you need to, and the same is true for formulae that can be inverted, inflected, and extended. The purpose of a distinctive formula is to allow you to solve in the same way a problem that you have already solved during composition. These devices are not aids to the memory. Naturally, if you admire a song you will want to reproduce it accurately, but the method of reproduction is, literally,

re-production, recomposition. I am convinced that all four poets did much more than reproduce; but the point here is not what these poets did, rather what their technique was designed to do. It was a technique developed for the *creation* of infrequent formulae during an oral performance.

We turn now to the mathematical relationships. Their message is twofold: the consistency of formularity, and the precision with which infrequent formulae were created. They tell us first that for all five poems the technique is employed *pervasively*; it reaches into every corner of the poem. The density of formulae in various passages may be different, but there is never a point at which the poet has set his technique aside. Not every noun has the same formularity, to be sure, but almost all are formulaic more than half the time, and three-quarters are formulaic more than two-thirds of the time. Most that occur frequently enough will have at least one regular formula; almost all that have a regular formula will also obey the rule that the more often they occur the more different formulae they will display. It is here, as we have said, that the contrast with Virgil, Apollonius, and Quintus is so telling; Virgil can treat the Homeric Aeneas in a fairly accurate Homeric style, and the Italian Turnus differently, because composition by writing gives one the leisure to compose with different techniques. Homer, in contrast, and Turolfus and the Spaniard and Avdo handle their nouns by the same formulary technique throughout. We do not detect a competing style.

But why such consistency? Why do nouns keep their formularity high? The obvious inference is that the demands of oral composition in performance are unrelenting: formulae of various kinds are needed incessantly. A tool has been devised to enable the poet to provide them, and he does not have the leisure to employ radically different tools.

The lesson to be learned from Equation 4 is more specific: it tells us that the production of infrequent formulae was very precise. The more often the poet used a noun, the more infrequent formulae he created or employed, and we can be very accurate about how many more. In other words, the poet was very restricted in his freedom to use an infrequent formulae or not. This would be absurd if he were essentially a literate poet with leisure to decide. There is no aesthetic reason why each noun a poet uses should average two occurrences per infrequent formula, and indeed it would be astonishing if the oral poet knew he was proceeding in this fashion. He is responding to circumstances that in a sense are beyond his control. If you compose in performance the infrequent needs that you must meet with a formula come at you steadily, and you respond according to the rules.

Note carefully that we have left plenty of room for originality, or at least individual variability. The argument, after all, asserts only that a regular store, a generic store, probably a precompositional distinctive store, and a certain training were in place at the time the poems were composed. We may believe that some formulae and generic words were traditional, but the argument requires only that the technique was traditional. It allows the poet to invent his own systems of regular formulae and his own generic adjectives and verbs, provided that he do so ahead of time. Since every poet I know of has taken material from his predecessors, and since it is hard to see why any poet would want to be so blindly original, I feel sure that many of our poets' formulae and generics were traditional.⁸ But the argument does not require it. Again, the technique as so far described says nothing about the non-formulaic occurrences that make up the other 25% of the total occurrences of Homer's (and 28.5% of the *Roland's*) nouns. They may be formular in some sense, but then I suppose all poetry, if not all language, is formular in some sense. Again, a poet may well be more or less formular than his predecessors; we have seen that Homer and the *Roland* poet do not display exactly the same mean formularity. Again, it is conceivable that one poet might differ from another in the minimum number for his regular formulae: this might be a matter of individual style, and it is certainly possible that our choice of 6 for the *Roland* and Homer is obscuring a true divergence. (I have maintained the choice of 6 for Avdo and the *Cantar de Mio Cid*, but their hyperbolae are consistent with 5.) Yet again: one poet may differ from another in the *parameters* of his Equations 2-4, though our poets do not. And finally, it is possible that the technique, evolved for the sake of oral composition in performance, was employed by Homer, Turolodus, and the Spaniard in the course of written composition. I do not entirely understand why literate poets should have continued to practice so slavishly a method of composition appropriate to oral performance, but perhaps the technique was so thoroughly ingrained that one simply used it no matter what. It is far easier to see why a dictating poet, whether he was dictating to a scribe, to a rhapsode, or to a group of

⁸ The French tradition actually gives us access to traditional formulae. In the course of demonstrating the difference between the composer of the Oxford *Roland* and other poets of the Old French epic, Duggan points out how "on the level of detail, of individual hemistichs, the *Roland* poet's style is not his own but the tradition's" (1973:168).

rhapsodes, should have kept to the old ways.⁹

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Appendix 2: Data for Formulae in the *Roland*

The following pages include a table of regular formulae (6 or more exact repetitions), then the formulary breakdown of nominative occurrences of the 11 characters who appear often enough in the nominative to lend themselves to statistical study (13 times or more was my criterion), as well as 11 common nouns occurring 13 times or more and possessing a regular

formula. The choice of the 11 characters was made solely on the basis of their total occurrences, before I had any guidance as to where to put the minimum for a regular formula; the choice of the 11 common nouns was made afterwards.¹⁰ These occurrences are grouped into sets, then divided into subsets marked “formulae (regular and infrequent)” and “non-formulaic occurrences.” The number of times each formula occurs is marked.

The principles according to which a phrase is declared to be formulaic are found on page 101 of Part I of this article and in Sale 1989. A formula for our purposes is a noun-verb or noun-epithet phrase that is either a) exactly repeated (same words, same grammatical case, same place in the line of verse), or b) repeated with slight variations (different position in the verse, extended by an added word, inflected, having its parts separated or inverted), or c) partly repeated by including a generic epithet or verb (a word used in identical metrical circumstances with at least two nouns of the same metrical shape), or d) partly repeated by including a patronymic. As the work progressed, I came to feel that certain (not very great) modifications of these principles might be appropriate for Old French poetry; but except in a very few phrases among the common nouns, where the modification did not significantly affect the statistics, I retained the Homeric criteria rigorously. Such exceptions are signaled with a question-mark.

In order to maintain the parallel with Homer, we must use the terms “nominative” to mean strictly “possessing a nominative syntax,” without keeping rigidly to the forms of the names as signifiers. And “possessing a nominative syntax” means “used as the subject of a finite verb, or as predicate nominative after a form of *estre* and its synonyms.” I have therefore not counted uses of nominative forms as vocatives, since these usually require a different form in Greek.

Both Homer and the *Roland* are rich in doubling formula (e.g., “Oliver et Rollant” in final position). These are not counted as formulae or as non-formulae, and are omitted from the total occurrences, unless one or the other name is a part of a different formula (if, for instance, in the above phrase “Oliver” had been preceded by “quens”). This follows my practice

¹⁰ Certain common-noun phrases are very difficult to classify as formulaic or non-formulaic. “Li emperere(s)” fills the first hemistich; it appears not to need, and does not receive, an epithet in this position; but by the standards I was using in counting Homeric phrases, it could not be called formulaic. Intuitively I feel it is a formula, but since I am not an expert in Old French, it appeared best to make my choice from nouns that have clearcut noun-epithet or noun-verb formulae.

in Homer; if the only thing that makes a name part of a formula is the other name, should we count it twice, once in each set? If not, to whom do we give it? Since we cannot answer these questions satisfactorily, it seems best not to count such phrases at all.

Certain exact repetitions (“Rollant ferit,” for instance) are not considered formulae because their sole repetitions are too close together to rule out the view that they are being using as “refrains.” But “Rollant s’en turnet” is counted, because “s’en turnet” is generic (cf. “Païen s’en turnent,” 3623). On this point see Sale 1989:347 with further references.

Some of the characters have alternative names (alternative signifiers), such as “emperere” used without “Carles,” or such as “Francs.” If the alternative name appears to be used as metrically equivalent to the basic name, I have counted it along with the basic name. If it does not appear to be used as metrically equivalent, it must be counted separately if at all, since some of the mathematical argument depends on the concept of localization, and two nouns with metrically different shapes can be expected to have different localizations.

On the charts I have used the following abbreviations: TO = total occurrences, NFO = non-formulaic occurrences, FO = total formulaic occurrences, RFO = regular formulaic occurrences, IFO = infrequent formulaic occurrences, and DF = different formulae. The numbers in italics following the formulae give the position in the verse, each syllable being numbered from 1 to 10. We begin with a list of the regular formulae and their classification (an asterisk marks those that do not occur in the first hemistich):

Regular Formulae

Li quens Rollant 1-4	33x	Noun-epithet
Li reis Marsilie 1-4	20x	Noun-epithet
...di(s)t li reis 1-4	17x	Verb of speaking
Dient Franceis 1-4	16x	Verb of speaking
...dist (dient) al rei 1-4	16x	Verb of speaking
Guenes respo(u)nt 1-4	14x	Verb of speaking
Dist Oliver 1-4	13x	Verb of speaking
A icest (icel) mot 1-4	13x	Noun-epithet
Naines li du(c)x 1-4	13x	Noun-epithet
cheval brochet 1-4	12x	Verb with “horse” oblique
L’escut li freint 1-4	12x	Verb with “shield” oblique
Ço di(s)t Rollant 1-4	11x	Verb of speaking
Respo(u)nt Rollant 1-4	11x	Verb of speaking
...bataille est 1-4	9x	Verb for battle
Sire co(u)mpai(g)n(z) 1-4	9x	Noun-epithet

Respo(u)ndent Franc(s) 1-4	8x	Verb of speaking
Dient paien 1-4	8x	Verb of speaking
C(h)(K)arles li magnes 1-4	8x	Noun-epithet
li emperere Carles final	7x	Noun-epithet
Dist l'arcevesque 1-4	7x	Verb of speaking
Dist Baligant 1-4	7x	Verb of speaking
Cent (xx) milie Franc(s) 1-4	7x	Noun-epithet
Pleine sa hanste 1-4	7x	Noun-epithet
de sun osberc(?) 1-4	7x	Noun-epithet equivalent
el cors li met(mis) 1-4	7x	Verb with "body" oblique
...dist Guenes 1-4	7x	Verb of speaking
Li quens Rollant 5-8 *	6x	Noun-epithet
Plu(o)re(n)t des oilz 1-4	6x	Verb with "eyes"
C(K)arle-magne(s) 5-8 *	6x	Noun-epithet

The 22 Nouns

(Noun-epithet formulae are in the left-hand column, noun-verb formulae on the right)

Proper Nouns

L'arcevesque(s) 39x minus 6x oblique = 33x

Localization: 24x in 2-4

TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO
33	16	17	7	10

Total formulae: 7 DF, 17x

Regular formulae:

1 DF, 7x

Dist l'arcevesque 1-4

7x

Infrequent formulae:

6 DF, 10x

arcevesque Turpin *final*

5x

Turpin, li arcevesque *final*

1x

Ço est l'arcevesque 1-4

1x

Li arcevesque Turpin 1-6¹¹

1x

Li arcevesque cumencet 1-7

1x

Li arcevesque brochet 1-6

1x

NFO

16x

Baligant: 22x minus 4x oblique and 2x vocative = 16x

TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO
16	6	10	7	3

Total formulae: 4 DF, 10x

Regular formulae:

7x

Dist Baligant 1-4

7x

Infrequent formulae:

3x

li paien Baligant *final*

1x

E Baligant cumencet 2-7

1x

Dist Baligant *final*

1x

NFO

6x

C(h)(K)arles 164x minus 27 oblique, minus 4 vocatives: 133x

Carle 6x, Carlemagne 13x, Carlemagnes 6x, Carles 112x, Carles 3x, Charles 11x, Karlemagne 2x, Karles 10x, Karlun 1x (Carlun, Carlun, Charle, Charlemagne, Karlun *display no nominative usages*)

TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO
133	41	92	21	71

Total formulae: 38 DF, 92x

Regular formulae:

3 DF, 21x

C(h)(K)arles li magnes 1-4

8x (5C, 2K, 1Ch)

li emperere Carles *final*

7x

C(K)arle-magne(s)5-8

6x, in the following phrases:

Carlemagne dreit

1x

Karlemagne li vielz

1x

Carlemagnes li ber

1x

Carlemagnes li reis

3x

Infrequent formulae:

35 DF, 71x

Carles li reis 1-4

4x

C(K)arles se dort 1-4 (1xK)

5x

C(h)arles respunt 1-4 (1Ch)

4x

Carles de France dulce 5-8 [li e.. 1x]

4x

Quant Carles veit 1-4

4x

si l'orrat Carles 1-4

4x

Carles repa(e)iret 1-4

3x

dist Carles 1-4¹²

3x

¹¹ The principles we are using for counting formulae preclude our placing this in 1-4, since we cannot count "Li arcevesque" by itself; cf. the two noun-verb formulae next in the right-hand column.

¹² Ordinarily a formula must fill the entire colon in order to be counted as occupying that colon, on the grounds that any empty space represents a further demand upon the poet. But the space left by formulae of this form can always be immediately filled by "Ço li," or a disyllabic vocative, if the poet does not choose to put something else there; there is no real further demand. On the other hand, we

		que Ca. a(ve)it(ad)..chere <i>final</i>	3x		
		C(K)arles l'oit(d) e 1-4	3x		
li reis Ch(K)arles <i>final</i>	2x	Carles n'est mie... 5-9	2x		
Carles li velz 1-4	2x	Carles apelet 1-4	2x		
C(K)arles de France 1-4	2x	Carles en ad 1-4 l	2x		
Carles...li reis poesteifs 1-10	2x	que Carles a(i)ma(e)t tant <i>final</i>	2x		
		Sours est Carl(l)es 1-4	2x		
Carles li reis 4-6	1x	Quant Carles oit 1-4	1x		
Carles mi sire <i>final</i>	1x[1x voc]	Karles...ki est a porz passant 1-10	1x		
Carlemagne <i>final</i>	1x	Carles cevalchet 1-4	1x		
[li empereres Carles{de France}] [1x]		Carles escriet 1-4	1x		
Carles li emperere <i>final</i>	1x	vos mandet Carles 3-6	1x		
		nos ad Ch. plus chere <i>final</i>	1x		
		Carle me mandet 1-4	1x		
		Carles li dist 1-4	1x		
		Carles, ki France tient 5-10	1x		
		que Carles diet 1-4	1x		
		ki France ad en baillie 1-10, 4-10	1x,1x		
NFO, breaking down into:	48x				
Carles NFO	39x	Charles NFO	3x		
Karles NFO	5x	Carlles NFO	1x		
Oblique	27x				
Carle:	5x	Charles	3x		
Carlemagnes	1x	Karles	0x		
Carles	5x	Karlon	0x		
Carlles	1x	Carlemagne	12x		
Vocative	4x				
Doubling formulae	0x				
Franc(s): 56x minus 10x oblique, minus 3x vocative, minus 3x doubling = 40x					
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization: 19x in 4
40	14	26	15	11	
Total formulae: 11 DF, 26x					
Regular formulae: 2 DF, 15x					
Cent (xx) milie Franc(s) 1-4 7x					
Infrequent formulae 9 DF, 11x					
tuit li Franc (?cf.tuit li altre) <i>final</i>	1x	Respo(u)ndent Franc(s) 1-4	8x		
mil Francs de France 3-7	1x	ont Francs recumencet <i>final</i>	2x		
		returnerunt Franc <i>final</i>	2x		
		Escriet Franc 1-4	1x		
		s'enfuiet Franc <i>final</i>	1x		
		chalcent Franc <i>final</i>	1x		
		enchalcent...Franc <i>final</i>	1x		
		encalcent Francs 1-4	1x		
NFO	15x				

cannot tabulate "Carles li dist" (1x below) with "(puis le) dist Carles," because the noun is in a different position in the line.

Franceis: 100x minus 27x oblique, minus 5x vocative, minus 1x singular, minus 3x doubling, minus 6x refrain = 58x

TO NFO FO RFO IFO
58 22 36 16 20

Total formulae: 15 DF, 36x

Regular formulae:

	1 DF, 16x		
		Dient Franceis 1-4	16x
IFO	14 DF, 20x		
		Franceis descendit 1-4	4x
		Franceis escriet 1-4	2x
		e li Franceis i fierent 1-6	2x
Franceis barons 1-4	1x	Franceis n'un talent 3-7	2x
		Franceis curucus e dolent ^{3-10 bis}	1x, 1x
mil Franceis de France 2-6	1x	Franceis sunt morz 1-4	1x
		Morz sunt Franseiz 1-4	1x
		Franceis escriet <i>final</i>	1x, 1x
		Franceis se fierent 5-9	1x
		Franceis se dementent <i>final</i>	1x
NFO	22x		
Refrain		Franceis murrunt 1-4	6x ¹³

Guenes 61x, minus 5 vocative minus 2 doubling formulae = 54x¹⁴

TO NFO FO RFO IFO
54 12 42 21 21

Total formulae: 12 DF, 42x

Regular formulae:

	1 DF, 21x		
		Guenes respo(u)nt 1-4	14x
		...dist Guenes 1-4 ¹⁵	7x
Infrequent formulae:	10 DF, 21x		
Guenes li quens 1-4	5x		
Guenes li fels 1-4	3x		
...li quens Guenes 1-4 ¹⁶	3x (+1x)		
		Guenes i vint 1-4	2x
		Ço respunt Guenes 1-4	2x
		Quant le(co) v(e)it Gu.1-4	2x
		Quant Guenes veit 1-4	1x
		Quant l'oit Guenes 1-4	1x
		Guenes respundit <i>final</i>	1x
		Guenes est fels (? cf. li fels) 1-4	1x
NFO	12x		

¹³ This phrase seems to me a deliberate refrain, not a freely used formula, occurring as it does only towards the end of *laissez* 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, and 78, and tolling the knell of Roland and his company. Hence it cannot be counted as a formula; yet it is not non-formulaic. Therefore I have removed it from the statistics altogether.

¹⁴ "Guenelon" in the nominative has a different meter.

¹⁵ See note 59.

¹⁶ See note 59.

Marsilie(s): 60x plus 1x Marsiliun (v. 222), minus 15x non-nominative = 46x

TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO		
46	11	35	20	15		
Total formulae: 8 DF, 35x						
Regular formulae:					1 DF, 20x	
Li reis Marsilie 1-4					20x	
Infrequent formulae:					7 DF, 15x	
dist Marsilies li reis <i>final</i>					2x	Ço dist Marsilie(s) 1-4 5x
reis Marsilies li bers <i>final</i>					2x	Quan l'ot Marsilie 1-4 2x
li reis Marsilie(un) <i>final</i>					2x	
NFO					11x	Respunt Marsilie 1-4 1x ço li a dit Marsilie <i>final</i> 1x

Na(e)imes 24x minus 1x vocative, 1x doubling formula = 22x

TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO		
22	1	21	13	8		
Total formulae: 5 DF, 21x						
Regular formulae:					1 DF, 13x	
Naimes li du(c)x 1-4					13x	
Infrequent formulae					4 DF, 8x	
...dux Neimes 1-4 ¹⁷					4x	est Neimes venud <i>final</i> 2x
dux Neimes 4-6, <i>final</i>					1x, 1x	
NFO					1x	

Oliver: 69x, minus 13x oblique, minus 7x vocative, minus 9x doubling formulae = 40x
Localization: 26x in 2-4

TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO		
40	13	27	13	14		
Total formulae: 9 DF, 27x						
Regular formulae:					1 DF, 13x	
						Dist Oliver 1-4 13x
Infrequent formulae:					8 DF, 14x	
e Oliver li proz e li... 1-8 ¹⁸					4x	
li quenz Oliver <i>final</i>					3x	
compainz Oliver <i>final</i>					2x	
Oliver sis compainz <i>final</i>					1x	E Oliver chevalchet 1-6 (cf. note 5) 1x
Danz Oliver 1-4					1x	Oliver li respunt <i>final</i> 1x
Oliver li ber <i>final</i>					1x	
NFO					12x	

¹⁷ Cf. note 59. "Dux Naimes" in 3-4 is freely preceded by either "Respunt" (3x) or "E dist" (1x), and is therefore part of a speaking formula. If it had been tabulated under 3x and 1x it would have been classified as filling the first hemistich; instead I have tabulated under 4x to recognize its freedom, and continued to classify it as filling the first hemstich.

¹⁸ See note 58.

	Païen(s): ¹⁹ 108x minus 24x oblique, 18x singular, 7x vocative, 3x doubling = 56x				
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization: 25x in 1
56	18	38	8	30	
Total formulae: 15 DF, 38x					
Regular formulae:					
				1 DF, 8x	
Infrequent formulae:					
				14 DF, 30x	
Felun païen 1-4				3x	Dient païen 1-4 8x
Païen d'Arabe 1-4				2x	Païen s'en fuint 1-4 5x
					Païen escrient 1-4 4x
					N'i ad païen 1-4 ²⁰ 3x
					Moerent païen 1-4 2x
					Païen chevalchent 1-4 2x
					Païen respudent 1-4 2x
					Païen sunt morz 1-4 2x
					s'en fuint païens <i>final</i> 1x
					Païen dient 1-4 1x
					païen descendent 1-4 1x
					païen l'entendent 1-4 1x
					sunt morz païens <i>final</i> 1x
NFO, breaking down into:					
païen				18x	
païens				15x	
				3x	
Rollant: 187x total, minus 49x oblique minus 13x vocative minus 6x doubling = 119x					
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization : 70x in 3-4
119	25	94	61	33	
Total formulae: 24 DF, 94x					
Regular formulae:					
				4 DF, 61x	
Li quens Rollant 1-4					
				33x	
					Ço di(s)t Rollant 1-4 11x
					Respo(u)nt Rollant 1-4 11x
Li quens Rollant 5-8					
				6x	
Infrequent formulae:					
Ço sent Rollant 1-4				5x	Quant (l')ot Rollant 1-4 3x
					Morz est Rollant 1-4 3x
					Rollant regardet 1-4 3x
					Rollant s'en turnet 1-4 2x
					Quan(t) Rollant veit 1-4 2x
					Rollant respunt <i>final</i> 1x
					Rollant regardet <i>final</i> 1x
					Or veit Rollant 1-4 1x
					ço li respunt Rollant <i>final</i> 1x
					Rollant apelet 1-4 1x,[2x]
					dist Rollant 5-8 1x
					Rollant dist 1-4 (sic) 1x
NFO					
				25x	
Vocative					
				13x	
Ami(s) Rollant 5x					
Cumpai(g)n(z) Rollant 3x					
sire Rollant 1x					
Non-formulaic 4x					
Doubling					
				6x	
Oliver e Rollant 4x (inc. 1x Genitive)					
Rollant e Oliver 2x					
Oblique					
				49x	

¹⁹ 5 instances of "païens" have nominative plural syntax.

²⁰ "païen" functions as a plural.

Common Nouns

					Bataille nom: 73x minus 43x oblique = 30x			
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization: 12x in 2-3			
30	7	23	9	14				
Total formulae: 9 DF, 23x								
Regular formulae:					1 DF, 9x			
						...bataille est 1-4		9x
Infrequent formulae:					14x			
ceste bataille(?) 1-4					3x			
						ert (fut) la bataille 7-10		2x
						la bataille serat 6-10		1x
						bataille i ad 1-4, 7-10		1x,1x
						bataille i ert 1-4, 5-8, 7-10		1x,1x,1x
						justee est la bataille 5-10		1x
						bataille i seit justee 5-10		1x
						s'il ad bataille 1-4		1x
NFO					7x			
					C(h)eval: 52x minus 3x nominative = 49x			
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	FO	Localization: 16x in 3-4			
49	13	36	21	15				
Total formulae: 11 DF, 36x								
Regular formulae:					2 DF, 21x			
						cheval brochet 1-4		14x
						siet el cheval 1-4		7x
Infrequent formulae:					9 DF, 15x			
...cheval curant 5-10					4x			
... bon cheval 1-4					2x	brochet le cheval 6-10		2x
						sur sun cheval (se) pasmet 5-10		2x
... bon cheval 6-8, 7-9					1x, 1x	set el ceval 5-8		1x
						sist sur un ceval 5-9		1x
						le cheval curre 7-10		1x
NF					15x			
					Co(u)mpai(g)n(nz) voc sing: 20x minus 4x epithetic, 1x plural = 15x			
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization: 10x in 3-4			
15	4	11	9	2				
Total formulae: 3 DF, 11x								
Regular formula:					1 DF, 9x			
Sire co(u)mpai(g)n(z) 1-4					9x			
Infrequent formula:					2 DF, 2x			
Sire cumpainz 5-8					1x			
Bel sire, chers cumpainz 1-4					1x			
NFO					4x			

Cors: 75x minus 6x plural, minus 1x "horns" = 68x				
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO
68	28	40	7	33
Total formulae: 20 DF, 40x				
Regular formula:				
1 DF, 7x				
Localization: 19x in 4				
Infrequent formulae				
par mi le cors li 5-8				
19 DF, 33x				
trestut le cors 1-4				
enz el cors li 5-8				
braz del cors <i>final</i>				
e(se) de mun cors(?) 1-4				
par mi le cors ferut 1-10, 5-10				
par mi le cors...de iiiii. espiez 1-10, (cf. above)				
NFO				
28x				
Erbe: 17x²¹				
Localization: 14x in 3-4				
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO
17	3	14	14	0
Total formulae: 1 DF, 14x				
Regular formula:				
Sur l'herbe verte 1-4				
NFO				
3x				
Escut(z) 33x minus 3 nominative = 30x				
Localization: 15x in 1-2				
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO
30	11	19	12	7
Total formulae: 6 DF, 19x				
Regular formula:				
1 DF, 12x				
Infrequent formulae:				
5 DF, 7x				
escut bucler (cf. plur) 7-10				
sis bons escuz (generic) 1-4				
NFO				
11x				
Hanste: 21x minus 6x nominative = 15x				
Localization: 7x in 4				
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO
15	7	8	7	1
Total formulae: 2 DF, 8x				
Regular formula:				
Pleine sa hanste 1-4				
Infrequent formula:				
pleine sa hanste <i>final</i>				
NFO				
7x				

²¹ "Erbe" was not counted in the statistics, because it has no infrequent formula. I do not think that this fact would have affected the statistics significantly; but I did not include similar nouns in Homer. And if the *Roland*, as it seems not to, contained a large number of such nouns, that too might have mattered.

					Mot: 26x minus 1x nominative = 25x	
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization: 17 in 4	
25	6	19	13	6		
Total formulae: 5 DF, 19x						
Regular formula:					13x	
A icest (icel) mot 1-4					13x	
Infrequent formula:					6x	
					ki un sul mot respundet 5-10	2x
					e dist un mot 1-4	2x
					si li(ur) ad dit un mot, 1-6, 5-10	1x, 1x
NFO					6x	
					Oilz: 19x	
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization: 13x in 4	
19	6	13	6	7		
Total formulae: 6 DF, 13x						
Regular formula:					1 DF, 6x	
Plu(o)re(n)t des oilz 1-4					6x	
Infrequent formula:					1 DF, 7x	
kar a mes(voz) oilz 1-4					2x	
an(m)sdous les oilz 1-4					2x	
les oilz ansdous <i>final</i>					1x	plurer des oilz <i>final</i> 1x
						des oilz ne plurt <i>final</i> 1x
NFO					6x	
					Osberc: 27 minus 2x nominative, minus 1x plural = 24x²²	
TO	NFO	FO	RFO	IFO	Localization: 11x in 3-4	
24	3	21	7	14		
Total formulae: 6 DF, 21x						
Regular formula:					1 DF, 7x	
de sun osberc(?) 1-4					7x	
Infrequent formula:					5 DF, 14x	
e l'osberc li de-...5-9					5x	
blanc osberc 1-4, 7-8					2x, 2x	e sun osberc rumpet et desmailet 1-10 2x
						l'osberc li descomfist 5-10 2x
						l-osberc li rumpet 1-4 1x
NFO					3x	

²² "Osberc" might be excluded from the statistics on the grounds that its regular formula counts the possessive adjective as an epithet; but similar phrases falling in major cola were counted among the 190 nouns in Homer (ὦ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ, for example). I was persuaded partly by this parallel, and partly because the phrase is matched by a governing noun in the second hemistich, "pans, doubles, ventailles." This gives a total structure which resembles Parry's matching noun-epithet and verbal formulae.

		Rei: 43x	
TO NFO FO RFO IFO			Localization: 27x in 4
43 15 28 16 12			
Total formulae: 9 DF, 28x			
Regular formula:	1 DF, 16x	...dist (dient) al rei 1-4	16x
IFO	8 DF, 12x		
devant lu(e) rei(?) 1-4	2x		
un rei leutice(z)(?) 8-10	2x		
del rei paien 1-4	2x		
le rei persis(?) 8-10	2x		
del gentil rei 1-4	1x		
pur nostre rei(?) 1-4, 7-10	1x, 1x		
cest nostre rei(?) 1-4	1x		
NFO	15x		
		Reis: 136x minus 43x epithetic, 9x vocative, 7 plural, 1x oblique = 76x	
TO NFO FO RFO IFO			Localization: 37x in 4
76 24 52 17 35			
Total formulae: 28 DF, 52x			
Regular formula:	1 DF, 17x	.. di(s)t li reis 1-4	17x
Infrequent formula:	27 DF, 35x		
...reis de France 1-4	2x	Li reis cumandet 1-4	3x
li reis poesteifs <i>final</i>	2x	Respunt li reis 1-4	2x
		li reis escultet <i>final</i>	2x
		si li reis voeult 1-4	2x
		la siet (fut) li reis ki...ti(e)nt 1-10	2x
li reis magnes <i>final</i>	1x	ço voeult li reis 1-4	1x
li gentilz reis (cf.voc) 1-4, 5-8	1x, 1x	fiers est li reis & li reis est f., 1-4 bis	1x, 1x
		Quant l'ot li reis 1-4	1x
		Quant veit li reis 1-4	1x
		Li reis descent 1-4, inverted 5-8	1x, 1x
		Fust...i li ries, si fust li reis n'i 1-10	1x, 1x
		Las est li reis 1-4	1x
		...est le reis ki 1-5	1x
		Li reis vos mandet, inverted 1-4	1x, 1x
		alez li reis, li reis alez <i>final</i>	1x, 1x
		Li reis li (me) dunet (at) 1-4, 7-10	1x, 1x
NFO	24x		

Deafness and Orality: An Electronic Conversation

Introduction

What follows is an edited digest of a wide-ranging conversation that took place on ORTRAD-L, the electronic discussion group sponsored by the Center for Studies in Oral Tradition, between February 4 and February 13, 1993. Like most such exchanges, it begins from a germ of an idea, an aside, or a question, and grows outward in many different directions, sometimes with a clearly sequential logic and sometimes with more of a summary or reprise texture. We present it here because of both its endemic interest for *OT*'s readership and its mimetic illustration of a new mode of verbal exchange and performance—neither “oral” nor “written,” precisely. Should this feature prove worthwhile, we may well present other “threads” from ORTRAD-L in the future.

To subscribe to the discussion, send the following e-mail message to listserv@mizzou1.bitnet, with no subject line: sub ORTRAD-L your name. First and last name are required for your subscription to be processed.

Margaret Steiner:

Here's another wrinkle to the “tertiary orality”¹ question. Eric [Crump] says that even for written language, most of us convert what we read into sound, and I know that that's what I do. But what about deaf

¹ A previous discussion concerned fitting computer-mediated communication into Walter J. Ong's “primary” and “secondary” orality distinction (*Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, New Accent Series [London and New York: Methuen, 1982], pp. 135-37). “Tertiary orality” was suggested by Eric Crump as a possible term to describe the dual oral/literate nature of on-line conversation.

computer users? I have done no research among the hearing-impaired, but somebody out there who has can comment.

Stephanie Hall:

Marge, it is true that many prelingually Deaf people use written language very effectively even though they have never heard spoken language. Interestingly enough, this is especially true of second- or third-generation Deaf people whose parents signed to them. Sign languages are different from spoken languages, and from each other. American Sign Language is different in grammar and vocabulary from English, and different from British Sign Language as well.²

² A week after the cutoff date, the thread was briefly picked up again in another context, and Lois Bragg provided this more detailed description of ASL: “ASL, American Sign Language, indeed is a language and has its own syntax, wholly unrelated to that of English. ASL is a non-Indo-European language, related closely to French Sign Language, from which it branched off in the nineteenth century. (It is also wholly unrelated to BSL, British Sign Language, which is also wholly unrelated to English.) What [you are] evidently thinking of here is what we call MCE, Manually Coded English, an umbrella term for various invented systems of encoding spoken English into signs. . . . It is very easy to confuse an MCE system for ASL, and it happens all the time. Further complicating matters is a widely used pidgin, called PSE, Pidgin Sign English. I use this pidgin a great deal myself, and when you see me at an academic conference with an interpreter, this is the language we are using during the sessions. We switch to ASL for socializing. I can’t produce any MCE system, and read them with great difficulty.”

Stephanie Hall adds this comment: “ASL and other human sign languages most *certainly* are languages. ASL is *not* English. It took those of us doing research on these languages a very long time to convince linguists of this. Now this has been firmly established. . . .

“There are reasons why this confusion still persists. When people see interpreters on TV they often get the sense that what they are seeing is signs from English. And that is mostly true, with some ASL thrown in. Interpreters are hearing, and their job is to make English comprehensible to the Deaf. There is a long tradition of using signs in English Syntax as a language mixture (sometimes called a pidgin, but it is not) as a way of communicating between the Deaf and the hearing. But these conventions should not be confused with ASL used by the Deaf among themselves. This is rather like using Chinese vocabulary in English syntax and then having people say that Chinese is just English with funny sounds.

“But, for the record, ASL has its own grammar, vocabulary (which does not

So how do kids grow up in a home where a non-English visual language is used and without the ability to hear English spoken (lipreading is not a substitute), and yet write effectively enough to go to college, become professionals, and even write books and Ph.D. dissertations? While written language has a strong relationship to oral language, it does not absolutely depend upon it.

If you are interested in reading more about this, Madeline Maxwell has studied deafness and literacy. She had an article in *Language and Society* a couple of years back.³

Eric Crump:

That's a wrinkle-and-a-half, Marge, especially if we're talking about people who have been hearing-impaired from birth and whose only face-to-face language has been sign. If we accept Ong's pronouncement on the fundamental orality of language,⁴ we might say that even sign language, though it has no auditory quality, is related to orality in the same way printed words are: it couldn't occur without prior oral language.

Lois Bragg:

lois bragg here, at the gallaudet university english department, being bombarded with private messages soliciting my response to the recent postings on orality and deafness (and doing deaf typing, a derivative of tty communication, which allows for no upper-/lower-case distinctions and

correspond to English vocabulary on a word-to-word basis), and syntax. It is a highly inflected language. It generates its own new vocabulary (rather than acquiring words from other languages extensively as English does). It uses a visual directional syntax common to visual languages. It uses classifiers (like Navaho, I am told). In short, it is not only a language, it is a *very different language from English.*"

³ "Some Functions and Uses of Literacy in the Deaf Community," *Language in Society*, 14 (1985): 205-21.

⁴ *Orality and Literacy*, p. 7.

makes most marks of punctuation a two-key hassle).⁵ to be perfectly honest, i havent felt quite up to joining this thread, for reasons that may become clear below. however, because ive gotten quite a bit from this net in its very short life, i guess i have some responsibility to give something (crotchety) back on a subject some folks seem to think i know something about. besides, its easier than answering all those private notes! so here goes. . . .

1) in my considered opinion, deaf culture is absolutely an “oral” culture. father ong is absolutely wrong on this point. asl (american sign language) is an “oral” language. and asl literature is an “oral” literature—perhaps the only true living “oral” literature in the western world. however, this point is neither readily apparent nor widely accessible because,

2) the deaf community is (regrettably) a closed community, for many reasons, not the least of which is the language barrier. entry to this community is absolutely dependent upon learning the language (asl), which aint easy, and, on top of that, having some sort of very close contact with deaf people. short of membership in the deaf community, there is no other way to get reliable information on the language or literature because,

3) you cant believe ANYTHING you read, including this posting. all issues, including and especially those that have appeared on this net, are hotly debated within the deaf community, and there is no such thing as a basic textbook or primer that isnt under fire from one sizable segment of the deaf community. as an example, i would say that in my opinion,

4) it simply is not so that “many” deaf people become effective writers of english, or that written english is not necessarily dependent upon audition/speech. i would bet my right arm (a big bet for a signer) that no one of the 200 members of the gallaudet faculty would fail to snort at that opinion, tho, god help us, we all very much wish it were true, and regularly behave as if it were. (what else can we do, when faced with a classroom full of shockingly intelligent students who come to us with grammar-school-

⁵ The TTY (teletypewriter), also known as the TDD telecommunication device for the deaf, and TT (text telephone), is a device with a keyboard, a one-line display, and a means of connection to telephone lines, which allows people who are deaf or who do not speak to communicate by phone. To preserve the distinctive “voice” resulting from this method, no attempt has been made to edit Bragg’s “deaf typing” into standard printing conventions.

level, ESL⁶ reading and writing skills?) but if the truth be told, even the dullest member of the deaf community could spot my prose a mile away as the product of a late-deafened person with usable, auditory memory of the idioms, cadences, and tones of speech. the sharpest, of course, will recognize that my auditory memory has receded, in that my prose is now somewhat stilted—a sure sign that i read a lot and do not hear at all, which brings me to my final point:

5) please dont be put off by my tone in this posting! it is partly a tone-deaf, deaf tone. and partly that i saw the thread as something like that which a group of notable brain surgeons might achieve if they were to undertake the dating of *beowulf*: a worthy effort indeed (yup, im an anglo-saxonist). but i humbly advise english 501: old english, before they begin. and because i like to contradict myself,

6) i humbly advise harlan lanes *mask of benevolence*,⁷ which you may safely (take it from me!) believe. and finally (will she never shut up?), im happy to grab the opportunity to say that,

7) our listowner⁸ is a prominent aficionado of and advocate for deaf culture and asl, and is in fact the person who induced the NEH to recognize and provide for the needs of deaf academics.

Stephanie Hall:

Hello Lois, nice to meet you. I am a hearing signer and I had a Deaf Grandmother (Ethel Taylor Hall, Gallaudet class of 1900). I did my dissertation, and have published a few articles, on the social aspects of deafness, particularly folklore and sociolinguistics. This doesn't make me an expert either—just another one of the many voices adding to the confusion on this subject.

I agree with you that sign language is, in all the ways intended by this discussion, an oral language. Doesn't that sound strange?! In talking

⁶ English as a Second Language.

⁷ Harlan Lane, *Mask of Benevolence: Disabling the Deaf Community* (New York: Knopf, 1992).

⁸ "Listowner" refers to the individual who originated this discussion group.

about signs we usually contrast oral, meaning language physically spoken with the oral apparatus, with signed, meaning language physically spoken on the hands. But when it comes to “oral tradition” there is no significant difference between the signed and the spoken. Neurolinguist Ursula Bellugi⁹ has looked at this and found that ASL happens, by and large, in the same part of the brain as spoken language (in an area just behind the left ear).

Fingerspelling is a different thing—a way of representing spoken languages on the hands (usually just a word here and there, but sometimes phrases). Now that is an interesting variation on this theme of oral writing. Perhaps fingerspelling is an example of writing orally?

I do think that the achievements of the Deaf in acquiring proficiency in writing spoken languages challenges the idea that writing is dependent on oral speech (an idea I think originated with Chomsky rather than Ong?). But I hope I didn't seem to overstate Deaf literacy. It depends on your perspective, I guess. Many hearing people are astonished to find out that there are around 100 Deaf Americans with Ph.D.'s, for instance. But if we are talking about improving education of the Deaf—certainly we need to do a lot better. Many of those Ph.D.'s will tell you they got their degrees in spite of, rather than because of, the educational establishment.

And you are right that there are gaps and difficulties in achieving literacy for people who do not hear language. Sometimes interesting ones in terms of oral tradition—because it is oral traditions that the Deaf have the least access to. It is possible to learn to write from reading and writing, but you don't learn what is talked. English idioms, slang, and cultural attitudes are often very difficult for the Deaf to absorb. So it is not surprising, for example, that of the writing published by prelingually deaf authors, there is quite a bit of non-fiction, some poetry, but very little fiction.

I've rambled on enough. Besides, I can't spell this early in the morning!

⁹ See Howard Poizner, Edward S. Klima, and Ursula Bellugi, *What the Hands Reveal About the Brain* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987).

Theresa Skrip:

It might be useful to make a distinction between the historical development of writing, typography, online modes of communication on the one hand, and the acquisition of individual speaking, reading, and writing skills on the other. Ong does not presuppose that individual people must be able to, themselves, physically speak to learn language. Even the old Chomskian argument for the “language acquisition device” would not claim that. Ong’s statements about the transition from orality to literacy are not statements about ontogeny.

I’d like to refer us, then, back to Eric’s comment that you first need a base oral language in which to operate before you can develop, historically and as a culture, writing as we know it now. If we were, as a species, completely unable to hear all those eons ago when we were just forming our basic ways of communicating, we undoubtedly would have developed some manner of communication with each other; however, this manner would likely have been much different from “alphabetization,” which is fundamentally a way of translating sound into text.

Erica M. Dibietz:

Hello Stephanie. . . and hello to you Lois (we meet again on the NET :)¹⁰ I am particularly interested in what you both are writing as I am translating an assessment tool for substance abuse for use with the deaf/hearing impaired. I am fortunate in having some deaf counselors and an interpreter help me with this undertaking. They are providing me with some of the “nuts and bolts,” i.e. translating the english into ASL and adding some critical questions, i.e. education and medical info. BUT I need some theoretical underpinnings, i.e. why does this have to be translated etc. and you both speak to differences in those who are born

¹⁰ The colon followed by end parenthesis is called an “emoticon,” one of a group of typographic representations of facial expressions turned on their sides for the purpose of communicating to the discussants attitudes normally conveyed by facial expression, gesture, and physical appearance. The example above is the basic emoticon of friendliness or a joke; however, others are often quite imaginative. For instance, the sequence ;-) means the speaker is winking, :-o registers shock or surprise, and 8-) represents a speaker who wears glasses.

deaf/h.i. and those who have lost their hearing at a later time and therefore have memory of spoken language. Can you give me some more specifics on this as well as references? I will be happy to cite you in my article. Many thanks and keep up the discussion.

Lois Bragg:

hi, this is lois again, with an omnibus posting in response to a new batch of private queries and net postings.

asl ranks third in the u s, behind english and spanish, for the number of people who use it as their primary language at home. this makes it by far the most widely used oral language. as such, it rewards study by oral-traditional scholars. dan, your student has a head start on havelock since she s studying asl.¹¹ i find a lot in his work on greek culture that looks deaf to me. (thats a compliment to all concerned.)

now, what do i mean by oral? stephanie halls explanation is good. in addition, i would point out that asl has no written form. linguists have developed several writing systems for asl, but they are universally shunned by deaf people. like socrates, perhaps, we want to keep our culture oral, and refuse to use them. as theresa skrip astutely guesses, they are not alphabets, but rather syllabaries or logograms, although i understand that an alphabet is in the works. we wont use it!

how is deaf culture oral? this looks like a good idea for an article, but let me just throw out a few things I copped from ong. (by the way, my quarrel with ong is merely that he refuses to believe that deaf sign languages are indeed natural languages, not manual codes of spoken languages. this is wrong, wrong, wrong, and stephanie hall has explained why.) lets see . . . in deaf culture, expression is formulaic, patterned, mnemonic, redundant, conservative, traditional, situational, concrete, empathetic, and participatory. asl syntax is additive rather than subordinative, and the literature is aggregative rather than analytic, and full of personification. how's that, jim? and yes, there is a class of professional "singers" who are the repositories of accumulated cultural knowledge, but

¹¹ Refers to a request from Dan Melia for opinions on how best to introduce an undergraduate speech pathology major who studies ASL to the works of Eric Havelock on oral culture.

everyone takes a turn when the harp is passed and it's rare to find a deaf cædmon who is too shy or inept to sing.

there is quite a bit of published writing by deaf authors and it is largely non-fiction, as stephanie points out. more interesting, however, is the vast literature in asl, a tiny bit of which is available on videotape, the rest, as with all oral literatures, you have to catch at a deaf get-together. in asl, you will find a full range of literary/oral genres, including epics (there is a very good one called, in english translation, "deaf president now," which deals with the events at gallaudet in march 1988 and was composed shortly after that historic coup d'état),¹² drama, lyric poetry, folktales, jokes (lots of jokes), but not fiction, of course, for obvious reasons.

finally stephanie and i agree on all points she has brought up in her two recent postings except one: her contention on the ability to learn to read and write english through access to its writing system only. maybe we are just differing on the degree to which this is possible. stephanie, im sure you know bob johnson, scott liddel, and carol ertings "unlocking the curriculum,"¹³ but for the rest of you folks, this is a seminal article written by three of my colleagues asserting the *theoretical* possibility of acquiring english literacy without speech. i say theoretical, because it is not possible to experiment on deaf children by withholding speech therapy to see if they can do it. i tried this experiment on myself by trying to learn a language written in a non-roman alphabet (russian) and it didnt work. i simply couldnt make heads or tails of it without knowing the sound values of the characters. i gave up after a couple of weeks of hell, and taught myself what i could of what russian might sound like by using the international phonetic alphabet equivalents for the characters and pitch charts for the syntax, and went through five happy semesters to tolstoi. i am told that i speak russian very poorly, and with a german accent, and write it like a

¹² "Deaf President Now" was the student protest that closed Gallaudet University, brought the students into the streets of Washington and into the national news media, and resulted in the resignation of the recently appointed hearing president and the appointment of Gallaudet's first deaf president. The epic concerning this event was composed and is performed by Gil Eastman, a now retired member of the Gallaudet Theater Department faculty.

¹³ Bob Johnson, Scott Liddel, and Carol Erting, *Unlocking the Curriculum: Principles for Achieving Access in Deaf Education* (Washington D.C.: Gallaudet University, 1989).

german, too, tho i read it ok. this experience seems analogous to that of prelingually deaf people who typically learn to read and write english by associating the written characters with their estimate of what the sound values might be. the result is a pidgin: the words are english, but the grammar is asl. (but now we are in a linguistics discussion, and stephanie and i should go off-list if we want to pursue it.) in fine, i would say that alphabetic writing is dependent upon the oral language it encodes.

with sincere apologies for the length of this posting, and a vow to break any further comments into discrete and better labeled chunks.

Stephanie A. Hall:

Lois, I love the idea of Deaf Cædmoms! I have met many myself. I am not sure we really disagree. Or if we do, I am not sure how we disagree. Since I am replying on list I will try to keep my reply relevant to the topic:

Lois's citation of Johnson, Liddell, and Erting is an important one, because it is essentially an applied challenge of the theoretical view that acquisition of written language is dependent on the acquisition of oral language. Some Oralist educators of the deaf took the notion of oral-before-written to a horrific extreme; isolating deaf children from signed languages and withholding the introduction of written language until spoken language was achieved. If Chomsky was right, they should have succeeded, but this system failed—and damaged the education of many deaf children.¹⁴

Johnson, Liddell and Erting are not proposing any such extreme experiment to prove that language can be taught through writing. They say only that the *primary* means for teaching writing to deaf children should be writing (page 17). They also say that children should be exposed to and acquire a natural language as early as possible so they will have a language on which to base further language learning. The only natural language the deaf can acquire is sign. (This is an overly short summary, see the monograph, *Unlocking the Curriculum: Principles for Achieving Access in*

¹⁴ See, for example, Pierre Oléron's preface to A. Van Oden, *Sign Languages of Deaf People and Psycholinguistics: A Critical Evaluation* (Lisse, The Netherlands: Swets & Zeitlinger, 1986), pp. 1-7. For a history of Deaf education in America, see Harlan Lane, *When the Mind Hears: A History of the Deaf* (New York: Random House, 1984).

Deaf Education, 1989).

They base their position on several studies that concluded that for the deaf, writing is the most successfully taught through writing, and that written language should be introduced at a very early age.

For me, as an ethnographer, the ethnographic evidence is most compelling. Deaf children of deaf parents are especially likely to succeed and to achieve a high level of literacy. The deaf must be doing something right that hearing educators are doing wrong. And it isn't too hard to see: deaf children in deaf homes acquire natural sign language. Deaf parents introduce writing at a very early age and children see their parents using TTYs and other writing to communicate. Sign language is used to talk about English. Speech is considered important too—but it is a *secondary* rather than a *primary* means of learning spoken language. And, perhaps most important, Deaf parents believe their children can succeed linguistically. Unlike hearing parents and educators, they do not underestimate their deaf children's potential.

I am not saying that hearing and speaking language does not affect literacy, of course it does. I am not saying that the Deaf can or do achieve identical competence to the hearing in written language—there are certainly differences. Only that the fact that some prelingually deaf people do achieve high levels of competence in written language and that they learn literacy *primarily* (not exclusively) through reading and writing challenges the idea that spoken competence in a language *necessarily* precedes literacy.

Sorry this got so long. I find it is hard to discuss *anything* about deafness briefly, it all gets so complicated. But also I think we get tangled up when we try and make short statements, because we seem to be saying things in extremes. I hope I have helped to make things clearer—or have I muddied it up some more?

Lois Bragg:

perhaps at this point in the discussion, some of you would like to see some writing samples from deaf, undergraduate english majors, to determine for yourselves to what degree they are commensurate with those of their hearing peers, and, thus, to what degree deafness interferes with the ability to acquire proficiency in a written encoding of an oral/aural language. since I have access to their files (because i coordinate the

program and am their advisor), i can pull such samples and tag them with respect to residual hearing (if any) and deaf/hearing status of parents, pending, of course, student permission. if anyone is interested, please let me know and ill go off-list with a d-list, where we can have a knock-down-drag-out fight over syntax and morphology.

in the meantime, i would like to point out that jim earl has made a very astute observation (unfortunately off-list) concerning the analogy between the deaf community with regard to english and the anglo-saxons with regard to latin. in both cases, we have a community using a low-prestige, oral language at home, and being schooled in a high-prestige L2, which is the language of literature and learned discourse. the validity of this analogy and what, if valid, we may learn from it, i dunno. as i told jim, i gave a paper on this very subject a couple of years ago, but it was orally composed and delivered, so poof! its gone. i can remember it all right because it was mnemonic (natch), redundant, concrete, empathetic, etc, but id sound like dweeb if i tried to translate it into english. the words above are jims.¹⁵

Karen Colburn:

Thanks to Lois and Jim and you others who are developing this conversation. I'm an Alaska Native, an actor, a Maine native, a graduate student. My undergraduate work was in French, German, Theology, with a lot of theatre courses. Presently, I am only beginning to look at what it means to be the daughter of an Alaska Native woman, fully acculturated, what DOES that mean. So, this semester I am looking at Native American Literature, a new course in the English dept. at Univ. of Maine. Yeah, so?

Well, your discussion of orality/literacy catches my attention. Especially when Lois points out that there is a recognizable difference in the writing of people in different levels of hearing. . . . Lois puts it much cleaner. We just read *Indian Boyhood* by Charles Eastman, and today the professor mentioned that it was actually his WIFE who wrote the ms., from the notes Charles made during his morning walks. He could talk (he could take notes), he could TELL his stories, but he couldn't WRITE them.

¹⁵ Response from "jim" (James W. Earl): "Lois—perhaps some of the words were mine, but I never said dweeb."

Neither could he write his weekly reports when he was serving as a government agent. This from a Dartmouth graduate, and a physician to boot. So what happened when this Sioux became literate?

So thanks, all, for your debate. I, for one, would love to see some examples of writing that illustrate observable differences in stages of hearing conversations, or just learning prose from reading.

Lois Bragg:

this is lois, thinking that some of you may be interested in a couple of conversations i had today with published deaf authors. around 7 30 this morning, not much to my surprise, i found myself on the gallaudet shuttle bus from union station to campus with the worlds only published deaf novelist.¹⁶ i asked her why it was that so few deaf people attempt novels. her immediate answer was that deaf writers write for deaf readers, and that deaf readers arent much interested in novels, AND that prose fiction is a late development in all cultures. she pointed out that deaf writers of prose prefer autobiography, to which i responded that our lives are much stranger than fiction. this cracked up the whole bus and nearly produced an accident at 6th and k streets. end of ethnographic interview 1. but she did beg me, in passing, to point out to the list that jonathan swift doesnt count. duly noted.

then, this afternoon, i posed the same question to a well-produced (off-broadway) deaf playwright,¹⁷ who has had a few of his short stories published. he told me that he writes short fiction only as an exercise for trying out ideas for his plays, a technique he learned from studying with derek walcott. (were showing off here.) he said he didnt quite know what the deal was with novels—why people write ‘em and read ‘em. he composes his dramatic scripts orally and then translates them into english. this comment recalled the technique of another deaf playwright who writes his scripts in facing-page translations: english on the right and english gloss with diacritics of asl on the left. this second playwright claims to think in both languages at the same time when he is writing drama. he also has a

¹⁶ Andrea Shettle, *Flute Song Magic* (New York: Avon, 1990).

¹⁷ Willy Conley.

couple of books of non-fiction, which he claims to have written by thinking in english. he claims that this is a big bore, and is happiest translating moliere into asl, tho there isnt a big audience for this work.

thank you to karen for her note on charles eastman, who wrote by dictating to his wife, tho he was a dartmouth grad and physician. looks to be a good analogy to me.

Barra Jacob-McDowell:

Like Karen, I have been reading this thread with interest. Also, it is not my field at all. I'm not certain if this is the appropriate place to mention this but will anyway; I'm curious about what feedback I might receive.

Every year while I was growing up, my blind grandmother would come and visit us for two months. She was undoubtedly the most important influence on my life; it's thanks to her that I have become a Celtic storyteller. When I was 7, I borrowed Helen Keller's *The Story of My Life* and read it to Gramma. We were both fascinated, and since the book had diagrams in the back for sign language, we promptly learned them. I searched out every book I could find to share with her. A year later Gramma, aged 80, was tricked into going to an eye doctor (she didn't believe in doctors much, and was convinced that her blindness was a test of her faith). Young doctor's diagnosis was cataracts which "could've been taken care of 38 yrs. ago." Most of the family pitched in to pay for the operations, and Gramma, having a crisis of faith, and scared to death of hospitals, was taken off for them and the very long recuperation necessary in those pre-laser days. I was not allowed to visit her. Wanting her to feel better, I wrote to Miss Keller c/o the Lighthouse for the Blind in NY. Everyone was astonished except for me when she sent Gramma a get-well card and an invitation for us to come to tea at her home, I think on Long Island in the spring. That card was the first thing Gramma wanted to see with her new glasses. We did go, just the 2 of us, by bus from my hometown in New Jersey, and were met in NY by her companion. I remember a long room filled with beautiful things to see and touch, fragile china, the great kindness of Miss Keller—and the communication problem. I had never been around any deaf person before, and I simply could not understand her speech. The solution was for me to sit between the two

ladies; Miss Keller felt what I said with one hand, while I spelled into her hand whatever Gramma said; she spelled her responses into one of my hands, and I spelled them into Gramma's with the other. Somewhat slow, but it worked. What has always intrigued me was the fact the Gramma could not simply look at my fingers to know what I was spelling. She had learned them by touch, and could not then nor in the remaining 4 yrs. of her life adapt to reading them visually. I was told by a college roommate who had a deaf friend from whom she had learned to sign, that signing is different for the deaf/blind than for the deaf, which makes sense.

After all this, here is my question: is it especially difficult for someone deaf who learned to sign as a sighted person later to make the transition to the other signing after losing sight?

Lois Bragg:

john "the lurker" mclaughlin missed seeing koko a couple of nights ago on tv.¹⁸ believe me, this gorilla carries on conversations in asl. in that clip (anybody got the cite?—my kids came running for me and i didnt catch the name of the program) we see koko discussing her taste in men and selecting a date on the basis, she said, of his hairiness, thus proving that she is after all just a gorilla, though a language-using one. it wont do simply to correct aristotle by correcting his (historically contingent) misapprehension of language as necessarily oral/aural. add other modes in which language can occur, and his definition of humans as language-using animals is no better than the old featherless-biped definition. a plucked chicken eliminated that one, and koko eliminates this one.

Enid Hilton:

Hallo Lois. This is Enid Hilton from South Africa wishing to join in your very interesting discussion on "orality" and deafness. I am a teacher of the deaf and am curious to know why you are so adamant that you want to keep your culture oral. Would it not help pre-lingually deaf children to

¹⁸ Refers to a statement indicating that apes have only limited ability to manipulate symbols.

acquire more concepts and information if they had access to a written form of their language? At the moment they have to rely on another person to gain information if they can't read. The written form would enable them to learn independently to some extent. Also, if ASL was available in a written form, would hearing people not have more access to its literature, language, and culture?

You also say that the oral literature of the deaf does not include fiction "for obvious reasons." I am not clear that I know the reasons. Could you elaborate? If ASL was taught as a first, natural language to prelingually deaf children, would you not tell the children "deaf" stories through ASL to develop their imaginations? Would their teaching be focused primarily on reality?

Please bear with all these questions! It is exciting to be part of an international discussion. Oh yes, could you please send a reference for Father Ong whom you mention? Thanks. Bye for now.

Paul Jordan-Smith:

The note about Koko should be posted to the semiotic list, where it would doubtless receive a very lively response and possibly a sound drubbing. The semiotic view, especially of zoosemioticians like Sebeok,¹⁹ is that signing of this kind does NOT a language make. There are lots of issues here, and a lot of problems, such as the presence of humans familiar to the animal and the possibility of unconscious signaling. This doesn't negate animal communication—but it calls into question animals communicating *in human language*. There's a respectable bibliography of studies undertaken, not just at the "animal trainer" level, but at the semiotic. Take a look at Sebeok's *Animal Communication, Perspectives in Zoosemiotics*, and a couple of the essays in *A Sign is Just a Sign*, as well as two anthologies edited by him and Jean Umiker-Sebeok: *The Clever Hans*

¹⁹ *Animal Communication: Techniques of Study and Results of Research* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1968); *Perspectives in Zoosemiotics* (The Hague: Mouton, 1972); *A Sign is Just a Sign* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991); *The Clever Hans Phenomenon: Communication with Horses, Whales, Apes, and People*, ed. with Robert Rosenthal (New York: New York Academy of Sciences, 1981); and *Speaking of Apes: A Critical Anthology of Two-way Communication with Man*, Topics in Contemporary Semiotics (New York: Plenum Press, 1980).

Phenomenon, and Speaking of Apes.

Theresa Skrip:

Koko's pretty amazing, I agree. In fact, gorillas have an even better propensity for acquiring sign language than their cousins, the chimpanzees (see F.G. Patterson's "The Gestures of a Gorilla" in *Brain and Language*, 5 [1978]:72-97).

No one, I think, will argue that speech is not necessary for communication on some level. We know that animals communicate in a number of different ways; unfortunately, none of these ways are equivalent to human language. Even ape studies, as promising as they look, have failed to show that apes can sign with Ameslan,²⁰ Yerkish designs, Premack symbols, or other ape symbol systems using the same grammatically inferred relations that humans use when they communicate with language. When we see a string of ape signs, we might infer grammatical relations among them that the ape does not. For example, Terrace et al. (1979)²¹ have argued that when the chimpanzee, Washoe, signed "water bird" for "swan," in response to the question "What that?" Washoe might have been identifying water and bird, but not using "water" specifically like an adjective, as we would. Others in the field have made similar criticisms of the conclusions drawn from ape language studies.

A further complicating factor in the "origins of language" debate (which is what we are really discussing now, I think) is that some neuropsychological research has suggested that lesions (as a result of injury or stroke, typically) in the area of the brain disrupting vocal speech also disrupt signing ability (see Kimura's research, especially 1979 and 1981).²²

²⁰ Another name for ASL.

²¹ H.S. Terrace, L.A. Petitto, R.J. Sanders, and T.G. Beyer, "Can an Ape Create a Sentence?" *Science*, 206 (1979): 891-902.

²² D. Kimura, "Neuromotor Mechanisms in the Evolution of Human Communication," in *Neurobiology of Social Communication in Primates: An Evolutionary Perspective*, ed. by J.D. Steklis and M.J. Raleigh (New York: Academic Press, 1981), pp.

This would lead some to conclude (and they have) that vocal language and signing are controlled by the same areas of the brain.

One final point here is that in making apes learn to sign, we might be underestimating their true communicative ability in, if you will, “ape speak.” That is, some researchers (most notably Goodall²³) have pointed out that apes have a huge repertoire of communicative sounds and sound combinations that are analogous in complexity to our own language but are not necessarily analogous in grammar, syntax, or abstraction to human language. I’m not trying to argue that apes, or any other types of animals, do not communicate. What I am saying is that they do not communicate in what we would understand to be “language” in the human sense.

Lois Bragg:

a quick answer to this question from barra jacob-mcdowell:

I was told by a college roommate who had a deaf friend from whom she had learned to sign, that signing is different for the deaf/blind than for the deaf, which makes sense. . . .

After all this, here is my question: is it especially difficult for someone deaf who learned to sign as a sighted person later to make the transition to the other signing after losing sight?

well, first of all, thank you for a great story.

the sign language that deaf-blind people use is just ordinary asl. the only way it differs is that there must be physical contact between the two people signing with one another, which will cause some changes in articulation, and some exaggeration of the articulation to replace the loss of grammatical features that would ordinarily be articulated in facial expression.

i think the point of confusion here is that helen keller did not use sign language, but rather fingerspelling, which is simply a method of spelling

197-219. D. Kimura, “Neural Mechanisms in Manual Signing,” *Sign Language Studies*, 33 (1979): 291-312.

²³ J. Goodall, *The Chimpanzees of Gombe* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1986).

english words. hope this is helpful.

Lois Bragg:

this is lois, responding to enid hiltons posting today:

Hallo Lois. This is Enid Hilton from South Africa wishing to join in your very interesting discussion on “orality” and deafness. I am a teacher of the deaf and am curious to know why you are so adamant that you want to keep your culture oral? Would it not help pre-lingually deaf children to acquire more concepts and information if they had access to a written form of their language? At the moment they have to rely on another person to gain information if they can’t read. The written form would enable them to learn independently to some extent. Also, if ASL was available in a written form, would hearing people not have more access to its literature, language, and culture?

enid is right, of course: literacy is a good thing in general, and a good thing for a minority language. am i adamant about the deaf community staying oral? the community will either do what it has to do to survive, or it will perish. many people would say the latter would be a good thing, because deafness is a pretty serious disability. even deaf people who are proud of being deaf and of their membership in this minority community are quite aware of what it is to be unable fully to participate in civic life—I mean, WE cant join the army, either! but most of us want the community to survive and flourish, and so we stick to the old ways. if i may venture an analogy by paraphrasing i.b. singer, we keep kosher to avoid assimilation.

about writing systems for asl, i should mention that i, myself, am a big fan of sutton sign writing, a logographic system that includes an alphabet for loan words. for this, i am considered an eccentric. many of you will not be surprised that i can read it but not write it. the only person i know who can write it is my sister, who is, like many deaf people, a printer by trade, and who actually prints stuff written in it. she has no readers.

You also say that the oral literature of the deaf does not include fiction “for obvious reasons.” I am not clear that I know the reasons. Could you elaborate? If ASL was taught as a first, natural language to prelingually deaf children would you not tell the children “deaf” stories through ASL to

develop their imaginations? Would their teaching be focused primarily on reality?

i really wish that this net would take up this question about fiction being a literary genre dependent upon writing (if not printing). all i can say about the deaf community, as an oral culture, is that we dont do fiction, as a rule. there is a lot of prose narrative, but it is largely epic, legend, (pseudo)history, and (auto)biography. the last is quite stylized, and much more like hagiography than modern forms.

can we please change the subject now? im pooped. how about if you all help me and enid and explain to us what those "obvious reasons" are for the lack of fiction in oral cultures.

Theresa Skrip:

"Fiction," for me, is one of those messy words that I never really know the meaning of. Does anybody else feel this way?

Prose narrative, on the other hand, is a little less messy, I think. If we look at how narratives are structured, what we notice is that published prose fiction is often linear in nature and non-repetitive. This type of writing and reading requires us to think in ways that preliterate people would likely not think. That is, oral narrative depends on less linear, more repetitive forms and epithets so that audiences would be able to remember the characters and events as well as hear the speaker tell them (after all, tales were probably told in group settings where there were many distractions).

What I surmise from my readings in this area is that, as literates, we have certain expectations and values about narrative structure that are very different from what pre-literate (oral) people value. Prose narrative caters a great deal to the expectation and values of literate audiences (i.e., lack of repetition, linear narrative, parallel subplots, etc.). As a consequence, it is not surprising to me that prose narrative, or something akin to it, does not exist in pre-literate cultures. One further point is that without writing linear prose structure probably would not have developed.

I'm not sure what this all means for the deaf community, since the argument I'm making is, again, a historical one and says nothing about cultures where literacy is rampant. On the other hand, I do wonder about

one thing. Much prose narrative incorporates a good deal of metaphor and symbolic comparison. If generalization beyond the concrete is an issue for persons who are deaf, then there might be a relation between the two (i.e., amount of prose narrative being inversely related to level of abstract thought). I have some great doubts about this, though, and I know very little about development in individuals who are congenitally deaf.

Stephanie A. Hall:

Just a point of clarification regarding the Deaf, ASL, and narrative, before things get too confused here. There certainly is storytelling in ASL, fictional and otherwise. There are also plays, poems, and one or two genres of wordplay that don't exist in English. What Lois and I were wondering about is why the Deaf do not write fiction in *English*, a language that is, and can never be, the native language of any prelingually deaf person in the normal sense.

Deafness creates a unique situation regarding literacy. There are no completely successful and widely used ways of writing sign language, although there are about three systems being experimented with.²⁴ (Signwriting developed by Valerie Sutton is one that has some potential because it is relatively easy to learn, but there are problems representing very fine movements of the face and hands). There are conventionalized ways of glossing signs, but these are not standardized and omit a lot of inflection, etc.

So the Deaf use a non-written language and write in a language that is not their native language. In addition, not all deaf people acquire a

²⁴ The first attempt at a "phonemic" system for writing American Sign Language was William Stokoe's *A Dictionary of American Sign Language on Linguistic Principles* (Silver Spring, MD: Linstock Press, 1965). This work helped establish that signs, like words, have parts and that sign languages are languages. Based on Stokoe's work was the report by Marina McIntire, Don Newkirk, Sandra Hutchins, and Howard Poizner from a 1987 project to create a workable "phonemic" system for ASL, primarily for research purposes. This system included characters for facial expression as well as hands and hand movements. Valerie Sutton's *Sign Writing for Everyday Use* (Newport Beach, CA: Sutton Movement Writing Press, 1981), introduced a movement-based system derived from her system for writing dance. This is the first attempt to create a "phonetic" system that allows for writing movement in any sign language.

native language in the normal sense. Most deaf children are born into homes with hearing parents. Unless there are deaf adults, or an educational system that intervenes to teach the parents signs as soon as an infant is identified as deaf, the child is not presented with any language until after the normal period of language acquisition. This is true of the majority of Deaf children, meaning that in addition to not being able to hear, most deaf children are language-delayed. Depending on what happens in later education, this may be more or less of a problem. But problems some deaf people have in understanding linguistic concepts have more to do with this problem of language delay than with any differences caused by ASL or the deafness itself.

Native Deaf signers are generally more facile with both ASL and written English. So, please, don't generalize about signing as an oral culture preventing people from abstract thought—that just isn't the case.

I wish I could send a couple of Clayton Valli's poems across the net as examples of abstract ASL, or some of the folk stories collected by Simon Carmel, Susan Rutherford, and others.²⁵ Oh, well. If you ever get a chance to see storytelling in ASL, I recommend the experience.

Karen Colburn:

I send you all a comment in support of Stephanie's suggestion, that if you ever get a chance to see storytelling in ASL, do it.

I have been acting with a local professional, award-winning children's theatre company, the Theatre of the Enchanted Forest, which regularly uses a signer for deaf members of the audience. Each time this woman has "performed" with us, we have all been intrigued with watching her. (I think she also has been working with the Penobscot Theatre Company).

So, this could bring up some questions about "performance." Does

²⁵ See Simon J. Carmel, "American Folklore in the Deaf Community," a videotape by Gallaudet College Television, Washington, DC in cooperation with the Smithsonian Festival of American Folklife, 1981, produced and directed by Simon J. Carmel; Susan D. Rutherford, "American Culture: The Deaf Perspective," a videotape made by The San Francisco Public Library with Deaf Media, Inc, produced by Susan D. Rutherford; and Clayton Valli, "Poetry in Motion: Original Works in ASL," a series of three videocassettes made by Sign Media, Inc., Burtonsville, MD, vol. 1.

the signer ever “upstage” the actors? If the one signer can successfully convey the multiple speakers on stage . . . why do we need so many actors? Or, rather, what about the possibility of a group of signers, all performing a play? And how much would the signers be able to convey, to a hearing audience unaccustomed to signing?²⁶

There has been some mention of the smaller movements, gestures, of the face or hands, or slight variations to indicate tone, etc. . . . When we actors watch our signer during our shows, we see that she “catches” the characters. We see that, even when we can’t “read” asl. She does “perform.”

Postscript

It is in the nature of such “threads” as this one that they lack a (textual) closure, tending rather to flow on into another related topic or sub-topic, perhaps to re-emerge later on in a new context. For this quality they may have something in common with storytelling in a living tradition, where performances punctuate and epitomize but do not subsume the tradition. At any rate, we look forward to more stories and storytelling on the ORTRAD-L net.

²⁶ The sort of theater that Karen Colburn imagines here is alive and well, and approaching its thirtieth birthday. The National Theater of the Deaf (headquartered in Waterford, Connecticut) was founded in 1966, and has been on tour every year since then, playing mainly to hearing audiences. In addition to the NTD, there are various local deaf theater companies, such as the Chicago Theater of the Deaf, Deaf West (Los Angeles), New York Theater of the Deaf, Fairmount Theater of the Deaf (Cleveland), Callier Theater of the Deaf (Dallas), and many more. Gallaudet University (Washington, D.C.) has an active theater department, as does the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Rochester, New York), which also sponsors a touring company.

Deaf Theater is performed in ASL. Hearing audiences who are not fluent in that language will depend upon voice-over translations, usually provided by two professional actors, one male and one female, who are employed by the theater company. Thus, the experience of Deaf Theater for a hearing audience is much like that of deaf people experiencing a hearing production with sign language interpretation.

Participants

Lois Bragg, Assistant Professor of English at Gallaudet University, is the author of *The Lyric Speakers in Old English Poetry* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 1991) and articles on various medieval literatures. She is presently at work writing a book on the Icelandic sagas, and, with Clayton Valli, setting up an annual ASL poetry competition.

Karen E. Colburn is an actor and assistant to the founder/producing director at the Continuum Theatre in Maine. A candidate for the Master of Arts in English at the University of Maine, she is currently writing her creative thesis, a playscript addressing Native American mother/daughter relations in increasingly assimilated social circumstances.

Eric Crump is the assistant director of the Writing Lab of the University of Missouri-Columbia and is a graduate student in English studying rhetoric, writing, and writing technologies.

Erica M. Dibietz is a Ph.D candidate at the Institute of Child Study, University of Maryland, College Park, currently working on transliterating the Addiction Severity Index for assessment of drug/alcohol use/severity for use in the deaf/hard of hearing population. Her article on substance abuse and mental health will appear in *Hospital and Community Psychiatry*, 1993.

Stephanie A. Hall is an ethnographic archivist with the American Folklife Center, Library of Congress. Her most recent publication on Deaf culture is "Monsters and Clowns: A Deaf American Halloween," *Folklife Annual*, 90 (1991): 122-31.

A certified teacher of the deaf, *Enid Hilton* holds a Master of Arts in applied linguistics. Currently she is in charge of language development programs for Deaf children at Fulton School, Gillitts, Natal, South Africa.

Barra Jacob-McDowell, also known as "Barra the Bard," is a Celtic storyteller who performs stories, poetry, singing, and the Celtic harp in the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania area. She also works as the Reserves Assistant at Hunt Library, Carnegie-Mellon University.

Writer and storyteller *Paul Jordan-Smith* is also the founding (and contributing) editor of *Parabola* magazine, and a graduate student in the Folklore and Mythology Program at UCLA. He serves as a staff member at UCLA's Office of Academic Computing.

Theresa M. Skrip attained her Master's degree in English Literature and Composition from the State University of New York at Binghamton, after which she taught for several years at the post-secondary level. Currently, she is a graduate student in clinical psychology at the University of Saskatchewan, performing research in children's understanding of friendship relations and interpersonal communication.

Margaret Steiner received her Ph.D in Folklore at Indiana University in 1988, and is currently writing a book based on her dissertation, an ethnography of singing in a border community in Northern Ireland. Her recent research focuses on the bilingual and bicultural singers in the Miramichi Region of New Brunswick, Canada; an article based on this research will appear in *Lore and Language* in 1993.

About the Authors

Mishael Maswari Caspi, Professor of Religious Studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, has published widely on Arabic and Jewish oral traditions, especially the traditions of women. Among his books are *Daughters of Yemen* (1985) and, with *Julia Ann Blessing*, who has completed her M.A. in Religious Studies at Santa Clara University, *Weavers of the Songs* (1991).

Thomas DuBois is Assistant Professor of Scandinavian Literature at the University of Washington, Seattle. His article, "An Ethnopoetic Approach to Finnish Folk Poetry: Arhippa Perttunen's *Nativity*," is forthcoming in *Studia Fennica*.

Associate Professor of English at the University of New Orleans, *Miriam Youngerman Miller* specializes in Old and Middle English literature. She is editor of *Approaches to Teaching Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* (1986) and co-editor of *Text and Matter: New Critical Perspectives on the Pearl-Poet* (1991).

William Sale, Professor Emeritus of Classics at Washington University, has written extensively on the Homeric poems, with particular relation to their formulaic structure. His most recent articles appear in *Transactions of the American Philological Association* and *Greek, Roman and Byzantine Studies*.

Madeline Sutherland, Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Texas, Austin, recently became Chair of her department. Her book, *Mass Culture in the Age of Enlightenment: The Blindman's Ballads of Eighteenth-Century Spain*, appeared in 1991.

Debra Wehmeyer-Shaw serves as Director of the Ohio Alliance for Arts Education in Columbus. Her fieldwork for this project was conducted in Columbia, Missouri while she was studying oral tradition at the University of Missouri.