

3521

**FLESH MADE WORD:
SECONDARY ORALITY AND THE MATERIALISM OF SOUND**

MARY JILL SPELLISCY

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES
THE UNIVERSITY OF STIRLING**

**IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

DECEMBER 2000

09/01

ABSTRACT

Approaching the subject of 'orality' as a complex social-historical practice containing fissures of technological inversion and spatial-acoustic transgression, this thesis seeks to understand the implications of an electronically realised 'secondary orality'. In particular, it seeks to understand this idea as it is elaborated in the media theory of Marshall McLuhan. The approach taken here attests to a vitally important, if often 'ghosted', materialism of acoustic space, a context which is immediately and ambivalently implicated in the institutionalising and ideologising of communications technology. It is argued that a cultural media theory must address those forms of managed communicative experience that serve to diminish the everyday vernacular. The Introduction of the thesis identifies developments that have brought the idea of a 'secondary orality' into being. Chapter One examines Havelock's and Innis's privileging of technology in the orality question, as well as the general denial of acoustic practice within the orality-literacy debate. Chapter Two explores Ong's ideas on 'presence' as well as Derrida's critique of Western phonocentrism in terms of the larger historical denial of sound. Chapter Three explores McLuhan's position on the techno-evolutionary overcoming of rationalism in the new electronic landscape and argues that his 'electronic materialism' is a form of interiorisation. Chapter Four turns to a discussion of the ancient world to consider oral ambivalence and the paradox of orality in the transition to literacy. Consideration is also given to the early modern emergence of a paradigm of abstract visualisation. Chapter Five examines the modern emergence of an oral resistance found in the acoustic otherworld of the 'chapbook' and the poetics of Wordsworth, Blake, and Clare. Chapter Six discusses issues of the oral 'other' as found in the theories of Bakhtin, Volosinov, and Kristeva. Chapter Seven investigates a varied postmodern neo-McLuhanism in relation to issues of ecology, intertextuality, and the feminisation of technology. The Conclusion argues that 'secondary orality' involves a technological inversion of oral powers serving an electronic hegemony. The mimetically engineered spatial disorientation of transgressive sociality is further considered.

CONTENTS

DECLARATION v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vi

INTRODUCTION – THE ABSENCE OF SOUND IN ORAL THEORY

The Privileging of Technology 1

Flesh Made Word: Interiorisation and Presence 10

Specters of Materialism: The Politics of Technological Inversion 14

Notes to Introduction 17

CHAPTER ONE – THE PARADOX OF IMPERMANENCE

Oral Contestation in the Politics of Oral Tradition 22

Havelock and Technologies of Preserved Form 26

Innis and Technologies of Time against Technologies of Space 33

The Oral-Literate Binary in Studies of Orality 39

Notes to Chapter One 45

CHAPTER TWO – THE PRESENCE OF SOUND: ONG AND DERRIDA

Ong and the Eternity of Sound in the Living Word of God 50

Derrida and Metaphysics: The Negation in the ‘Presence’ of Sound 63

Notes to Chapter Two 73

CHAPTER THREE – THE MEETING OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ORALITY

Innis, McLuhan, and the Recovery of a Lost Orality 78

Orality and Nature in McLuhan 81

Interiority and Re-tribalisation 91

Oral Rationalism in the Spirit of Technology 97

Electronic Materialism 106

Notes to Chapter Three 110

CHAPTER FOUR – ORAL AMBIVALENCE

Authority and Resistance in the Ancient World 117

Homer, Hesiod, and the Fissures of Orality 122

Socrates, Plato, and the Paradox of Orality 127

Space and Visualisation in Early Modernity 139

Notes to Chapter Four 153

CHAPTER FIVE – ORAL RESISTANCE

The Chapbooks 167

Wordsworth’s World of Grace 188

Blake’s Hauntology 199

Clare and the Heteroglossia of World 208

Notes to Chapter Five 220

CHAPTER SIX – THE QUEST FOR THE SPACE OF ACOUSTIC SUBVERSION

Seeking the Body of the Oral Other 225

Bakhtin's Heteroglossia 226

Volosinov's Behavioural Ideology 244

Kristeva's Semiotic Chora 253

Notes to Chapter Six 266

CHAPTER SEVEN – ELECTRONIC CARNIVAL

Ecobabble: The Techno-inversion of Spatial Acoustic Practice 277

Electronic Intertextuality 284

Haraway's Monsters 293

Hayles and the Posthuman: Data made Flesh 304

Notes to Chapter Seven 316

CONCLUSION – SOUND AND SPACE 334

Notes to Conclusion 341

BIBLIOGRAPHY 342

DECLARATION

I declare this thesis to be of my composition and to embody research and study that I have carried out wholly in fulfilment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Stirling.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to extend my appreciation to the many colleagues who have shown interest and support along the way to the completion of this project. I especially wish to thank my advisor, Dr. John Drakakis, whose guidance has been of great assistance in developing the topic. I must also thank my husband, Robert, who read the manuscript and offered much helpful advice with respect to its presentation.

'I believe [. . .] that the future belongs to ghosts, and that modern images, technology, cinema, telecommunications, etc., are only increasing the power of ghosts' (Derrida, *Ghost Dance*).¹

¹ 'Acts (The Law of Genre): Curriculum Vitae' in Geoffrey Bennington and Jacques Derrida, *Jacques Derrida*, p. 350.

INTRODUCTION –THE ABSENCE OF SOUND IN ORALITY THEORY

The Privileging of Technology

The 20th century marks a significant shift in thinking about the ways of knowing and about the material experiential world.¹ There is movement away from the notion of optical mechanics and the industrial body in linear space and toward the notion of acoustical ‘organics’ and the physical body in contrapuntal space. The sense of sound as an ‘other’ way of knowing suggests the identification of a new historical conflict between the visual and oral. The technologising of the spoken through electronic media serves to rehabilitate the oral into a sphere of reason, but the magnitude of technologically-produced acoustic ‘presence’ also ignites distant memories of the pre-modern sound of oral culture.

The contemporary period also marks an unparalleled dispute over the role played by oral and written means of communication in the history of language.² The intensity of the debate is provoked in the Western world by the latest of three historical collisions ‘between the oral act and the writing act’, the collision between electronic sound and printed word.³ In this case, the very pervasiveness of electronic sound serves to raise questions concerning the significance of the speech act, the difference between spoken and written as systems of communication, and the potentiality of a complex and largely unknown relationship between them. These questions bring other important matters into view, not the least having to do with the underpinning of Western ‘civilisation’ in the assumed superior grammars, philosophy, and inventions of the literate mind. The admittedly artificial electronic media suggests not only the ‘oral world’ and state of mind as it might have been in ancient cultures, but the possibility of some other kind of genius

and epistemology outside, even preceding, the achievements of the literate state of mind. 'Electronic orality' seems to raise an explicit consciousness of Gutenberg literacy, one technology addressing the other's claim to power.

Not surprisingly, the disputation over the 'orality problem' centred on the 'Homeric question'.⁴ The complexity of plot and narrative sophistication in Homer's epics represented the ultimate evidence of Western superiority. Could these foundational master narratives be the products of exclusively oral composition? If so, did they contain a comparable oral system of compositional techniques befitting the Homeric genius and the philosophical tradition of Western civilisation inherited from ancient Greece? And if, as Parry and Lord had suggested, the ancient epics were indeed oral compositions, how could their new 'oral authority' be reconciled with their previous literary status?

There were, of course, defenders of a more conventional view of the whole matter. In studying the implications of literacy for oral societies, Goody articulated the widespread theoretical assumption that informed much of the research into literacy and orality, an assumption key to the hierarchical ordering of communication in the history of Western society. The central difference between them, Goody pointedly reasoned, was the immateriality of the spoken, that is, the inability of sound to occupy space.

Writing not only recorded speech, but saved human communication from oral oblivion:

Its essential service is to objectify speech, to provide language with a material correlative, a set of visible signs. In this material form speech can be transmitted over space and preserved over time; *what people say and think can be rescued from the transitoriness of oral communication.*⁵

It seemed that if orality were to hold an alternative potential it would have to be achieved by resolving the 'transitoriness' of the oral. Work on this problem began in the 1930s and 1940s just as radio was making an impact. Immersed in a new sound space,

the new electronically preserved orality seemed to suggest an access to acoustic patterns and codes of the oral long silenced by the written record of history. Radio seemed to open up the possibilities for oral tradition that Gutenberg's printing press had done for written tradition. By capturing sound in the act of speaking, radio was developing a technology for revealing, holding onto, and examining patterns of the invisible, a possible science of orality equipped to challenge the science of writing. In the sound patterns of electronic orality, those studying the problem felt they could detect the acoustic methods of democracy in ancient Greece long rendered mute and historically ineffectual. The electronic orality of mass media promised to rescue the power of orality from the transitoriness of sound and bring forward an acoustic challenge to the visual domination of space.

For the 'orality theorists', as they might be called, radio offered a technological correspondence with the past 'primary orality' of ancient oral cultures, hitherto lost to the modern literate world.⁶ Radio suggested a rebirth of the past, a chance to straddle the great literate divide between two oral worlds, one ancient and one modern. The electronic orality of radio made available the acoustic patterns of oral tradition and suggested that the history of orality could be discovered by exploring the tensions between the technologies of oral and written traditions. Having been exposed to the first modern technologically produced 'sound environment', this generation found itself immersed in a copy-world of oral acoustics. It seemed to reach into the pre-technological space of an oral world, while at the same time offering an immersion in a historically new 'space'. Having a foot in both worlds, this group felt it had the potential to articulate the connection between ancient orality and the electronic word.

In this way, the problematic impermanence of sound and its escape from technological capture came to play a major role in the contemporary effort to understand orality. Indeed, the possibility of a permanent acoustic form in electronic technology prompted the search for an oral record equal in authority to that of writing and typography. Analysable patterns of speech captured on electronic tape seemed to promise access to previously unknown methods of permanence within the oral itself. Through a technology of acoustic fixity, access to the inaccessible past of oral culture became conceivable, suggesting that Homer and radio might illuminate each other in the acoustic techniques of permanence they might hold in common.⁷ This previously unrecognised possibility of an oral form of permanence served to fuel investigation into the orality of the electronic age and raise the possibility of a technological correspondence between the ancient and the new.

Electronic media evoked the possibility of a return to the oral origins of Western civilisation, and a mitigating of the confusion and disintegration characterising the modern world in the early 20th century.⁸ The pervasiveness and accessibility of this technology suggested that a theory of orality might offer an alternative to a visually oriented rationalism. Radio seemed to switch 'the vision of a whole population from visually conceived objectives to the total field of polarised energies that automatically goes with radio and auditory space'.⁹ This technologised sound seemed to access the symbolic richness of worlds palpably connected to the senses and outside the utility of industrial rationalism.

Havelock suggests that listening to radio did indeed touch an 'acoustic nerve'.¹⁰ As a teacher at the University of Toronto, he remembers the professors and students who had turned their attention to what he calls 'the orality problem'. It seems the experience

of listening to radio served to conjure up the illusive 'oral spell' of ancient Greece and shift scholarly attention to the spoken word.¹¹ With its early 'theatre of the imagination' storytelling approach, the sound of radio evoked a reconnection to the oral institutions and traditions of the ancient past. 'Here was orality indeed reborn'.¹²

Havelock also suggests a connection between this generation's encounter with radio and the subsequent large output of research on orality.¹³ From our viewpoint, however, what seems remarkable about these works is how far they remove the study of orality from social practice. Researchers like Malinowski, Parry, Lord, Innis, Goody and Watt, McLuhan, and Ong were all motivated by a fascination with things acoustic, but proceeded to read sound out of their work. Havelock explicitly encouraged this abstraction when he insisted that a general theory of orality 'cannot and should not' deal with the flexibility and mobility of conversational language. 'Oralist theory has to come to terms with communication, not as it is spontaneous and impermanent, but as it is preserved in lasting form'.¹⁴ In turn, he identifies 'two idioms woven into one, but of separate genius, the one designed for immediate communication, the other for serious preserved communication'.¹⁵

In choosing to limit scholarly research to 'serious preserved communication', Havelock denies the contradictions and dialectical relationship between fixed tradition and the social space of the spoken. The obvious question arises as to why there should be such a negation of sound in theory and history, especially since it is the sound that seemingly distinguishes orality from literacy.¹⁶ This is our point of departure. By seeking fixed patterns of orality to challenge fixed codes of writing, the orality theorists were pre-conditioned to discover the technology of the oral and not its history. In other words, they would reduce the oral to formulas and forms. The impetus for this came

from immersion in an acoustic space increasingly patterned by the electronic sound of radio. Notably, the assumed importance of the contestatory relations between the oral and written is responsible for a lack of attention to the contestatory relations within the history of orality itself.

Innis and McLuhan were among the first to suggest that orality possessed a radical means to challenge what they assumed to be an inherently repressive printed word.¹⁷ Their history of communication thus became a history of struggle between ‘traditional technologies’ of the spoken and ‘mechanised technologies’ of the written. Importantly, this overlooks the serious possibility that both ‘oral’ and ‘written’ repress communicative, especially acoustic, space. The reduction of communication to technology is a method of reducing the ambivalence of a social space to rules of order. In not distinguishing the oral itself as a site of contestation, this sensed experience of repression is taken not as a product of social conflict, but as inherent part of technological form.

As opposed to a habitat that is lived and produced, Innis and McLuhan approach space as a territory that is to be conquered or surrendered.¹⁸ By identifying the spirit of acoustic technologies as a challenge to the spatial monopoly of visual technologies, however, they abstract space from social and natural worlds. This action serves to draw contemporary oral theory away from analysing the oral world and towards a framework of oral technology. While helping to distinguish between the methods of oral tradition and print culture, Innis and McLuhan’s focus on technological difference pre-conditions a correspondence between orality and electronic media. It is in part because Innis describes oral tradition as a system of acoustic techniques that McLuhan discovers the rebirth of the oral in the acoustic patterns of electronic orality. In their efforts to identify

the 'vitality' of the oral, they negate lived orality by focusing on techniques of oral preservation. Ultimately, their constructs of space work against their projects of oral retrieval such that they must invoke oral traditions of the past to re-order the ills of the present.

In McLuhan, it is an 'electronic orality' that becomes a permanent oral record of the spoken Origin: Flesh made Word. Although informed by the context of an emerging electronic media, Ong enters the debate at a slightly different level. Whereas Innis and McLuhan seek to distinguish 'oral' from 'literate' in terms of the differences of an 'acoustic' as opposed to 'visual' domination of the sensorium, Ong addresses the aesthetics and silencing of sound in history and attempts to build a language of sound to overcome the dominant metaphors of vision. Ong's oral world is, however, forthrightly understood as the auditory spirit of interior communication with God. He builds into the notion of acoustic sensibilities an explicitly theological significance that reasserts the sacral history of sound undermined by the modern privileging of writing and typography. Ong finds an opportunity in the new environment of electronic orality to re-call the acoustic primacy of speech as the Origin of language and communication.

It is not our purpose here to further the orality-literacy debate, but rather to explore orality in terms of a materialism of sound as found in the sociality and history of acoustic spatial practice.¹⁹ Our specific intention is to approach orality as a social practice rather than a technology, and to relocate electronic orality outside of any quasi-theological technological enchantment. The technological replacement of sound and space converges in electronic orality as the paradoxical replication and negation of acoustic space. The focus of any resistance to this media control must correspondingly shift inside representation itself, as the plurality of apparently contestatory forms appears

to instantly destabilise any singular meaning. In this technologically evolved form, which inherently resists fixity, democracy becomes technology, and vice versa. Once electronic replication is confused with social practice, it becomes difficult to distinguish ambivalence from orchestrated change.

The historical struggle for an autonomous public sphere enters a unique period when the electronic media is able to record and capture the oral in a new acoustic environment. The power of technology to remove the oral from the social world and reconstitute it within an electronic environment allows economic process to enter the space of the public sphere. The separation of voice from body, space from world, allows thought and experience to be commodified. The product orientation of corporate space is then able to shape itself after the social imagination of cultural space. This allows the corporate imagination to adopt the meanings, sensibilities, and values of the cultural world and make these over as indistinguishable from those of the market place.²⁰ The question then arises as to the degree to which the oral will be displaced and replaced by technology presenting itself as public discourse.

Raymond Williams suggests that the power of this technology is in its influence over sensory ways of knowing. Electronic technology taps into the rhythms of sound and speech as a 'way of transmitting a description of experience [. . .] the experience is re-created in the person receiving it, not merely as an "abstraction" or an "emotion" but as a physical effect on the organism'.²¹ It is this duplication of experience that makes it hard to distinguish between 'world' and 'representation'. Our contention here is that the replication of oral life and acoustic space is the central agency of this influence.

The 20th century has witnessed the historically specific emergence of a sound sphere to challenge the dominant paradigm of abstract visualisation. However, the

history that locates the electronic word does not involve a struggle between ‘oral’ and ‘visual’, but rather a struggle between ‘marginal’ and ‘dominant’ spaces. As spatial practice, sound is lived directly in the sensed world. The acoustic capacity to remain elusive, to permeate and escape fixed form, this is its social texture and radical potentiality. As material processes, hearing and speaking locate sociality in acoustic space, testifying to a hidden world outside or underneath words. In turn, this history of orality is a story of how the subversive potential of ambivalent acoustic space is appropriated and consolidated into ideology. The repression of acoustic space is a means of dominance in both spoken and written spheres, as well as in McLuhan’s electronic world. It is the potentiality of sound found within the material links between orality and textuality that questions this dominance.

The history of communication as technological transformation has been recorded principally by Innis, but it has been expanded and detailed in contributions from Lord, Goody and Watt, Havelock, Ong, and others. Arguably, it is the orality-literacy debate and the ‘theory of transformative technology’ that dominate media analysis in the 20th century.²² It is these bodies of knowledge that also seem to underpin the current identification of cyberspace as a technological evolution beyond language and world.

In *Unthinking Modernity: Innis, McLuhan and the Frankfurt School* (1995), Stamps gives credit to the work that identifies oral acoustic techniques as an alternative to the visual hegemony of print technology:

The Canadian theorists are [. . .] to be praised for their technical descriptions of primary orality. The descriptions laid the groundwork for understanding the distinction between an oral society and a literate one [. . .]. In making this distinction, Innis and McLuhan had focused on the structure of epic poetry. As they noted, the formal elements of that medium were dictated by the need for its contents to be stored in memory.²³

Unfortunately, this remark reflects a common tendency toward the reduction of orality to acoustic technique. This stamping of orality with the 'technical question' is notable in that it reinforces the methods by which a lost oral tradition is found in the secondary orality of the electronic world.²⁴ It also preconditions the analysis of media as a contest between electronic and print cultures.

Flesh Made Word: Interiorisation and Presence

The privileging of mimesis serves to deny those other processes of lived experience that do not rely on representation.²⁵ As opposed to this, it is possible to view communication as different from the ability to perceive and represent reality through whatever means. Communication in this sense is sociality, not a superior access to Reality. Orality may thus be examined not as a device for the circulation of what Greenblatt calls 'mimetic capital,' as the means to possess reality, but rather as the production of communicative space negotiated between world and sociality.²⁶

Greenblatt recommends a guarded approach to theories of representation:

The emphasis on the productive power of representation should not lead to a collapse of the distinction between mimetic practice and any other kind of social practice [. . .]. Mimetic capital, the stock of images, along with the means of producing those images and circulating them according to prevailing market forces – is differentiated from other, non-mimetic forms of capital. Cultures are not altogether an assemblage of screens, or texts, or performances. In concentrating on mimetic capital, we can get at certain important qualities – the multiple interconnected sites of representation, the mobility of spectacle and spectator alike, the unreality of images paradoxically linked to the dazzling powers of display – but we also risk ignoring other important qualities; modes of non-mimetic production as well as reproduction, presentation as well as representation, reality as well as simulation.²⁷

As Greenblatt further notes, 'it is [. . .] a theoretical mistake and practical blunder to collapse the distinction between representation and reality'.²⁸ Although he posits the contestatory multiple sites of representation, more importantly he emphasises the link

between technologies of the sign and the hegemonic process. This connection between mimesis and capitalism becomes especially significant in the modern world-order, and even more so with the globalism of electronic media. Notably, 'it is with capitalism that the proliferation and circulation of representations (and devices for the generation and transmission of representations) achieved a spectacular and virtually inescapable global magnitude'.²⁹ This connection between mimesis and capitalism also suggests an important distinction between communication and the technologies of representation: communication seeks access to the social and experiential world within a history of contestatory relations; technologies of the sign seek a definition of, and access to, a superior reality.³⁰

The electronic 'presence' of the spoken word suggests a mimetic agency with the capacity to insinuate itself into everyday experience while renouncing the social materiality of that experience. As McLuhan recognised, in electronic media the entire concern with a master narrative is made redundant. In effect, the ideological focus shifts from a conceptual control of experience to the manufacture of experience itself. As the narrative of tradition breaks apart, fragments of experience are technologically orchestrated in its place to represent the anecdotal and unfinished. Hegemony is thus constructed, consolidated, and maintained in a replication of the ambivalence of social experience.

As much as sound is 'gripping at the level of the anecdote', it is at this level that electronic media invade and consolidate.³¹ As announced by the ceaseless anecdotal and fragmentary juxtaposition of electronic stories, the death of the master narrative gives the sense of a kind of vernacular authority, and of margins overtaking the centre. In this, the ambivalence of sound harnessed in a technologically manufactured experience becomes

a power based on replicating the mysteries of sound. What Greenblatt calls ‘isolated anecdotes of the unanticipated’ find a universalising form in the anecdotal and seemingly chance world of electronic technology.³²

Anecdotes then are among the principal products of a culture’s representational technology, mediators between the undifferentiated succession of local moments and a larger strategy toward which they can only gesture. They are seized in passing from the swirl of experiences and given some shape, a shape whose provisionality still marks them as contingent – otherwise, we would give them the larger, grander name of history – but also makes them available for telling and retelling.³³

The sound of orality is produced in dialectical and ambivalent association with the noises and intonational potentiality of the world. Sound breaks through the technologies of language by way of its uncontrollable potential to produce a space of social contact. In this sense, the experience of language is linked to the acoustics rather than the semantics, and the poetics of culture and world is in the sound, not the meaning. Resistance to the repression and inversion of sound lies in distinguishing the contestatory relations of acoustic space from the technologies of their negation.³⁴

A focus on the acoustic challenge to media technology should not be taken to imply an effort to hierarchically order the human sensorium. Rather, it is a means to access orality as something other than communicative technology. With the introduction of these technologies there has been a historical displacement and repression not so much of orality, but of sound. The issue here is not one of visual dominance in the modern world, but rather the reduction of communicative space to the visual sphere in association with a renunciation of sound in its materiality. The historical reduction of sound underpins the ideological shift from controlling ‘meaning’ to controlling ‘experience’ in which an electronically replicated spatial practice confounds the acoustic transgression of sociality.

Theories of orality, which have influenced theories of media, have confounded a materialism of sound in this reduction of experience to language to technology. The dominant understandings of orality have emerged from a theoretical model that seeks social-communicative history in technologies of permanence and the evolutionary correspondence of forms realised in mnemonic (traditional), logical (written), and anecdotal (electronic) device. However, this approach is obviously not without problem. The material production and experience of intonational difference questions the reduction of representational alignment of world to the rules or technologies of language. Sound slips out of place in the accidental encounters of lived experience in the social world. The ambivalent relations of sociality threaten the stability of meaning. Ultimately, the complexity of acoustic production transgresses univocal meaning by eluding total capture.

Donna Haraway hints at this in her discussion of the ‘articulation’, rather than ‘representation’, of the world. ‘Nature’, she observes, ‘may be speechless, without language, in the human sense; but nature is highly articulate. Discourse is only one process of articulation’.³⁵ By insisting on a world that is articulated through ‘situated knowledges’, sociality itself is seen to take on an ‘other’ outside the specifically human ability to speak and hence to represent.³⁶ In this case, ‘articulation’ includes the world and its other speechless inhabitants in the production of social communicative space. Haraway suggests that there is a need to move outside ‘a politics of representation’ in order that the world may speak for itself, and not in the ‘ventriloquist’s voice’ of experts who reduce the world to representation.³⁷

By framing historical struggle in terms of articulation rather than representation, Haraway suggests the possibility of an ‘elsewhere’ outside doctrines that reduce history

to competing meanings and the world to 'human constructions'. Such an elsewhere appears not as an edenistic 'back to nature', but rather as a space of 'co-habitation', a relationship among 'humans, other organisms, and other kinds of non-human actors'. This articulating space 'derives not from the power to represent from a distance, nor from an ontological natural status, but from a constitutive social relationality', a relationality in which there is a 'natural/social embodiment'.³⁸ In this way, Haraway sees the struggle to save nature as a conjoined struggle for natural/social survival that the world articulates for itself.³⁹

Specters of Materialism: The Politics of Technological Inversion

Derrida's interest in ghosts articulates his own sense of '*others* who are not present, not presently living', but others who ceaselessly return in the social-historical interactions of all those presently living and in the 'evidence' of the world.⁴⁰ The presence of the ghosts in the living present shakes the immutability of the present, tying it to all that has come before as well as the potentiality of the future. The ghosts speak to the material relations and always-unfinished construction of the world. They articulate the ambivalence of sociality within a larger context of responsibility:

[They are] beyond all living present, within that which disjoins the living present, before the ghosts of those who are not yet born or who are already dead, be they victims of wars, political or other kinds of violence, nationalist, racist, colonialist, sexist or other kinds of exterminations, victims of the oppressions of capitalist imperialism or any of the forms of totalitarianism.⁴¹

In what Derrida calls the 'spectropoetic', there is a contestation between the ghosts of the experiential material world and those which are idealised apparitions, 'simulacra of the ghost'. The simulacra use the 'magic' of ghosts, the disappearing acts,

to support the mystery of political and economic power. As Derrida suggests, the politics of power is also a matter of ‘conjunction’, of exorcising some hegemony.⁴² Orality calls up the simulacra to break a spell that enlists the sound of others to silence their materiality just as the electronic replication of orality conjures the sound ghosts in order to exorcise their transgressionary powers. In this battle of ghosts, the sound that returns to the earth haunts the electronic apparition. Since technology turns social processes into ghosts, and never more intensely so than through electronic technology, the work of radical poetics is a ‘counter-conjuring’ which reveals the sounds of history acting in the world.⁴³ Ghosts of past and future then haunt the poetics of space but the material ghost, or ‘revenant’, transgresses the ideal spirit.⁴⁴ The ghosts who walk the earth transgress the space of those who claim to speak beyond it. ‘They give us to rethink the *there* as soon as we open our mouths’.⁴⁵

The sense of sound ghosts is the materialist haunting of a technological interiorisation; it is here that the materiality of ‘presence’ speaks against the metaphysics of interiorisation.⁴⁶ The denial of sound as an acoustic practice in the socio-physical world denies a materialist critique of media by accepting the notion of acoustics as ‘essentially’ metaphysical. Presumably, the sound of the oral has not been put to a materialist analysis precisely because of the complex ideological entanglement of Platonic myth, sacred religious mysteries, reductive grammars of rationalism, and the new electronic myth of globalism. It is here that one can look to find the reduction of sound to a metaphysics of presence. It is important to note that the plausibility of secondary orality is based upon a hegemonic effort to harness the mysteries of sound and its palpable otherness. It is the material sense of wonder associated with ambivalence that is electronically replicated and then inscribed through the ‘technological

experience'. In effect, materiality itself is confounded by an objective form of its own ambivalence; history itself is 'told' by technology.

The material practice of orality is 'spectralized' by the electronic displacement of acoustic space.⁴⁷ Space is denied by the excess of space, a process that Derrida suggests is no longer dependent on a process of 'continuous growth' for its power. It is a different kind of spatial colonisation, reliant upon topographical dominance at the level of experience, but not the level of visual conquest: 'What can no longer be measured is the leap that already distances us from those powers of the media that, in the late 1920s, before television, were profoundly transforming public space'. The new hegemonic power is in controlling the sense of space and historical eventedness. This sensed spatial concreteness is manifested within a controlled environment of constant change. Derrida notes that the sense of public space is 'profoundly upset by the new modes of appropriation [. . .], by the new structure of the event and of its spectrality that they produce':⁴⁸

The politico-economic hegemony [. . .] cannot be analysed or combated, supported here or attacked there without taking into account so many *spectral* effects, the new speed of *apparition* (we understand this word in its ghostly sense) of the simulacrum, the synthetic or prosthetic image, and the virtual event, cyberspace and surveillance, the control, appropriations, and speculations that today deploy unheard-of powers.⁴⁹

Notes to Introduction

¹ Surrounded by the circumstance of ‘contact’ with the electronic word, in the 1930s and 40s there is a broad interest in the social and empirical science of spoken language. In a sense, this encounter is analogous to the contact with new worlds of words in the colonial period. Coincident with the emerging culture of sound is a phonetic empiricism that set the tone for the dissection of language in the science of linguistics. The linguistic focus on phonetics examines sound as fixed vocal patterns as opposed to spatial acoustic practice. This approach can also be seen in the techniques applied to the study of oral traditions among early 20th century tribal peoples, as well as to the search for the oral residue in surviving manuscripts of Ancient Greece. See Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964) and Jack Goody, *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968). The growth of linguistic science in the 20th century is to acoustics what empiricism was to optics in the 18th and 19th centuries. Sound is subject to phonetic dissection, reduced to independent sound-marks, and removed from the lived context in which the sociality of sound is produced. Spoken language is studied as a system of sounds produced by vocal organs and received by the ear; the physiological movements of the body isolated from the physicality and sociality of lived experience (Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik, New York and London: Seminar Press, 1973, p. 45). Sound is translated into the ‘language’ of optical empiricism and unable to speak or hear in the environment of its making. Removed from acoustic space, the spatial practice, the materiality of sound, is silenced.

² Eric Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write, Reflections on Orality and Literacy from Antiquity to the Present* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986), pp. 24-33.

³ Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, p. 34. The first collision occurred in ancient Greece, the second in Gutenberg Europe, and the third occurred in the electronic age between electronic sound and the printed word. All three collisions ‘triggered’ the impulse to think about the difference between the spoken and the written word, the oral and the literate mind. The collision provoked momentary consciousness of an ‘other’ means of communication hidden or overridden by the predominance of the standard form. See also Walter Ong’s *Orality and Literacy* (1982) in which the category of communication designated as primary orality is crystallised and defined in terms of the ‘secondary orality’ of electronic media.

⁴ Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, p. 37.

⁵ Goody, *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, p. 1. Emphasis added.

⁶ The “orality theorists” refer specifically to that interdisciplinary group of scholars whose work served, unwittingly or not, to ‘technologise’ orality and thereby set the theoretical conditions for McLuhan’s ideological construct of electronic media. A specific examination of this group is undertaken in Chapter One.

⁷ Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen., 1982), p. 2.

⁸ Innis, *Empire and Communications* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), pp. 169-170. See also *Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), p. 190. In the ‘Author’s Preface’ to *Empire and Communications*, Innis speaks directly to this point and to the overemphasis on contradictions between orality and literacy at the heart of the Canadian School’s orality theory. To suggest that written works are responsible for the threat to oral tradition and culture is to deny the possibility that both systems of orality and systems of writing have been dominant systems of communication which built power by repressing vernacular and acoustic space.

⁹ McLuhan, *War and Peace in the Global Village*, with Quentin Fiore and co-ordinated by Jerome Agel (New York: Bantam, 1968), p. 133.

¹⁰ Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, p. 30.

¹¹ Havelock, *Muse*, p. 24.

¹² *Muse*, p. 32. Remembering his early experiences with radio, Havelock intimates a sense of the contradiction between the authority and ambivalence of the oral. He remembers listening to radio on an October day in 1939 about the time Hitler was conquering Poland, standing on a street in Toronto with other professors and students listening to “an open air address” from a loudspeaker: ‘It was broadcasting a speech from Hitler, with whom we in Canada were, formally speaking, at war. He was exhorting us to call it quits and leave him in possession of what he had seized. The strident, vehement, staccato sentences clanged out and reverberated and chased each other along, series after series, flooding over us, battering us, half drowning us, and yet kept us rooted there listening to a foreign tongue which we somehow nevertheless imagine that we understood. This oral spell had been transmitted in the twinkling of an eye, across thousands of miles, had automatically been picked up and amplified and poured over us. I have sometimes wondered whether McLuhan as a young man in Toronto at that same time would have heard the same speech, shared the same experience’ (*Muse*, p. 32).

¹³ The bibliography in Walter Ong’s *Orality and Literacy* forms a history of oral scholarship dating from 18th century. Havelock notes that 1963 was a watershed year in that prior to this date only 25 works were cited. Following that year there were 136. In 1963 five major works on orality are published in five different disciplines: *The Savage Mind* (Levi-Strauss), ‘The Consequences of Literacy’ (Goody and Watt), *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (McLuhan), *Animal Species and Evolution* (Mayr), and *Preface to Plato* (Havelock). In turn, these works are part of a larger dialogue involving the work of Milman Parry (1930s), Harold Innis (1940s) and Albert Lord (1940s to 60s).

¹⁴ *Muse*, p. 64.

¹⁵ *Muse*, p. 65.

¹⁶ By ‘sound’ is meant the complex noises, harmonies, disharmonies, loudness, endlessly overlapping and rhythmic intonation, dissonance, bodily expletives, and the acoustic encounters and products of the ‘heard’ and ‘spoken’ material of the sensed world; that is the noise and gestures of the unmuzzled oral material of the world.

¹⁷ Innis located the contradiction in the time and space biases of the spoken and printed word. The spoken was of the time-based traditional world rooted in the assumed past of oral culture. Conditioned by the disseminating powers of the printing press, the written was space-based and empire-driven.

¹⁸ The Canadian interest in orality emerges out of the paradox of impermanence in the space of the country’s history and sensibility. Like sound, survival in space is tenuous; identity and univocality are perpetually interrogated and foiled by circumstances of marginality and the heterogeneity of the land. From the outset of colonial settlement, unrecorded history spoke against imposed orders of another time and space. Canada’s reliance upon technology to carve out living space and to stake a claim on territory articulates a quest for permanence, identity, and stability. In Canada, space resists colonisation and wilderness experience defies notions of a benign natural world. Survival is a matter of battling cruelties of climate, isolation, and the unfamiliar. For those who settled the land of Aboriginal peoples, Canadian space was shadowed by a sense of trespass and disturbed by a sense of forced reliance on technology. The country’s sensibility has been shaped by the perceived need to circumscribe space and the anxiety of destroying something important in the process. The preoccupation with technologies of communication in Canadian oral theory emerges from this tension.

¹⁹ Berland notes the interconnection between media theory and the politics of space in the Canadian context: ‘I suppose that I find [space] an interesting preoccupation, maybe because I’m Canadian and Canadian writing about media always talks about space, as both a problem and a product. It’s a problem because of geography and colonial economics; it’s also a product of these’ (Jody Berland, ‘Angels Dancing: Cultural Technologies

and the Production of Space', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paul A. Treichler (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), p. 53).

²⁰ As Carey has suggested, 'the fundamental form of social power is the power to define what reality is [. . .] to produce [. . .] an official view of reality which can constrain and control human action', and as it is here suggested the power to define reality is connected to the control of space' ('Canadian Communication Theory: Extensions and Interpretations of Harold Innis' in *Studies in Canadian Communications*, pp. 27-59).

²¹ Raymond Williams, *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961), p. 24. Unless otherwise indicated the 'ellipsis' indicates my own omissions from the original quoted passage.

²² The 'theory of transformative technology' is a more recent term meant to unseat the negative connotation of 'technological determinism' as it has been applied to Innis and McLuhan, the recognised 'fathers' of a school which studies media and language as technologies. The term was coined by Michael Heim, author of *Electric Language: A Philosophical Study of Word Processing*, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989 and *The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

²³ Judith Stamps, *Unthinking Modernity: Innis, McLuhan and the Frankfurt School* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), p. 165.

²⁴ See also Jack Goody, *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, p. 63, Arthur Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind: Innis/McLuhan/Grant* (Montreal: NewWorld Perspectives, 1984), John Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Methuen, 1987), Jesus Martin-Barbero, *Communication, Culture and Hegemony* (London: Sage, 1993), Donald Theall, *Beyond the Word: Reconstructing Sense in the Joyce Era of Technology, Culture, and Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995).

²⁵ Mimesis here refers to processes by which technological representation seeks to eliminate the difference between representation and represented world. It is a structuring of authority based on idealised universal forms that in turn assume an equivalency or objective correlative between world and form. It is the means by which a 'metaphysics of presence' is perpetuated through the objective-correlative relationship of writing to speech (primary origin), and more recently of electronic orality to speech. Technological correspondence is the mimetic agency for interiorisation and the endless reproduction of immutable, harmonising form as 'Reality' itself. Plato's privileging of inner truth in revelatory form over any mere imitation of external reality preconditions to search for an external form that would realise interior wisdom – a mimetic bonding of world to soul. It is this concept of mimesis so influential in the Western tradition that Derrida seeks to deconstruct and that we seek to reveal in the electronic mimetics of presence underpinning the information age (*Dissemination*, trans. by B. Johnson, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981). For an insightful discussion of the link between the 'assimilation of the other' and the 'reproduction and circulation of mimetic capital', and specific examples of this relationship in records of contact with the New World see Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 6-25.

²⁶ We take Greenblatt's caution against over-emphasising the productive power of representation further by suggesting that the power of electronic media is tied not only to the circulation of mimetic capital but to the technological replication of potentiality. This replication of potentiality unhinges sound and words from history and world, and inverts the counter-transcendental practice of sound which is of the earth and corporeal. We are suggesting that the sound of the spoken is materially spatial in its acoustic capacity to produce the space of social encounter in world. In other words, sound does not need to translate itself into visual terms in order to materialise its practice. Its practice is emphatically spatial and concrete. Its historical life is complex and contestatory lived experience. The soundings of the world are the history of becoming and disappearance. Sound in space multiplies histories by subverting the one. The acoustic act of producing space to speak is part of the dramatic acts of history. Forms that separate sound and world reinforce immutable authority by denying the earth as the material setting of production, reproduction, and death. Transcend the earth and 'eternity' is achieved.

²⁷ Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 7.

²⁸ *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 7

²⁹ *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 6.

³⁰ The modern rationalisation of cultural co-ordinates can be traced to Saussure's theory of linguistics that defines a representational relationship between sound and image, and which assumes that writing is the materialism of sound. Writing moves sound into the space of the line; that is into history: 'Auditory signifiers have at their command only the dimension of time. Their elements are presented in succession; they form a chain. This feature becomes readily apparent when they are represented in writing [. . .]. The signifier, being auditory, is unfolded solely in time from which it gets the following characteristics': (a) it represents a span, and (b) the span is measurable in a single dimension; it is a line (Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics* p. 103 quoted in Derrida *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974, p. 72).

³¹ Stephen Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 2.

³² Although Greenblatt is here addressing records of 'contact' with the New World in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance, the electronic age resonates with the 'sense' of encountering a 'new world,' unknown, full of wonders, chance encounters, and the magic in the sound of new languages (*Marvelous Possessions*, pp. 2-4).

³³ Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions*, p. 3.

³⁴ Anthony Easthope makes the case for a kind of 'renegade' pleasure in the sound experience itself (*Poetry as Discourse*, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1983, p. 33). We suggest that electronic media constructs its cultural authority in terms of appropriating this same sense of renegade pleasure as an ideological means of weaving itself into the fabric of social life.

³⁵ 'The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. by Grossberg, Nelson and Treichler (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 324.

³⁶ Haraway, 'Promises of Monsters', p. 313.

³⁷ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 312.

³⁸ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 310.

³⁹ Kristin Ross comes at the notion of reconceptualising social space through an analysis of Rimbaud's poetics of 'oral aggression' that seeks an elsewhere in the multi-accentuality of the 'low' vernacular as the practice of producing social space in the concreteness and physicality of a place of lived experience. Here transgressionary practice cannot be disconnected from the production of transgressionary space, which is itself a matter of shifting boundaries, hegemonic consolidations, displacements, and marginalisations. Social and physical spaces articulate, produce, and are produced within structures and fractures of power. Human sociality exists only in so far as it inhabits and produces space in the world, an environment more complex and irreducible to the humanly social. Above the world or separated from it, sociality denies the world and thereby produces the 'space of power by replication' palpable in the electronic restructuring of physical space (Ross, *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune* (Minneapolis, MN.: University of Minnesota Press, 1988).

⁴⁰ Derrida, 'exordium', *Specters of Marx* (New York: Routledge, 1994), xix.

⁴¹ 'exordium', *Specters of Marx*, xix.

⁴² *Specters of Marx*, p. 47.

⁴³ *Specters of Marx*, p. 97.

⁴⁴ *Specters of Marx*, pp. 105-123.

⁴⁵ *Specters of Marx*, p. 176. Emphasis added.

⁴⁶ The term 'presence' is used in Benjamin's sense of social presence, 'the process of becoming and disappearance,' the material involved in the always unfinished making of history (*The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 45).

⁴⁷ Pierre Bourdieu's *On Television and Journalism* is an unremitting attack on the impact and pretensions of television, a medium that distorts journalism and is therefore bad for democracy (trans. by Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson (London: Pluto Press, 1997). Bourdieu emphasises that journalism has to be understood as a 'field' – a structured social space caught between two dominant poles, the 'groupthink' of the pack and the forces of the marketplace. He points out that although journalists work for different media institutions, there is powerful consensus not only about what constitutes 'news' (what is significant and worth recording), but also about the manner in which these master narratives are 'told'. Further to the ideological consolidation of this 'field' as the dominant medium of communication, the ratings-wars of market-driven television exert inexorable pressure on other media to follow its values and narrative patterns. As such, and despite the venting of newspaper journalists against the trivialised spectacle and superficiality in television news, they are obliged, in order that their own stories are 'taken up' by this most influential medium, to dance to its rhythms. It is by now nothing new to suggest a close association between television and the market, i.e., television programs produce audiences for commercial advertisements but it is the manner in which this 'technology' associates with lived concrete experience that offers to explain its market force.

⁴⁸ Derrida, *Specters of Marx*, p. 79.

⁴⁹ *Specters of Marx*, pp. 53-54.

CHAPTER ONE – THE PARADOX OF IMPERMANENCE

Oral Contestation in the Politics of Oral Tradition

The compositional secret of Homer's epics has been at the heart of a complex struggle in Western culture to claim the ancient poet as the 'father of civilisation' and first great exponent of literacy. The assumed literary talents of Homer have rationalised a division between pre-literate oral primitivism and literate civilisation that underpins the Western world's claim to historical authority. The 'orality question' focused on resolving the orality-literacy debates over the works of Homer and Hesiod. Even though their works had been handed down as textual products of the Greek alphabet, both poets denied 'authorship', identifying their roles as intermediaries between Muse and audience.¹ In the 1930s, Parry's research into the oral traditions of contemporary non-literate peoples raised questions about authorship, composition, and preservation in the epic tradition. Parry and Lord believed that the works of Homer and Hesiod were products of both a collectively inherited tradition and an individual oral composition. They suggested that the ancient epics followed oral formulas still discernible in the contemporary 'literature' of non-literate peoples.

Parry and Lord suggested that oral cultures possessed sophisticated 'literary' powers based on acoustic formulas at least comparable to the so-called advanced grammars of writing. Up until this point there had been two major theories: the first was that the epics were products of advanced civilisation and literary technique; the second was that they were hybrid texts produced by a merging of the oral and the phonetic alphabet. The new theory suggested that the epic form was a product of oral composition and performance, an 'oral literature' produced and reproduced by generations of singers who applied fixed acoustic formulas to the singing of their songs.

Parry's work was conditioned by the assumption that both narrative power and individual variations in literary composition are the products of an advanced written form. The narrative 'excellence' in Homer's epics thus indicated some equivalence of form in the oral. If indeed the oral tradition was to be given its historical due, then the correspondence between orality and literacy would be found in comparing their technologies of form. As well, the differences between them could be sought in their techniques of composition and transmission.

Distinctive grammars and formulaic relationships were found present in both the surviving texts of Homeric poetry as well as in the contemporary compositions of an 'illiterate' Slavic people living in southern Yugoslavia. Using an elaborate analysis of formulaic construction for comparison, Parry and Lord demonstrated that the sophisticated thematic composition, narrative variation, and length of the epic tales were products of an oral composition created in the act of oral performance. The act of singing the tales preserved the tradition by way of metrical formulas and acoustic patterns maintained through generations of singers. It could be seen that oral tradition involved a fixed technology comparable to writing, a technology that allowed variation in dialect and story content within recognisable oral patterns.

Lord came to the conclusion that the epic poet is not simply a carrier of tradition, but a 'creative artist making the tradition' in oral performance.² The poet singer's role is to re-create a recognisable pattern for the audience. His skill is in fitting 'his thoughts and their expressions into this fairly rigid form'. In effect, he fits 'thought to rhythmic pattern' such that the tradition is literally in the song and its composition and performance before an audience.³ The presence of the audience, its size and location,

calls for variety in dialect and content within the thematic patterns and formulas. The secret of the epic poet is thus a proficiency in thematic structure and formula making.

In turn, poetic greatness is found in 'the role of conserver of the tradition, the role of the defender of the historic truth of what is being sung; for if the singer changes what he has heard in essence, he falsifies the truth'.⁴ In this case, the narrative exactness or variation is not crucial because the narrative itself is not the tradition. The goal of oral tradition is stability, and this stability is thematically maintained in the music of active performance.⁵ In other words, the tradition is in the singing and sound of the patterns, in 'the preservation of tradition by the constant re-creation of it'.⁶ In the re-creation and variation on a theme, and in the reduction of sound and oral world to a fixed form of variant formulas, the technology of oral tradition is more than a tool, it is a 'living phenomenon of metrical language'.⁷

The form of epic language uses sound as a technology of composition, transmission, and permanent record. The reduction of sound to acoustic patterns in epic formula comprises a mimetic tradition in which metrical language becomes the framework for an acoustic grammar composing variation within fixed structure. Oral tradition is based on acoustic patterns, sounds, or groups of sounds, that announce a potent order to the world. Indeed, tradition is preserved in the sound patterns of the song. Oral authority thereby acoustically invokes the sense of magic and ritual that exists before epic narrative becomes heroic tradition.⁸ In other words, the power of the oral spell resides in the experience of sound and is appropriated by the technological form of oral tradition. Lord suggests that the epic poet is a seer and an acoustic trickster before becoming an 'artist', but that 'the roots of oral traditional narrative are not artistic but religious in the broadest sense'.⁹

In his earlier study of Homer's techniques of formulaic epithets, Parry was convinced that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were traditional epics of communal origin. He further thought they were oral compositions produced by the narrative skill of Homer in the act of performance. Parry saw composition and performance as inseparable aspects of the techno-poetic act of 're-creating' oral tradition. He tested his theory among the singers of tales in the surviving oral tradition of Yugoslavia in the 1930s. From the outset his investigation was based on a comparison of compositional technique. The point was to identify 'with exactness the *form* of oral story poetry, to see wherein it differs from the *form* of written story poetry'.¹⁰ Immersed in the acoustic atmosphere and performances of the singers, Parry and Lord were able to map the formulaic oral compositional forms through which oral tradition is composed, transmitted, and preserved.

In continuing Parry's studies of Yugoslavian formulaic structures, Lord looked for evidence that the thematic intricacies, ornamental detail, and length of the epic poem were made possible by oral formulas and the rhythm of musical accompaniment. These formulas were the means by which the poets created songs in the act of performance, and, Parry had reasoned, they might explain why no two singers sang exactly the same song. The singers created the song in the singing, but also in the specific way in which they used the formulas, tailored to the specific audience, to tell the Story. The oral tradition used fluid narrative methods in the maintaining of a fixed cultural order, a possibility previously not considered.

Havelock and Technologies of Preserved Form

Havelock took up the political element of the 'Homeric Question' three years after Lord's *Singer of Tales*. While acknowledging the 'fundamental benefit for Homeric studies that accrues from Parry's research', he questions the validity of comparing two poetic situations as different as those of the Balkan peasantry and the Homeric governing class.¹¹ Arguably, the oral traditions of contemporary Yugoslavia were not comparable in role to the ancient epics of an oral culture. However important the traditional singers of tales in Yugoslavia, the record of order in the society was transacted by written documents. Under such circumstances the epic singer becomes 'primarily an entertainer, and correspondingly his formulas are designed for easy improvisation, not for the preservation of magisterial tradition'.¹² In Havelock's view, Parry and Lord decontextualised the poetic situation they encountered, equating its role to that of the Homeric epic forms in which oral techniques were the basis of a system of power.

Havelock became preoccupied with a related question. Specifically, if Homer and Hesiod produced forms of literary improvisation or 'oral literature', why did Plato argue so vehemently to banish the poets and their epic performances from the Republic? If epic poems were an oral version of high art associated with the literary achievements of written tradition, and if the oral was simply the formulaic composition of heroic tales, what was the threat?

Having demonstrated the sophisticated formulaic composition of oral epic narratives, both Lord and Havelock marvelled at the complexity and ingenuity. However, in addressing the aforementioned questions, Havelock went further in

redefining the orality question by examining the power politics within oral tradition. He argued that in the effort to find an oral equivalent to literary form the politics of order inherent to the encyclopaedic reporting of the epics had been ignored. In effect, the search for the formulaic secrets of artistic creation had implied a 'separation of the artist from political and social action' and failed to recognise the importance of epic performances as oral 'acts' of order published as records of permanence in the memory of the listening audience.¹³

Havelock also examined Plato's attack on the poetic experience of epic tradition. Given the achievements in question, he asked, why would Plato view the poetic works from Homer to Euripides as a 'kind of psychic poison' and a dangerous spell cast upon Greek society? As well, why should the poets be excluded from the educational system of the Greek State?

In his analysis of the *Republic*, Havelock notes that Plato did indeed wish to ban poetry as a means of sociality or communication.¹⁴ It seems that Plato saw the danger of the passions in the power of epic performance. Poetry was considered a disease of the body, a force of the passions that during poetic performance overwhelmed the mind with emotions and the wild imaginings of the body.¹⁵ This physicality of the poetic experience was entirely unacceptable. Interestingly, Havelock goes on to demonstrate that the poetic experience was also the means of maintaining order in the Greek society of oral tradition. The epics were narrative compositions that re-enacted and preserved the dominant themes of traditional life in remembered and deeply socialised acoustic patterns. It seemed that Plato was forced to reject the poetic experience because the political authority and acoustic aesthetics of oral performance were one and the same.

Havelock concludes that in oral cultures 'orality' must certainly be a system of political control based upon memory and devised by specialists in the techniques of oral tradition. Homer's civic authority had legitimised itself through the acoustic laws of composition and performance embedded in the ancient oral tradition as well as the narrative authority of its unique phono-alphabetic text.¹⁶ The result was a compositional form that had achieved both political and 'literary' authority. In a basic way, the government of ancient Greece and its laws and institutions were acoustic constructs designed for governing, used to inculcate societal observance of public law, and necessary to the development of memory that served to sustain authority. The preservation in ritualised telling of oral traditions could be understood as propaganda designed to store and publish the rules of order of an oral culture.¹⁷ Akin to the 'King's writ', oral texts were composed in formulaic verse using the powers of rhyme and rhythm, and laws were 'sung or chanted aloud by heralds or criers'. In this way the sounds of speaking were transformed into technologies of 'textual' control. The technologies of oral tradition appropriated acoustic space to repress acoustic space. Even in the surviving epic 'texts', Havelock observes, the 'ideological echo arises out of acoustic echo'.¹⁸

Havelock further notes in the modern model of communication 'the poetic and prosaic stand as modes of self-expression which are mutually exclusive. The one is recreation or inspiration, the other is operational'. However, no such split exists in ancient Greece, he suggests, where the entire life and memory of people 'was poetised', something that 'exercised a constant control over the ways in which they expressed themselves in casual speech'.¹⁹ Poetics was a 'total state of mind'.²⁰ That which was

considered significant in oral culture was recorded through formulaic translation into poetic patterns of preservation – the insignificant was unrecorded, forgotten, and ‘lost’.

In ancient Greece ‘all significant communication [. . .] was framed to obey the psychological laws of the goddess Mnemosyne’, the goddess of record and recall.²¹ The epics formulated the record; the performance was the act of publishing. Havelock notes that ‘such control had to be linked with functional performance to be effective. The fact that the Homeric was not the vernacular tongue only heightened its power of control. Here was not just a poetic style but [. . .] a superior idiom of communication’. The authority of the oral record was thus legitimised in the act of its performance. The clear implication of this was that ‘control over the style of a people’s speech, however indirect, means control also over their thought’.²²

Havelock comes to the view that ‘the crux of the matter lies in the transition from the oral to the written and from the concrete to the abstract [. . .] generated by changes in the technology of preserved communication’.²³ Between Homer and Plato, he argues, the methods of storage change and the eye replaces the ear as the main organ of record. In this development the ‘text’ of Homer in the modern sense of literature has been confused with the ‘function’ of Homer in the oral world of ancient Greece. In written text the cultural role of sound becomes defined in terms of a discernible formulaic metre decontextualised from acoustic space. In the absence of the acoustics of oral performance, the narrative form hides the political function of the epic tradition as a litany of the rules of power. However, in oral performance there is a different dynamic. Specifically, the larger life of sound is systematically repressed by its reduction to the acoustic rules of memorialising tradition. This appropriation of sound serves as the basis of oral authority, and this authority reduces acoustic space to acoustic patterns of order.

The reduction of sound to forms is the means by which oral tradition asserts its authoritative account of reality and its control.²⁴

Havelock raises the possibility that Homer's epics were joint compositions of a correspondence between oral tradition and writing: the acoustic and memorised laws of the ancient Greek state in convergence with the acoustic mimesis of the phonetic alphabet. The sophistication of Homer's epics can thus be seen as the product of a technological convergence between orality and literacy that manages to retain oral tradition within a mimetically attuned phonetic equivalent of writing. This meeting of 'techniques of oral composition' and 'acoustic sensibilities of alphabet technology' seems to be the making of a unique literary genius, one merging oral methods of memory and composition with an alphabetic form of acoustic permanence.

The importance Havelock places upon the meeting of oral tradition and writing is linked to the specific phonetic or sound-based character of the alphabet developed in ancient Greece. The sophistication of the Greek oral state of mind and the Greek literate state of mind was accomplished precisely through the capacity of the phonetic alphabet to record the nuances and compositional structures of the oral:

A stark contrast appeared between the sheer richness of Greek orality as transcribed and the caution of its competitors (i.e. the so-called 'literatures' of Sumer, Babylon, and Assyria as these have been recently translated from cuneiform tablets, as well as versions of Egyptian wisdom literature). A wealth of detail and depth of psychological feeling contrasted with an economy of vocabulary and a cautious restriction of sentiment which seemed to be specific properties of all Near Eastern and Hebrew literature. It occurred to me that the true orality of these non-Greek peoples was not getting through to us – had in fact been irretrievably lost, because the writing systems employed were too imperfect to record it adequately. These peoples could not have been stupid, or insensitive, or of a lower order of consciousness.²⁵

Thus, the true orality of ancient Greece comes to us through the unique ability of the alphabet to transcribe or record its richness, that is, the 'sound' and compositional

formulas and techniques within it. The acoustic technology that went into its making is preserved in writing, in a unique mimetic correspondence between techniques of pure orality and the phonetic techniques of recording that orality in written form. It is therefore the technological link between orality and literacy in ancient Greece that creates its superior epics and philosophy. The oral preserved in the written record is the particular genius of ancient Greece, and this technological match further accounts for the superior narrative richness of the Western tradition.

Havelock arrives at this conclusion after conducting a vocabulary count comparing the *Iliad* against the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and Hindu Vedic literature. He began to suspect that the apparent simplification of the texts was linked to the shortcomings of their corresponding methods of written record:

Scholars of Hebrew, of cuneiform, of Sanskrit were not likely to welcome such a thesis, but I had been emboldened to assert it after I had considered some of the acoustics involved in linguistic behavior and had traced the way in which the Greek symbols had succeeded in isolating with economy and precision the elements of linguistic sound and had arranged them in a short atomic table learnable in childhood. The invention for the first time made possible a visual recognition of linguistic phonemes that was both automatic and accurate.²⁶

The secret of ancient literary genius was thus to be found in the preserved acoustics of the unique phonetic technology of alphabetic writing. The meeting of orality and phonetic alphabet had created the Greek enlightenment. Ultimately, as Havelock notes, this invention 'which had proved crucial in changing the character of the Greek consciousness was to do the same thing for Europe as a whole and in fact could be held responsible for creating the character of a modern consciousness which is becoming world-wide'.²⁷

Havelock finds both the literary power and political authority of orality in the sophisticated formulaic techniques required for the social publication of an oral system.

He credits Parry with understanding the importance of the formulaic in oral composition, but challenges the latter's notion that epic composition was improvisational in character. Improvisation suggested impermanence, and Havelock was not sensing this in the epic structures of ancient Greece. Indeed, acoustic formulas were not to be considered improvisational techniques, but rather methods of remembering and recording a tradition. This tradition was more than a method of literary composition, for it embraced 'the whole tradition of the society for which the bard sang, something which it was his didactic purpose to conserve'.²⁸

As evidenced in Homer, the particular genius of ancient Greece was not 'oral or literate', but 'oral and literate', an achievement made possible via the phonetic alphabet and its singular capacity to capture the acoustic methods of preserving the significant: 'The complexity of plot in Homer had to be literate yet the compositional form was oral'.²⁹ This met the conditions of genius. At the moment of Homer, the singer was learning to write. For Havelock, the meeting of orality and literacy in ancient Greece was not a rupture, but an interlock, one that would result in unparalleled achievement. Writing was seen to actually record the acoustic formulas of oral law and order in ancient Greece. That which survived in the form of written record was not literary improvisation, but rather the means by which epic composition and performance disclose themselves as acoustic technologies of political and social power. The significant was made epic; the insignificant rightfully went unrecorded. The oral and the literate were inextricably linked by the mimetic correspondences of their technologies.

Havelock lauds the phonetic alphabet as the merging of oral and written forms, but he admits to a sense of the acoustic world inside both yet outside the forms themselves. However, he insists that 'oralist theory has to come to terms with

communication, not as it is spontaneous and impermanent, but as it is preserved in lasting form'.³⁰ Thus, the only way to meaningfully, if indirectly, access the momentary fluidity of the oral is to examine the technological appropriation of acoustic syntax and formulation imbedded in texts.

Innis and Technologies of Time against Technologies of Space

In *The Bias of Communication* Innis articulates his principal concern with the direction of the modern world: 'The conditions of freedom of thought are in danger of being destroyed by science, technology and the mechanisation of knowledge, and with them, Western civilisation'. In Innis's view, Western society is losing the sense of 'the living tradition'.³¹ The market forces that build empires, codes, and monopolies also destroy the democratic vitality of society in the process. 'Oral discussion inherently involves personal contact and a consideration for the feelings of others, and it is in sharp contrast with the cruelty of mechanised communication'. In addition, 'the quantitative pressure of modern knowledge has been responsible for the decay of oral dialectic and conversation'.³²

Innis begins his study of communication by noting that written tradition as a system of specialised skills 'introduces monopolistic elements in culture [. . .] which are followed by rigidities and involve lack of contact with the oral tradition and the vernacular'.³³ However, it is not literacy, but rather mechanised communication and monopolistic control that displace orality.³⁴ Innis sees the mechanisation of both 'printed' and 'spoken' word as a limit, not an extension, of human communication. Ultimately, it is technology that has tended to create the monopolies of knowledge undermining the vitality and rigours of a publicly produced knowledge.

As opposed to this, Innis declares that his 'bias is with the oral tradition' and with 'the necessity of capturing something of its spirit'.³⁵ Early into the electronic revolution he calls for a renewal of the 'organic techniques' of the oral tradition as a means to resist technological monopoly. Embracing the oral tradition as a dynamic system of technical skills in memory, speech, and argument, he insists that the practice of these techniques is necessary to produce the spirited exchange and intellectual rigour crucial to the development of collective knowledge.³⁶ In the ancient practice could be found the materials for a contemporary renewal of oral ways of knowing, 'a sphere, a place of institutional home in which such a tradition might flourish'.³⁷

Innis found his model for a renewed democratic orality in ancient Greece. The oral tradition of ancient Greece was seen to contain a certain creative force essential to the reproduction of 'cultural activity', a force that any modern quest for the public sphere would have to fight to sustain.³⁸ Innis agreed that the resistant powers of its oral tradition were rooted in acoustic laws and their compatibility with the phonetic alphabet. The longevity of this tradition was in turn linked to a technological compatibility between acoustic methods as well as the mimetic powers of alphabet to replicate patterns of the oral.

The interlock of acoustic technologies may have been the secret to the 'spirit of the oral'. However, it was this very same creative interface between oral tradition and phonetic alphabet responsible for the heightened language of the epic and the great literature of Europe that was increasingly threatened by the disseminating powers of mechanisation. Indeed, in Innis's view the 'monopolies of knowledge' based on mechanisation of the printed and spoken word had separated Western society from its democratic roots in the living oral tradition of ancient Greece.³⁹ Recapturing this spirit

was pre-requisite to understanding the ‘importance of life or of the living tradition, which is peculiar to the oral as against the mechanised tradition’.⁴⁰

In his communications studies Innis followed the ‘staples theory’ he had used to investigate cultural survival within the centre-margin relations of political economy. He had adopted the theory of ‘centres’ and ‘margins’ in the belief that the Canadian context did not fit with the models of industrialised Europe. An export colony, Canada’s development had occurred within economic centres that had geographically shifted as the economy shifted its reliance from one staple resource to another. In effect, each new economic staple required a different technological infrastructure, political institution, and transportation form. Innis suggested that in these circumstances the political economy of the country would inevitably involve geo-social margins in contest with centralising powers.

The technological alignment in Canada between transportation networks and communication networks strongly underlies Innis’s approach to empire and communication.⁴¹ Patterson notes that in Canada prior to 1950 communication was defined as a transportation system in the manner of roads, seaways, and railways.⁴² Innis was the first to consider both the transportation of goods and the transportation of communication across space. This concern with the ‘space question’ of transportation served as a model for his later investigation into dominant media forms and the rise and fall of monopolies of knowledge through the control of time and space.

In his earlier economic work Innis had explored the connection between wealth produced by the pulp and paper industry and the destruction of Canada’s forests.⁴³ He subsequently recognised the same centre-margin relationship in the history of communication. In effect, mechanisation was seen as producing the destruction of oral

tradition through a mass transportation of words to market. It was exploiting the resources of oral tradition as well as manufacturing words into media monopolies.⁴⁴ Innis reasoned that much as the history of economic space involved a technological mastery of nature, the history of cultural space might be seen to involve a technological mastery of the word. It is with this in mind that Innis comes to view the orality of radio as another stage of media monopoly.⁴⁵ This electronic orality is seen to be aligned with a technological monopoly of space. In the mechanised technologies of transporting words, Innis began to detect a cultural decay of community resources and destruction of traditional vitality.⁴⁶

In many respects Innis's effort to recapture oral tradition is an attempt to recover the spirit of a land that had been silenced by the quantitative pressures of mechanisation. Innis remains immersed in the Canadian paradox of a country reliant upon the technological control of space for economic survival, but also reliant upon the wilderness for its cultural survival. His concern addresses the Canadian condition where space is both a distance to be conquered as well as wilderness essential to the 'freedom of thought'.⁴⁷ In this regard his 'Plea for Time', a metaphor for oral tradition, suggests a defence of culture and nature within the larger qualitative context of survival.⁴⁸ The tension Innis identifies between 'media of space' and 'media of time' is the product of his centre-margin thesis of Canadian economic history.

For Innis, the achievement of 'civilization reflects the influence of more than one medium [. . .] in which the bias of one medium toward decentralisation is offset by the bias of another medium towards centralisation'.⁴⁹ He argues that the sustainability of a civilisation is linked to its ability to maintain a balance between the cultural coordinates of time and space, 'overcoming the bias of media, which over-emphasize either

dimension'.⁵⁰ The greatest civilisations were those in which cultural richness could flourish as a consequence of balancing tradition and technology.⁵¹ A return to democratic civilisation in the modern world very much required a return to 'time-bound' oral tradition as a check against the 'space-bound' bias of mechanised print over-emphasising visual and spatial sensibilities. In the absence of such balanced temporal-spatial interactivity, the bias of the dominant mode of communication would create the inevitable monopoly of knowledge.

In general terms, Innis believes that oral tradition holds the potential to sustain a public sphere beyond the monopolistic reach of communication technology.⁵² His research into communication focuses on the influence that dominant media forms have exerted upon cultures historically, as well as on the importance of renewing oral tradition as a means of resisting centralised power. For Innis, the monopolising power of mechanised communication is a process of silencing the richness of oral dialogue. His work on the history of empire and media is informed by this sense of modern jeopardy. In the context of the technological and mass media circumvention of public space, he fears for the survival of culture in a world that distances communication from 'human action and feeling'.⁵³

Innis thus seeks to identify the special properties of oral tradition that produce the richness of Greek civilisation in order to reconstitute these properties in the modern world and counteract the technological reduction of civilisation. The use of the term 'oral tradition' is problematically imprecise throughout his work, but his discussion of ancient Greece reveals a fascination with both the formulaic structures of oral poetry and the power of the spoken word.⁵⁴ Innis seems to recognise the incongruity of situating oral tradition as a progressive historical force resistant to monopolies of knowledge; he also

seems to become mired in the contradictions he seeks to expose.⁵⁵ Although seeking a means to break the mimetic spell of dominant communication technologies, he continues to believe the force of cultural resistance lies within the formulaic elasticity of oral tradition.⁵⁶

In an effort to challenge the reduction of history to fixed classifications, Innis invokes the fluidity of oral time.⁵⁷ Indeed, he argues that culture is not a matter of monopoly conquest, but rather one of appraising problems in the broader terms of time and space.⁵⁸ Arguably, however, within a binary opposition of time and space, his historical sense of space as geographical territory reinforces the separation between culture and nature underpinning a capitalist hegemony. In effect, 'space' is still considered in terms of monopoly and empire building and equated with quantity, commercialism, industrial growth, and consumption.⁵⁹ An alternative notion of 'time in space' cannot be considered. Innis argues for a balance of time and space; but, as historically separate and contradictory co-ordinates, the construct of 'time and space' remains an ideological product of industrialism.

In his analysis of orality in the contemporary world, Innis also overlooks the contradictory movements that exist between the 'mechanical' and the 'democratic' within the oral tradition he is seeking to re-animate. He identifies contradictions between oral tradition and mechanised writing. In idealising the oral tradition of ancient Greece, however, he disregards the power of orality he senses in such things as the experience of radio. His history of orality subsequently becomes a matter of 'tradition' against 'modernity', technologies of the 'preserved oral' against technologies of the 'preserved visual'. The potential radicality of the impermanent is silenced by a celebration of the elasticity of form. Even though he pointedly emphasises the

importance of appreciating the oral as ‘living tradition’, Innis’s methods reduce the ‘vitality’ of the oral to the techniques of its institutional preservation.⁶⁰ As an archaic form of monopoly in its own right, ‘oral tradition’ goes unchallenged.

The Oral-Literate Binary in Studies of Orality

The oral-literate binary has helped to entrench the assumption that the history of communication is that of competing technologies with regard to preserving and transmitting cultural tradition. In the effort to offset the distinction between primitive and civilised societies, those examining the differences between oral and literate cultures have been caught in the exercise of contrasting modes of ‘preserved communication’. In this exercise ‘orality’ is reduced to the methods of mnemonic storage comparable to the technologies of written record. The differences between oral and literate cultures are subsequently to be understood by contrasting their modes of communication.⁶¹ It is critically important to note that with such an approach the sociality of the oral outside the oral tradition of preservation is negated. It is implicitly rationalised as ‘outside the scope of study’ because the mechanics of oral record involve remembering the significant and forgetting everything else. The possibility that both ‘remembering’ and ‘forgetting’ might entail relations of power is further obscured by privileging the record in the history of orality and writing.

Those who have taken up the orality question have thus tended to look for a logic of the oral in the differences between oral and literate cultures. However, they have also sought to examine the residual evidence of traditional mnemonic oral still in existence. Accordingly, the survival of a traditional orality in the modern world was seen to offer a living laboratory for study of the previously inaccessible oral techniques of ‘preserved communication’. In particular, the recorded sound environment allowed the means to

access the oral structure of tradition in the narrative formulas and rhythms of acoustic composition. The hope was that this living laboratory might elucidate not only the nature of orality, but also the collision between the oral and literate in ancient Greece.⁶² As a result of this work, and in response to the emergence of electronic media in the 20th century, a new category of human communication, ‘primary orality’, was designated.⁶³ What had previously escaped scholarly examination would become a serious area of study that promised to identify a ‘science’ of oral culture against the assumed superiority of Western rationalism and literary achievement.

Of course, there were those who questioned the notion of ‘primary orality’. Influenced by the technology questions taken up in the University of Toronto review, *Explorations*, Goody and Watt identified the historical potential of writing to extend communication in time and space beyond the limits of the human voice.⁶⁴ Both saw a cultural advancement in writing, but realised that most societies had existed in an ‘in-between situation’ of both orality and literacy. It was conceded that there was the possibility of discovering a great deal about linguistic structures and rhythms in the surviving remnants of pre-industrial societies. There was doubt, however, that access to a primary orality was possible in the contemporary world, as the mere presence of the written document would alter the situation of a non-literate culture.⁶⁵

Goody and Watt objected to what they called the ‘untenable dichotomy between the “mythical thought” of primitives and the “logico-empirical thought” of civilized man’.⁶⁶ Following Goody’s West African research, Watt had found evidence of oral forms that rivalled the literary achievements of the Western world. In the sophisticated techniques of oral composition both saw the means to investigate the differences between oral and literate cultures by way of technologies of communication, as opposed

to 'primitive' or 'literate' states of mind. This suggested not the rejection of the distinction between societies based on contrasting 'states of mind', but rather a rejection of the entire 'states of mind' thesis.

For their part, Goody and Watt sought the 'actual boundary lines between non-literate and literate cultures' with respect to the difference in technologies for transmitting cultural heritage.⁶⁷ It was felt that the best way of marking the differences between oral and literate cultures would be found in examining the 'significant', what had been preserved, and what assimilating mechanisms had served as storage. They concluded that in distinction to literate societies 'the transmission of the cultural tradition in oral societies is homeostatic'.⁶⁸ History, in terms of a widespread sense of the 'pastness of the past', was only seen to emerge with the advent of permanent written records.⁶⁹

Goody and Watt go on to argue that the diffusion of alphabetic culture conditioned the distinction between myth and history, but that this is the historical consequence of a written record, not the legacy of a more sophisticated 'state of mind'. Only with the widespread practice of writing could the 'sense of the human past as an objective reality' have developed. They further questioned attributing the achievements of ancient Greece to some kind of inherent oral 'genius of mind'. These achievements could be associated with the ease of access to the phonetic alphabet and the attendant popular participation in what is to be recorded or preserved.⁷⁰ The correspondence between the sounds of speech and the signs of sound suggested the democratic and autonomous potentiality of 'the first comprehensively and exclusively phonetic system for transcribing human speech'.⁷¹

Arguably, Goody and Watt confound the significance of any sense of oral 'other' while reinforcing a problematic understanding of oral communication and power. They suggest a resistance to the process of fixing the significant record in that 'formalized patterns of speech, recital under ritual conditions, [. . . and] the employment of professional remembrancers – all such factors may shield at least part of the content of memory from the transmuting influence of the immediate pressures of the present'.⁷² However, it should be noted that these varied techniques are themselves instruments of traditional power. Goody and Watt finally suggest a resistant potentiality in the orality existing within literate societies: 'For even with literate culture the oral tradition – the transmission of values and attitudes in face to face contact – nevertheless remains the primary mode of cultural orientation, and to varying degrees is out of step with various literate traditions'.⁷³ Interestingly, this points to an overlooked history of the oral distinctly outside the orality-literacy debate.

Both Havelock and Innis discuss orality in terms of technology and power, and thus suggest ways to take oral theory beyond the oral-literate binary. Taken together they give an articulation to the fissures in orality, although they fail to consciously access the history of orality as the contestatory relations of both power and resistance. Havelock finds the system of power in ancient Greece within the oral tradition and Homeric epics, that is, within the technologies of remembrance and oral dissemination that form a system sustained and consolidated by the mimetics and didactic role of oral performance. However, in defining oral tradition as technologies of 'preserved communication', he accesses the system of power in a way that denies an orality outside these forms of political and didactic control.

In turn, Innis seeks to locate oral tradition within the larger history of empire and communication as a uniquely 'difficult to appropriate' cultural potential capable of resisting state and commercial control.⁷⁴ He approaches the 'life' of the oral as outside centralised forms of communicative authority, as the power of resistance found in the margins of the vernacular. By locating his 'model' of resistance within the resilience of ancient epic formulas, however, Innis denies the politics of power within the oral tradition itself.

In the technologies of epic tradition Innis sees the resistance while Havelock sees the power. The possibility that orality is a site of historical contestation involving both oral practices of resistance and oral technologies of power is overlooked. In their conjoined reduction of the oral to technology, the oral outside of technology disappears and subsequently obscures an oral resistance to oral authority. Interestingly, it is Havelock's discovery of the authority of oral tradition that confounds Innis's theory of oral resistance to power. If oral tradition is a political monopoly, how does it resist itself?⁷⁵ In a context where electronic technology transforms the vernacular into a form of monopoly, how then does the oral resist its own authority? Havelock tries to challenge the 'decontextualisation' of oral tradition by pointing to the political and ideological function of this tradition in ancient Greece. However, the significance he places on the technological meeting of speech and the phonetic alphabet overlooks the politics of power in the acoustic realm. For Havelock, the life of the 'disappeared' vernacular is passed over in favour of the 'preserved' evidence of written texts and tape recordings.

It seems obvious that Innis is talking about the powers of resistance to be found in the vernacular, but his tendency to equate the elasticity of epic formulas with the 'vitality' of the spoken obfuscates the oral system of power in the ancient world. In

addition, the emphasis he places on the techniques of oral tradition contributes to the current difficulties in differentiating spoken and electronic word. Although the electronic is mechanised communication, its spoken-ness serves to identify it as of the 'cumulative effects of the oral tradition'.⁷⁶ Innis also believed that the further removed technologies of communication become from the vernacular, the stronger the resistance 'in marginal regions that have escaped the influence of a monopoly of knowledge'.⁷⁷ However, he cannot begin to address the problem of producing resistance to a monopoly form of the vernacular.

Ultimately, Innis's definition of tradition is itself contradictory. He notes that the oral is 'inherently more consistent and logical in its results because of the constant sifting, refining, and modifying of what [. . . does] not fit into the tradition'. The story is 'moulded and remoulded by imagination, passion, prejudice, religious presumption, or aesthetic instinct'.⁷⁸ Innis wants to re-capture the oral spirit and break the hold of mechanised communication while continuing to emphasise the stability, continuity, standards, and 'lasting moral and social institutions' of oral tradition in Greece.⁷⁹ He suggests that oral tradition resists monopoly and empire, yet he seeks to locate an ultimate stability inside the techniques of epic form.

Notes to Chapter One

- ¹ Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, p. 19.
- ² Albert Lord, *Singer of Tales*, p. 13.
- ³ Lord, *Singer of Tales*, pp. 21-22.
- ⁴ *Singer of Tales*, p. 28.
- ⁵ Eric Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, pp. 96-110.
- ⁶ Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, p. 29.
- ⁷ *Singer of Tales*, p. 30.
- ⁸ *Singer of Tales*, p. 66.
- ⁹ *Singer of Tales*, p. 67.
- ¹⁰ Milman Parry quoted in Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, p. 3.
- ¹¹ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, (New York: Grossett and Dunlap, 1967), p. 93-94.
- ¹² Havelock, *Preface*, p. 94.
- ¹³ *Preface*, pp. 90-91.
- ¹⁴ *Preface*, p. 5.
- ¹⁵ *Preface*, pp. 7-11.
- ¹⁶ Eric Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, pp. 12-13.
- ¹⁷ Havelock, *Muse*, p. 54.
- ¹⁸ *Muse*, p. 74.
- ¹⁹ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, p. 134.
- ²⁰ In Havelock's framework communication involves the conversation of the everyday (insignificant) and the area of preserved communication (significant). He calls preserved communication in contemporary culture, "'literature'", the range of experience preserved in books and writings of all kinds, where the ethos and the technology of the culture is preserved' (Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, p. 135). In other words, the technology of preservation sets the boundaries of cultural achievement. In oral cultures the significant is preserved in the saga. Homer's works are acts of significant speech where 'the maximum of meaning possible to a cultural state of mind is developed', the epic 'had no prosaic competitor' (p.135). Oral tradition is the performance of preservation, a literature of maximised cultural achievement. The echoes of these observations are palpable in McLuhan's efforts to evolve culture through patterns of secondary orality.
- ²¹ Havelock, *Preface*, pp. 137-8.
- ²² Havelock, *Preface*, pp. 141-2.

²³ Havelock, *Preface*, xi.

²⁴ The negation of sound outside systems of authority permeates theories of orality. The sound outside fixed forms is not on permanent record and therefore does not exist. The sound of oral tradition is found in the formulaic evidence of epic texts and in the acoustic patterns. Anything outside has disappeared. The sound in written literature is reduced to echoes of those patterns in the technology of the phonetic alphabet. The concern with the means of permanence negates the social and aesthetic potentiality of the impermanent. The technology of orality has overridden the sense of sound because there is no record of the experience. Plato defines the narrative variety and poetic ambivalence in the epics as the active material of indoctrination by illusion, the substance of the spell. The formulaic devices for maintaining thematic integrity become the mainstay of 'epic literature' and the record of oral composition. The sound of the oral, that which is necessarily appropriated and then artistically arranged according to preordained models of heightened language, is rescued from the uncertainties of the passions and confusing encounters of body and world. It is here that oral and literate traditions merge into authorities that reduce the sounds of living in the world. In *Preface to Plato* Havelock reaffirms Plato's conception of oral tradition in pre-literate Greece: 'Poetry was not "literature" but a political and social necessity. It was not an art form, nor a creation of the private imagination, but an encyclopaedia maintained by co-operative effort on the part of the 'best Greek polities' (p. 125). Nevertheless, the power of the encyclopaedia is in the acoustics of oral performance. Sound demands to be heard.

²⁵ *Preface*, p. 9.

²⁶ *Preface*, p. 9.

²⁷ *Preface*, p. 10.

²⁸ *Preface*, p. 11.

²⁹ *Preface*, p. 13.

³⁰ *Preface*, p. 64.

³¹ Harold Innis, *The Bias of Communication*, p. 190.

³² Innis, *The Bias of Communication*, pp. 190-191. Originally in the address, 'Critical Review', given at the Conference of Commonwealth Universities at Oxford, July 23, 1948.

³³ *The Bias of Communication*, p. 4.

³⁴ Innis points out that: 'The twentieth century has been conspicuous for extended publications on civilisation which in themselves reflect a type of civilisation. It is suggested that all written works, including this one, have dangerous implications to the vitality of an oral tradition and to the health of a civilisation, particularly if they thwart the interest of a people in culture and, following Aristotle, the cathartic effects of culture. 'It is written but I say unto you' is a powerful directive to Western civilisation' (*Bias of Communication*, xiii-xiv).

³⁵ *The Bias of Communication*, pp. 190-191. Originally in the address, 'Critical Review', given at the Conference of Commonwealth Universities at Oxford, July 23, 1948.

³⁶ *Empire and Communications*, pp. 59-61.

³⁷ William Melody et al, *Culture, Communication, Dependency: The Tradition of H. A. Innis* (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corp., 1981), p. 87.

³⁸ *Bias of Communication*, p. 90.

³⁹ *Empire and Communications*, p. 170.

⁴⁰ *Bias of Communication*, p. 190.

⁴¹ As Innis put it just before his death in 1952, 'the dangers to national existence warrant an energetic programme to offset them. In the new technological developments Canadians can escape American influence in communication media [. . .]. We are indeed fighting for our lives', against 'the pernicious influence of American advertising [. . .] and the powerful persistent impact of commercialism' on Canadian culture' (*Changing Concepts of Time*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952, p. 19). The complexities of colonial marginalisation and the location of the country as a borderland to the United States have produced a territory of the 'outside'. Here Innis reinforces the idea that the survival of Canadian culture hinges on its ability to take advantage of technological developments in order to claim its territory and its voice and to fend off the ever-present threat of American incursion. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and the National Film Board established during the 20s and 30s were products of this fight. Innis saw these developments as 'constructive attempts to explore the cultural possibilities of various media of communication and to develop them along lines free from commercialism' (p. 20).

⁴² *History and Communications: Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan, the Interpretation of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), pp. 9-10. Significantly, the sound of Canada's national radio network was first 'broadcast' on the trains of the Canadian National Railroad Pacific Railway, transporting goods, people, and sound *across* space. The first network program began with the parliamentary bells ringing in 'O Canada' to celebrate the country's Diamond Jubilee, July 1st, 1927. It was also carried by many local and regional affiliates of this travelling cross country railroad and 'transCanada network' (Sandy Stewart, *From Coast to Coast: A Pictorial History of Radio in Canada*, Toronto: CBC, 1985, p. 39).

⁴³ Harold Innis, *The Press: A Neglected Factor in the Economic History of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949). See also Havelock's comments on these directions in Innis's work in *Harold A. Innis: A Memoir* (Toronto: Harold Innis Foundation, 1952).

⁴⁴ *Bias of Communication*, p. 78.

⁴⁵ *Bias of Communication*, pp. 61-91, 188-89. See also *Empire and Communications*, pp. 162, 164-65, 170.

⁴⁶ Innis, 'Technology and Public Opinion in the United States', in *The Bias of Communication*, pp. 156-190.

⁴⁷ *Bias of Communication*, p. 190.

⁴⁸ *Bias of Communication*, pp. 61-91. See also Arthur Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind: Innis/McLuhan/Grant*, p. 92.

⁴⁹ *Empire and Communications* p. 7.

⁵⁰ *Empire and Communications*, p. 7. Innis's use of the term 'civilisation' embraces his larger notion of a society based upon human-scale communication processes in which public debate flourishes and challenges the more 'empire' building tendencies of mechanised communication forms.

⁵¹ Innis uses the notion of achieving 'a balance between the demands of time and space' as a complex means of discussing contradictions of body and spirit, and a sought after balance of the 'living tradition' of cultural, sensory experience.

⁵² *Bias of Communication*, pp. 90, 190-195.

⁵³ *Bias of Communication*, p. 191.

⁵⁴ *Bias of Communication*, pp. 3-11, 40-45, 105-107. See also *Empire and Communications*, pp. 3-11, 53-84, 170

⁵⁵ *Bias of Communication*, p. 4.

⁵⁶ *Bias of Communication*, p. 4.

⁵⁷ *Empire and Communications*, p. 56.

⁵⁸ *Empire and Communications*, p. 58.

⁵⁹ Defined as the co-ordinate of power, space overrides time by banishing it to the irretrievable past. Modern space relegates time to outdated forces of traditionalism that inhibit modern progress. Oral tradition is superseded by a linear typography, which simultaneously becomes the threshold to modern industrial society and structures of power. Power and economic growth become matters of space denying time. In the binary opposition between time (sound) and space (representation) those like Innis who were seeking an alternative to the dominion of Western rationalism saw in the oral a means to recuperate a lost time and, within this, to translate time into the repressed history of the oral. The expressed dominance of visual space came to associated with the corrupt world of modernity (exteriority). The repressed other of lost oral time became associated with the potentiality of a radical inner voice (interiority) capable of deposing spatial dominance. The inner transgresses the outer. Time dislodges space. Feminine oralisation ruptures patriarchal writing. The centrality of the orality-literacy (time-space) debate has obscured the historical contestations of sound in space which reveal the means by which the binary rationalises and sustains hegemony by consolidating proprietorship over space through interiorising sound, and denying its spatial acoustic practice and transgressive potentiality in the external world.

⁶⁰ *Bias of Communication*, p. 190.

⁶¹ 'Consequences of Literacy', in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, p. 19.

⁶² For Goody and Watt, 'the rise of Greek civilization, the, is the prime historical example of the transition to a really literate society', that is, to a civilization based on the unique potentiality of the phonetic-alphabet (*Literacy in Traditional Societies*, p. 42).

⁶³ See Walter Ong's *The Presence of the Word* (London: Yale University Press, 1967) and *Orality and Literacy: The Technologising of the Word* (London: Methuen & Co., 1982) where he develops the corresponding designations of primary and secondary orality which correspond to the poles of oral history between ancient and tribal culture (pre-literate) and modern electronic (post-literate) culture.

⁶⁴ Goody and Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy', in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, p. 3

⁶⁵ The orality-literacy issue became more contentious with Parry and Lord's demand that the sophistication of oral poetic and narrative composition be afforded a 'literary' status previously ascribed only to writing. Parry and Lord raised the 'literary' stature of oral tradition but at the same time contributed to denying the 'life' of the oral outside formulas of traditional composition and retention. The oral achieves unparalleled recognition, but as 'traditional forms' of narrative composition and performance, i.e., as texts. As Malinowski pointed out the continued plausibility of myth in oral cultures rests on the mechanics of continually adjusting the 'story' to changing circumstances. Through oral performance, inconsistencies between legend and circumstance were resolved in the continual adaptation of the story to fit the 'present' situation of the performance itself (Malinowski, *Myth in Primitive Psychology* (New York: Norton, 1926), p. 33. See also Malinowski, 'The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Languages', in *The Meaning of Meaning*, ed. by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards (London: Kegan Paul Trench, 1923). In this sense, the power in the oral tradition lies in its continual reconstruction of mythical authority in an eternal present. The written record has had the contradictory consequence in oral societies of preserving the oral tradition in fixed form eventually putting an end to oral performance and its function of 'situational adaptation'.

Fixed in writing, oral tradition began to lose face in the contrast between frozen 'story' and changing present. Unable to adapt the page to the present, oral tradition succumbed to writing as the 'realised' critique of myth. In this sense, writing *is* history. Myth is replaced by history; story by truth.

⁶⁶ Goody and Watt, 'Consequences of Literacy', p. 43.

⁶⁷ 'Consequences of Literacy', p. 27.

⁶⁸ 'Consequences of Literacy', p. 31.

⁶⁹ 'Consequences of Literacy', p. 34.

⁷⁰ For Goody and Watt, phonetic systems of writing are 'adapted to expressing every nuance of individual thought, to recording personal reactions as well as items of major importance. Non-phonetic writing [. . .] tends rather to record and reify only those items in the cultural repertoire which the literate specialists have selected for written expression; and it tends to express the collective attitude towards them' (p. 37). Here, subtly betrayed once again, is a sense of contestatory relations within writing, and between writing and orality. However, the emphasis on distinguishing non-literate from literate modes of preserved communication denies the history and contradictory relations of orality itself.

⁷¹ Goody and Watt, 'Consequences of Literacy', p. 41.

⁷² 'Consequences of Literacy', p. 31.

⁷³ 'Consequences of Literacy', p. 57

⁷⁴ Innis, *The Press*, p. 30. See also William Melody and Liora Salter and Paul Heyer, *Culture, Communication, Dependency*, p. 87.

⁷⁵ Here, the notion of 'monopoly' corresponds with Bakhtin's notion of the 'monologic', that is, the monopoly of oral tradition screens out 'other voices'. Although Innis can be seen as attempting to develop a theory of 'orality' akin to Bakhtin's 'heteroglossia', he is confounded by his fascination with the poetic *forms* of oral tradition. He thereby falsely aligns the elasticity of oral forms with the spatial acoustic practice of the vernacular.

⁷⁶ *Bias of Communication*, p. 102.

⁷⁷ *Bias of Communication*, p. 4.

⁷⁸ *Bias of Communication*, p. 102.

⁷⁹ *Bias of Communication*, p. 105.

CHAPTER TWO – THE PRESENCE OF SOUND: ONG AND DERRIDA

Ong and the Eternity of Sound in the Living Word of God

The physical impermanence of sound, confounding for some, does not pose a major problem for Ong's theory of orality. He has faith in the eternal Presence of sound as a medium of communication between the inner spirit of humanity and the voice of God. Ong sees the central problem of modernity as the silencing of the 'sound of Presence' by the domination of secular visualisation. Subsequently, the potential of an emerging 'secondary orality' is seen to offer an historical return to a sacred auralisation. What Ong finds in this electronic orality is not so much a technology of sound, but rather a reassertion of the omnipresence of its spiritual power. Sound is theology, not technology. In other words, it is the mystery of the Holy Spirit emanating from within. Electronic sound serves to recontextualise and rearticulate this always eternal Presence. In turn, this allows Ong the opportunity to revive the originary abstract auralisation he finds resounding in technological form and give historical substance to the Word of God. The 'Spirit of the Word', historically substantive, if visually repressed, finds the external proof of its immutable and eternal Presence in electronic technology.

For Ong, the predominance of space has distorted the sensorium by emphasising the empirical and denying the sacral sense of mystery that characterises the acoustic synthesis of oral cultures. This modern 'depersonalization of space has been due not merely to its dissociation from sound but also to its association with vision'.¹ The 'shift of focus from the spoken word and habits of auditory synthesis to the alphabetized written word and visual synthesis (actuality is measured by picturability) devitalizes the universe'. In a profound way it 'weakens the sense of presence in man's life-world, and in doing so tends to render this world profane'.² In Ong's view, typographical spatialisation desacralises

words by making them into things, and it is 'impossible to be reverent to a thing as simply a thing'.³ Secondary orality, however, suggests an invisible power, an unseen interior. The acoustic space of interior communication questions what Ong calls the 'pure' space of the eye. It further promises to reawaken habits of auditory synthesis and thereby open the fragmenting space of the sensorium to an awareness beyond the de-spiritualising space of modernity.

Reinforcing McLuhan's cosmology of technological transformation, Ong argues that 'technologies are not mere exterior aids but also interior transformations of consciousness, and never more than when they affect the word'.⁴ Studying the 'technologising of the word' reveals the originary orality of the word, that is, how writing has extended knowledge into the past while entrapping the essentially spoken quality of knowing into visual one-dimensionality. The electronic stage of development is seen to subsequently build upon typographical culture while re-articulating the essential eternity of oral presence. The diachronic link between past and present is made palpable by way of alterations in the psychic patternings that are produced in the stages of technological transformation. As a result of this, past and present can illuminate one another and co-inhabit the always oral interiority of the life-world.⁵ With all of this in mind, Ong is able to address McLuhan's special notion of acoustic space as the originary sensorium of manifest presence and its reincarnation in electronic world.

Ong wants to take advantage of the pervasive and powerful environment of electronic sound as an overdue vindication of the sacred history of communication. He uses the 'physicality' of technologised sound to rationalise the immateriality of the Word of God. In this approach, electronic technology becomes an objective correlative to the original and eternal interior life of Sound as God's Presence in the 'life-world'. For Ong,

the silencing of sound in history is the silencing of Christianity and the Word of God. For its part, electronic orality is seen to touch the 'acoustic nerve' of communication, opening a theological space for the modern renewal of sacramental communion with the Spirit.

In Ong's view, the word is always and forever spoken in the Word of God. Technologies of the word, on the other hand, ultimately profane this sacred condition. Since all words are fundamentally and originally oral, the distinction between 'oral' and 'literate' is seen not only as a technological transformation, but also as a denial of presence. The conscious access to this 'primary orality' is blocked by the technologies of visual reductionism. Hence, the absurdity Ong finds in the term 'oral literature', as well as his fundamental disagreement with Havelock on the matter.⁶ As far as Ong is concerned, orality stands in its own right, demonstrable through the special mnemonic formulas identified by Parry and Lord, and reinforced by Havelock's examination of the ancient texts.⁷ The spoken word as the origin of communication predetermines the 'superiority of oral noetics': speaking is knowing in the presence of the origin. The genius of the ancients, was therefore not the technological interlock between orality and alphabets, but rather the power of the spoken word itself. Quite simply, oral composition was party to the creative powers of the Word.

As the interior imagination of the Word, the roots of identity and consciousness are found in the world of the sensorium. They are also found in the power of the senses as interior mechanisms for detecting ordinary presence. According to Ong, technology becomes the means to discover the 'natural' primordiality of orality. Although the technology of literacy both hides and reveals the foundational role of speech in language, the interaction between foundational orality and the technologised word of writing can be seen to reveal the spiritual depth of the psyche.⁸ Similarly, the technology of the electronic

word reveals a depth of interiority reminiscent of the primary experience. Of critical importance, the electronic age also manages to sensitise us to 'the earlier contrasts between writing and orality' that highlight the inherent differences between 'oral' and 'literate' consciousness.⁹

Ong's goal is to reveal the untold history of 'sound as the originary spoken word', as the relationship between word of man and word of God, and as the silenced space in which this relationship unfolds. It is Ong who coins the term 'secondary orality', but he is quick to distinguish it from any corresponding 'primary orality'. In this case, the sense of participation may be reminiscent, but a secondary orality is seen to construct its own oral sensibility in a manner that is planned, manufactured, and controlled.¹⁰ Nonetheless, Ong plays a critical role in the theorising of a 'secondary orality', as his theory is integral to the reconstruction of sound as the sacramental Presence of the spoken Word. In its development, 'sound' becomes the means by which the human sensorium participates in the Word of God. In turn, 'acoustic space' becomes the interiorised and evolved human space of this communication. It is this space that serves as the evolutionary means by which the human 'life-world' takes on its highest form, the interiorisation of the word in the eternal 'silence' of God's Word.

Ong reconstructs a religious history of language and communication that defines the spoken word as 'Word made flesh'. Human speech is God's Word; it is the moment in which the Word enters history. In contrast to the religious concerns suggesting that the electronic media have silenced the Word of God, Ong sees promise in the correlation between an interiorised spatial acoustic of the word and the global sense of Presence afforded by the electronic sensorium. The interiorisation of the Word is the evolution of the human life-world to the point of global interiorisation, to the world as spiritual space.

Interestingly, this definition of acoustic space as interiorised form is also influential in McLuhan's delineation of secondary orality as a technologically realised form on a global scale.

According to Ong, the sacred mystery of sound can reveal the Word as the means by which God communicates or 'establishes contact with human existence'.¹¹ By focusing the relationship of the word to sound, Ong sets out to construct a religious history of communication grounded in the original 'sound' of the Word of God made flesh through the spoken word of humanity. Primary orality is thus seen to be the spoken word of God in the interior space of the spirit; secondary orality is a technological reminder of that originary space and a potential for reasserting the fundamental interiority of Sound in the omnipresence of the electronically spoken.¹²

In this framework, the physical world and body are vehicles of communication that carry the primary essence, speech emanating from the interior. The interior is the 'unsayable' substance of language, and 'language itself is at its deepest level not even a system of sounds [. . .] man is rooted in "speaking silence"'.¹³ It is not the sound itself that Ong pursues in his study, but rather the Presence of the silent interior that sound suggests. In this interior can be found the eternity of the spoken word that transcends the impermanence of the exteriorised sound of the spoken. Inside, the 'sound of the word' communicates with the primordial silence of God's Language.¹⁴

For Ong, modernity has been a matter of locking the word in space and shifting the sensorium from acoustic interior to visual exterior coinciding with 'the actual physical exploration of the globe'.¹⁵ In these circumstances the emerging secondary orality marks a new stress on auditory sensibilities, the pervasiveness of which suggests the technological means for humanity to re-establish contact with the Word. The predominance of the visual

did not destroy the oral. In Ong's view, however, it did suppress the interior space, and therefore the Christian history, of the word. The historical record is seen to be one of overspatialisation in which writing makes history exterior. As a result of this, the history of God's Word has been robbed of the space to reveal itself such that the interior space of sound went unrecorded. In these circumstances religion seemed dead, God silenced.

A history of communication that accounts for changes to the interior sensory ratios tells a different story, however. From this vantage the Word of God enters history through the 'Incarnation': in the life of Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh. In Ong's view, the 'Incarnation' was an historical event materialising and articulating God's existence and the means by which the sound of the word became the exchange between God and man. The word in its original oral form is not to be seen as a fixed record, but rather as a process of God living and communicating with man:

The Word was made flesh and dwelt, a Person, among us [. . .]. The Word of God, moreover, is reciprocating. If the Word who became man is God's communication to man, he is also man's response to God [. . .]. "Through him and with him and in him".¹⁶

The spoken word of man articulates the presence of God on earth. The spoken word is thus the living God among us, and the act of speaking is the act of 'materialising' God. Ong's interest here is to historicise religion by defining the history of sound as the social relationship to the Word of God in the 'human life-world'. In this context communication itself becomes a question of 'presence'. The spoken word articulates 'man's sense of his own presence to himself and to other men and to his sense of God's presence'.¹⁷ For Ong, the orality of the Word becomes the sensed history of communication between God and humankind.

Like Innis and Havelock, Ong notes a new sensitivity to electronic communications that engenders 'a growing sense of the word as word, which is to say of the word as

sound'. Ong wants to announce our liberation from the 'prison of literate culture' by way of an electronic oral presence. His theory seeks to make obvious the history of media in which the 'word is originally, and in the last analysis irretrievably, a sound phenomenon'.¹⁸ In this connection electronic orality allows a vantage from which to view the difference between oral and literate cultures for the first time. Only in the sound of the word can we distinguish the real nature of human life and the relationship of humanity to God.

Rejecting Havelock's notion of the oral record in written form, Ong finds permanence in the sound of the Word. In this permanence orality has a life and history of its own in the communicative relationship with God. Ong suggests speech is of the first order while literature grows out of speech and the oral performance that celebrates and realises Presence among human beings. Thus the alphabet was not behind the genius of Homer, as Havelock would have it, but rather a negation of the originary Genius present in the world and the epic creation of humanity itself. Accordingly, writing has served to mask the Word in its 'original habitat of sound' where it is not a record, but rather an event.¹⁹ Indeed, a dominant visual authority has served to block and silence the history of rhetorical tradition underpinning the mysteries of the Bible and language itself.

Ong rejects any emphasis on discovering an oral equivalent to the written record as an exercise in privileging the visual language of writing and typography. He joins the debate over epic composition, but he always assumes the fundamental orality of all language. In this regard, the compositional genius in the surviving oral texts of Yugoslavia is seen as testimony to the oral powers of memory, improvisation, and verbal formula. The compositional power of the oral is not in the written records of the unwritten, Ong insists, but rather in a knowledge involving a permanent state of the unrecorded. The singers of ancient tales kept alive the unrecorded, the continuous recurrence of the Oral Event and the

eternity of the Word in all its limitless performance. Oral performance was a celebration of the spoken word as life-affirming expressions of Truth.²⁰ Ultimately, the sound of the word is the Living Truth in the world of eternal time, that is, beyond the space 'where the letters of the alphabet have their existence'.²¹

As opposed to the notion of oral permanence, Ong finds an eternal impermanence in the oral. Phonetics notwithstanding, the alphabet is seen as a rupture of time by space: the 'diagram on the spatial field or the print on the disk or tape is precisely not sound'.²² Once sound is spatialised, Ong finds that its essence is masked by the visual representation:

Although something of what happens when a sound occurs can thus be represented, sound itself in its full existential actuality cannot. These representations in space suggest inevitably a quiescence and fixity which is unrealizable in actual sound [. . .]. Sound in its own actuality cannot be measured.²³

Time outlasts and eternally precedes space, and the impermanence of sound lies in its originary escape from its spatialised derivative. Those theories that suggest a correspondence between speech and alphabet are seen as party to the historical silencing of the origin.

As mentioned, Ong believes that writing silenced the acoustics of verbalisation and reconfigured the sensorium from interior sensibilities to exterior observations. Until the Gutenberg Press, communication had been associated with speech. Even the visual illustrations of medievalism were seen to be thematic reminiscences of an oral state of mind that presented the world in parables, as opposed to fixed and repeatable constructs. Moreover, Ong finds composition to be profoundly oral well beyond the Middle Ages. In these circumstances memory was linked to events carrying moral instruction, as opposed to 'literate verbatim based on memory of words'.²⁴ With the advent of a mechanical repeatability of words, however, the mimetic association between speech and parable was to be broken. In Ong's view, the great efforts of the 18th century to standardise the

vernaculars represented an attempt at total control over the spoken word as well as the reduction of meaning to a written code. In a profound sense, such a neutralised, devocalised physical world moved out of the relationship with man's own world. This devocalised world knew nothing of the power of the word articulated in Genesis: 'God *said*, let there be light. And there *was* light'.²⁵

Like Innis, Ong sees the history of communication in terms of the reduction of the world to spatial representation and words to visual form. He appreciates Innis's work on the spatial bias of media monopolies in that it highlights the reductive effects of communication technologies that force sound into visual space. For Ong, however, secondary orality is a stage beyond orality, script, and typography: 'Voice, muted by script and print, has come newly alive [. . .]. Recordings and tapes have given sound a new quality, recuperability'.²⁶ In turn, the promise of this lies in its acoustic pervasiveness so akin to the omnipresent voice of God. It points out that the only way human beings can truly possess the past is through understanding 'the patterned sequences of shifts in the media and corresponding changes in the sensorium.'²⁷

Also like Innis, Ong locates orality in time, writing (and typography) in space.²⁸ Indeed, Ong tends to reduce sound to time. This grounds his peculiar reconstruction of sound within an interiorised and immutable silence. Specifically, a 'word' is a something which participates in the event of the 'Word': 'For every word even today in its primary state of existence, which is its spoken state, is indeed an event'.²⁹ In this, primary orality is at the root of all words, 'the divine presence irrupts into time and space and "inhabits" them. Presence does not irrupt into voice. One cannot have voice without presence'.³⁰ The living sound on earth is the means by which humans access the living Word as it shows itself among living beings: 'But because human words do not endure and silence does,

encounter with God is even more an encounter with silence'.³¹ This all encompassing 'sound world in the negative' is the interiorisation of permanence and the eternal presence of God:

Permanence is [. . .] relative, and the living word used in an utterance [. . .] achieves a kind of timelessness or rather supratemporal existence which spatial quiescence can never achieve. Only God is unchanging [. . .]. We must always remind ourselves that while divine constancy is in one way like such spatial changelessness it is in another way not like it at all, for God lives, and to comprehend life we must somehow think of motion, too.³²

For Ong, the external world of objects perpetrated by the spatial bias of visual media hides the essential inner life of the sensorium: '*Sound is a special sensory key to interiority*'. Sound has to do with interiority 'for true interiority is communicative'. Indeed, sound reveals interiors 'because its nature is determined by interior relationships'.³³ The essential interiority of words is the higher form of being: 'Our bodies are a frontier, and the side which is most ourselves is "in"'.³⁴ Ong emphasises 'hearing' as the agency of interiorisation, the means by which we sense the presence of others.³⁵ When he suggests he is surrounded by sound, his reference is to 'being in' the presence of another interior, not to any physical sense of the acoustic world.

This suggested affinity of sound and thought is a reconstruction of the classical authority of speech. In this regard secondary orality is seen to set the conditions for reasserting the evolutionary purpose of the life-world: 'In all human cultures the spoken word appears as the closest equivalent of fully developed interior thought'.³⁶ The true promise of the electronic word thus lies in its pervasiveness of presence, a correlative form for the unavoidable acknowledgement of presence in the excess of interiority. Truth is realised in the 'epiphant' moment of a word now reaffirmed and rearticulated in the global spokenness of secondary orality.³⁷ The interior sound of the word holds the ultimate Truth. The acquisition of knowledge is a matter of participating in the living time of God's Word:

‘This is its habitat, its home’.³⁸ Presence and truth are revealed in the affinity of sound and thought, in the epiphany of ‘an intellectual event’. In simplest terms, ‘awareness of the irreducibly non-spatial elements in thought is crucial if we are to grasp the meaning and the sacredness of the word’.³⁹

For Ong, the electronic reorganisation of the sensorium opens the way to correlate the interior consciousness of human beings to the external history of the cosmos.⁴⁰ The electronic word suggests the achievement of an all-encompassing interiority as the highest stage of cosmic and biological evolution. In effect, we have evolved into interiorised beings participating in the silent sound of God’s eternal presence. This is the ultimate unity of external cosmic biology and human consciousness in a technologically achieved interiority. In this development ‘sound’ is the sense of interior space, the interiorisation of history unrecorded by the exteriorised history of visual space.

In Ong’s theory of communication, the Trinity is an acoustic metaphor representing this unwritten history. God is the Word; His Son is the Word made flesh in the life-world of human beings; the Holy Ghost is the communication between them and the presence inhabiting the interior spirit of humanity. In turn, the power of sound is the mystery of this communion and the revelation of interiority. Ong’s reconstruction of the Trinity into an oral-aural theology is an attempt to overcome the predominance of visual metaphors as they have crept into Christian sensibility. By re-examining religion in terms of communication and sound, rather than vision and light, he seeks to re-animate the dormant spirit of Christianity in accord with an electronic re-articulation of acoustic Presence:

The human word is uttered at the juncture where interior awareness and external event meet and where, moreover, encounter between person and person occurs at its most human depths, the history of the word and thus of verbal media has rather more immediate religious relevance than the history of kingdoms and principalities. Study of man in terms of the changes in the verbal media establishes new grounds for the relation of sacred and secular history.⁴¹

'Primary orality' is the Word of God in communion with humankind while 'sound' is the Word Incarnate.⁴² The sound of the word is always primary, and secondary orality is always technology addressing primary orality. Ong finds in the electronic age a new kind of orality reminiscent of a primitive oralism. However, he also distinguishes the electronic word from tribal orality. The 'sound world of a technological milieu' relies on visual constructs.⁴³ It is 'secondary' in this additional sense of existing alongside writing and print. This notwithstanding, secondary orality offers the means to understand the earlier age in some new depth and re-engage this acoustic sensorium of the inner spirit. Harkening back to the world of medieval scholasticism, and providing the technological means of preparation for a mass encounter with God, the oral is in the air once again.⁴⁴

For Ong, sociality is a world of personal presences communicated from one interior to another. Sound reveals interiors, and technological sound is the achievement of a higher evolutionary state: 'The use of sound becomes physically more and more interiorized as animals evolve to a higher or more interiorized forms'. The new orality of the post-typographical age suggests the evolution of human society to the point of a 'hominization of the world', to a 'triumph of the voice, of the word'.⁴⁵ The world is infused with human presence that spreads the sense of God in all things. The presence of the Word through the technology of orality is the evolution of the 'life-world' into manifest interiority, the society of God. Electronic orality marks the evolution of the word into interior subjectivity as an eternal state.

The emergence of electronic orality re-opens the metaphysics of sound Ong wants to privilege: 'For it is hardly an exaggeration to say that language was never effectively described as a spoken medium until the past few decades'.⁴⁶ A science and a technology of the Word was thus at hand. Hitherto, words as sounds had escaped all representation such

that it was virtually impossible to conceive of language as sound. Secondary orality, as 'sound', marked the means to assert Presence and reorder the sensorium for its conscious perception.

Ong concludes that only with secondary orality is it possible to recognise the profound differences between past oral culture and the culture of writing and alphabetic type. Not until oral-aural sensibilities were reawakened did sound emerge once again as the authenticating presence of God on earth. The rise of secondary orality provides the means by which the medium of sound can finally record the history of communication in terms of the Word. For Ong, the electronic reawakened the connection between sound, word, and the authoritative presence of God within the most vital of human 'life-world' processes. The electronic age of secondary orality is to be distinguished from the typographical age in terms of its advanced sociality: 'Near-instantaneous transmission of information across the globe maximizes the social sense by generating a sense of omnipresence'.⁴⁷ Sound can be seen to be explicitly bound to time, to presence. Electronic media create this sense of eternal time as well as participation on a global scale.

Ultimately, Ong's alignment of 'sound to time' and 'writing to space' corresponds with the oral-literate binary found in the work of Innis, Havelock, and others. In this binary, time and space are reduced to co-ordinates of technology, not world. Ong criticises the 'absence of sound' in contemporary theories of orality, and he attempts to correct this absence by inquiring into the sensory experience of sound and speech from the religious design of locating a media correspondent for the 'Holy Spirit' as the 'Word of God'. Human words as always originally spoken participate in this special sense of history that is reawakened in the electronic privileging of sound. No doubt the opportunity for a reconstructed sensorium is found in the reawakened mystery of sound. However, Ong's

sense of sound reduces orality to an event of communicative epiphany. By denying the materiality of sound in the world, and by reducing sound to an interior Presence, Ong contributes to the metaphysical negation of acoustic practice in the oral world.⁴⁸

Ong also articulates a central problem in Canadian orality theory. Removed from earth, sound is 'internal' and possesses the mysteries, secrets, and faith of the unseen.⁴⁹ It cannot challenge the visual ideology of space because it is removed from material space and located in an abstract place 'inside', yet above, the body. History is thus seen to be that of an interior world and word silenced by the historical dominance of vision and typographical order. In reducing the oral to 'lasting form' and 'survival of the past', Ong seeks an oral power to counteract the visual authority of writing. This surviving form is the 'presence of the spoken word' he detects in the technologies of writing. Together with Havelock, Ong tends to emphasise the oral influence on written form and thereby ignores the contradictory relations inherent to a 'secondary orality' itself.⁵⁰

Derrida and Metaphysics: The Negation in the 'Presence' of Sound

In the context of orality, 'ghosts' are heard through intonation and rhythm. They serve as reminders of what has been repressed in the phonetic order of speech. In Derrida's examination of writing, the ambivalence of the world is not an origin or a given or a presence, but rather a trace continually subject to erasure. The process of writing transgresses the written by haunting the sayable with the unsayable or unsaid. As a means to challenge the metaphysical presence of the spoken word, that is, the phonologic centrality of Western logocentrism, Derrida posits the 'non-phonetic', the metaphorical complexities and ambivalence of the writing process underneath the fixed-form of the phonetic alphabet. He wants to free writing from form. He also wants to find the lived in the silence of the non-phonetic, as well as in the anti-writing of the margins beyond fixed

alphabetic form. His exploration of writing suggests that appropriation of the other is part of the power of authority. He sees in writing more than the graphic form that is its authoritative guise. He sees also its non-phonetic metaphorical sense, the process that subverts the discourse of logocentric reason. For Derrida, writing is beyond the Word (the spoken truth), not its supplement.

Derrida suggests that 'the idea of the book [. . .] is profoundly alien to the sense of writing. It is the encyclopaedic protection of theology and of logocentrism against the disruption of writing, against its aphoristic energy'.⁵¹ The book is static. The social process of writing transgresses the book just as the acoustics of spatial practice transgress the word. Process disrupts form. Lived poetics disrupts abstract models and fixed meanings by working on the world: 'It describes relations and not appellations'.⁵² Both written and spoken forms seek permanence and repress the history of unreason. For Derrida, writing is a critical practice, not a mark on a page. It is where the multi-voicedness of literature and the hidden margins of text erase any claim to absolute truth. He sees the 'writing' in the writing as a certain 'fallen writing' that challenges transcendental absolutes. One must be conscious of the intrusion of the system into all efforts to reveal the haunting of the said by the unsaid, that is, the haunting of reason by the history of unreason. His point is to challenge absolutes without positing an absolute. The threat of the 'return of the system', the re-appropriation of alterity, is a continual problem.⁵³ That literature opens into the field of arche-writing also makes it party to the system of writing that represses it. The challenge is to avoid falling prey to the ideology of writing. Derrida recognises that the 'writing' of literature is not in itself subversive. The fact that it can act as support for transcendental authority is as important as its ability to destabilise authority.

Derrida challenges the evidence of a traditional (logocentric) reason that is assumed to be rooted in the phonetic alphabet, in the spoken word (the form), and in writing as supplemental inscription. In his notion of 'deconstruction', he seeks to reveal the fissures in writing, to break writing away from logocentric associations between the phonetic alphabet and univocal truth. He further seeks the marginal details that go against the grain of fixed meaning. If, in the classical sense, writing is the outside corruption of the inner writing of truth, the fissures of writing are revealed in the ideology of the Fall. Specifically, the natural good of writing on the soul is debased by the bad of writing on the page. If the purpose of Writing is to find the soul, then that Writing is aligned with the inner spirit of Speech. Consequently, the system of Writing is seen to be an ideology and metaphysics of presence that equates reason with inner truth and auditory spirit, the voice of God.

Derrida criticises both Rousseau and Saussure for denouncing literature's corruption of the original, natural language.⁵⁴ He positions both in the wake of the Fall. The Fall is the written debasement of the 'Word of God', the presence of God, or the Truth in the spoken Word. The pagan actions of writing transgress the mimetic union of Word and God, the language of God contaminated by the outside. Paradoxically, Derrida sees literature as an irreducibly graphic text that in its non-phonetic otherness reinscribes writing as transgressive and thus breaks the hold of the classical mimetics of univocal truth. Literature breaks the fixity of the Word and the Book by linking the play of form to the material of expression.

Derrida places the grammatology of the written against the linguistic logocentrism of the spoken. He seeks the points 'at which writing [. . .] returns to haunt the scene of its own repression'.⁵⁵ He also extends the classical definition of writing as supplementary

inscription to 'everything as writing'. Every discourse, including speech, is seen to be a metaphorical process, the 'sign of a sign'. In turn, if everything is metaphorical, writing breaks the metaphysics of presence and the spoken origin. Finally, if everything is writing, there is no origin. In Derrida's view, 'writing' is whatever escapes, transgresses, or opposes logocentric reason. He denounces metaphysical truths by way of the 'passions' of the body in the text. As opposed to this, the materialism of writing reveals the signs of reason.

Derrida goes to great lengths to demonstrate that writing (the symbolic) precedes speech. The trace that exists outside the speech-writing binary is seen to be the non-phonetic moment that lurks within language and creates dangerous and disruptive effects. He seeks to show how the process and not the order of writing is 'the return of the repressed' (absence) which escapes signification (presence). Writing is the non-phonetic unseen within language that disrupts appearances.

Derrida's point about the fissures in writing is that any privilege assigned to one form of writing always represses another form of writing:

As was the case with the Platonic writing of the truth in the soul, in the Middle Ages too it is a writing understood in the metaphorical sense, that is to say, a natural, eternal, and universal writing; the system of a signified truth that is recognised in its dignity. As in the *Phaedrus*, a certain fallen writing continues to be opposed to it.⁵⁶

In this sense there is a 'fallen writing' depending on the historical context of power relations. Allegory is fallen writing in that it escapes the One. The reduction of writing to model or form represses other writing by positing itself as writing in general. Derrida considers this abstraction to be an ideology positioned as the highest form, the ideal-type, in order to control, define, or simply dismiss all 'fallen' forms. The fallen forms must always seek reconciliation with the origin and absolution from the 'sin of the lived many' against the 'transcendental truth of the one'.

Derrida's theory of arche-writing challenges authoritative systems by exposing the experience that has haunted the dominant discourse of spoken and written reason.

Specifically, his deconstruction attempts to pose a world outside the binary opposition of speech and writing in a materialism of writing that counters metaphysical presence and transcendental truth. Also, in its contradictory relationship to monologic inscription, Derrida's examination of writing corresponds to an examination of orality and oral inscription. As writing is seen to be more than a representation of oral language, orality may be taken as more than spoken form, sound more than phonetic structure. In this context, both writing and orality become an 'exiled figuration, that outside, that double'.⁵⁷

Of critical importance, Derrida's arche-writing challenges the historical domination of the phonetic alphabet as system of authority in a way that assumes 'sound' as the chief vehicle of this power. He recognises the 'fissures in writing', but denies the 'fissures in orality' by generalising sound as abstract phonetic authority.⁵⁸ By reducing sound to presence, and by opposing this sound with the non-phonetics of arche-writing, he denies the transgressive potential of the 'heard' as well as the possibility of questioning oral form with acoustic practice. Rather than placing both orality and writing in the world, he assumes orality is to be placed in the system of writing.

For Derrida, writing is the difference between object and presence, that is, the space in-between.⁵⁹ In this sense, 'there is no necessary connection between sound and language'.⁶⁰ In the difference between sound and logos is a means to disconnect the linguistic hold on orders of the spoken. However, by denying the sound-space Derrida endorses the image and re-articulates in terms of sound the Platonic idea of the sign of truth overriding the ambivalence of debate: 'The sound-image is what is heard; not the sound

heard but the being-heard of the sound. Being-heard is structurally phenomenal and belongs to an order radically dissimilar to that of the real sound in the world'.⁶¹

An important consequence of placing the sound of speech inside an all-encompassing construct of writing is that Derrida, or at least in his influential earlier work, overlooks the authority of electronic orality and its appropriation of the 'other' in terms of acoustic practice and spatial contestation. Arguably, sound cannot be reduced to its linguistic phonetic sense. It eludes the discourse of reason as well as the reduction to a metaphysics of presence. The 'trace' sound makes in the poetics of world is such that what is sought in writing can also be said of acoustic practice: 'The immotivation of the trace ought now to be understood as an operation and not as a state, as an active movement, a motivation, and not as a given structure'.⁶² Derrida may reject 'origin and copy' by insisting upon metaphorical relationality against transcendental truth. However, in reducing sound to metaphysical presence, he does not account for the technological reproduction of the metaphorical process itself. In assuming that 'orality' is a metaphysical univocality, he denies both the materialism of sound and the secret power of electronic media.⁶³ His construct of the text would seem to deny the exteriority he seeks to expose.

Derrida's effort to deconstruct linear strictures intersects with McLuhan's notion of 'juxtaposition without copula', the dismantling of classical conceptual oppositions and hierarchical thought systems, which may subsequently be reinscribed within a different order of textual signification. In Derrida, the idea is to remove the logic and get outside hierarchical orders of speech and writing by seeking the 'under-writing' in the margins of the unsaid or unwritten.⁶⁴ In this effort, his deconstruction seeks to dig up unsettling forces by finding the practice of writing hidden in the order of writing. Derrida argues the point that in their effort to undermine classical absolutes symbolists such as Mallarme, and by

implication McLuhan, actually copy the mimetic process. In a McLuhan, for example, electronic writing becomes the miming of oral mimetics, the sign of a sign beyond verbal orders. If, as Derrida suggests, the 'mime inaugurates, he broaches a white page', then McLuhan becomes the orchestration of forms of otherness that negates the experience of otherness.⁶⁵

Derrida attempts to expose the linearity of McLuhan's theory by positing a writing 'that spells its symbols pluri-dimensionally' such that meaning is not subject to the successive orders of logical time or to 'the irreversible temporality of sound'. The multi-dimensionality of the symbolic world is seen to resist the fixing of history within a notion of eternal presence: 'Word history has no doubt always been associated with a linear scheme of the unfolding of the presence, where the line relates the final presence to the originary presence'. Symbolic multi-dimensionality, however, 'corresponds to another level of historical experience'. Implicitly addressing the rebirth of an originary orality, Derrida criticises McLuhan's construct of simultaneity that 'co-ordinates two absolute presents, two points or instants of presence'.⁶⁶ Where McLuhan's intended project is to challenge the visual dominion of linear rationalism with the acoustic multi-dimensionality of the electronic mosaic, Derrida rightly finds this a veiled articulation of return to the origin suggestive of reconciliation with the Word:

Linearity [. . .] has been structurally bound up with that of economy, of technics, and of ideology. This solidarity appears in [. . .] the formation of ideology by the class that writes or rather commands the scribes. Not that the massive reappearance of nonlinear writing interrupts this structural solidarity; quite the contrary. But it transforms its nature profoundly.⁶⁷

Ironically, the nature of this ideological transformation lies in the material relations of sound.

For Derrida, information is an extension that radicalises the limitations of the body. Much as McLuhan does, he equates sound to the inner world of the spirit of 'mental experiences which themselves reflect or mirror things by natural resemblance'.⁶⁸ In *Of Grammatology*, however, Derrida seems to directly address and reject McLuhan's theory of electronic presence. Specifically, the development of the practical methods of information retrieval is seen to vastly extend the possibilities of the 'message' to the point where it is no longer the written translation of language, the transporting of the signified, that remains spoken in its integrity. Rather, it goes hand in hand with an extension of phonography and all the means of conservation that allow the spoken language to function without the presence of the speaking subject.⁶⁹ With this, both the spoken and the written are reduced to information. In effect, the extension of the information technology becomes a kind of supra-inscription that liberates the spoken from the speaking subject in the abstract space of the 'message'. It follows, then, that the electronic-spoken transcends the limitations of writing as fixed system (and the spoken as part thereof) and that writing no longer issues from the logos. By implication, information becomes the 'other' of the logos.

Following the classical ideology of the oral, McLuhan seeks to make the auditory experience spiritual. He uses the acoustic process of hearing as an analogue to the 'spirit of the Word'. In this construct aurality transcends the 'hateful contraries' of mind and body, culture and nature, reason and experience, as it is the spiritual link internalising outside sounds in the auditory imagination of the soul. Derrida rightly points out that this is the means by which truth and reason are equated with the spoken. McLuhan's model of the mind is mimetically joined to a disembodiment of electronic orality. The idea of the inner spirit of sensory perception is key to McLuhan's acoustic theory, which hinges upon the acoustics of mind transcending social and physical space. Although this notion of 'interior'

as mimetic electronic presence inside the mind confuses the representation and representational space of orality, Derrida's critique of the privileging of speech seems very much a response to this position. For Derrida, the non-phonetic transgression of phonocentrism relies upon reducing orality and sound to the metaphysics of presence in the manner of McLuhan. Indeed, Derrida seems to assume McLuhan's construct of orality for purposes of his own analysis.⁷⁰

Derrida's critique of Western 'logocentrism' and the opposition between speech and writing reinforces this tradition rather than challenging it. In assuming linguistic dissection to be a privileging of the spoken (the phoneme), Derrida ignores its connection to linear rationalism and the reductions of empirical science. He decontextualises speech by negating its sound, in turn hindering the understanding of orality as a central contestatory site in electronic ideology. Derrida claims to celebrate the 'trace' in writing as the originary play of presence and absence (visible and hidden), but he negates this play in the acoustic field of the spoken. Acoustic space is not a sense of a place as in 'origin'. Sound, in the context of its making, connects body to social process in the world. The negation of this space of interconnection is the foundation of ideological dominance. Politically speaking, the matter has never been one of controlling either the spoken or the written, but rather of controlling the space in-between. The space between orality and literacy reveals sound as a spatial link between perception and interaction within the world.⁷¹

Derrida suggests there is writing in speech, but he denies the application of his own theory to acoustics and electronic replication. In deconstructing the opposition between written and spoken, Derrida seeks to escape that binary, but fails by dismissing the sound of the spoken as 'fixed form'. His failure is tied to a reduction of the spoken to linguistic

phonology that negates the erasure powers of acoustic practice. He posits the material substance of writing in the metaphor, but assumes the metaphysics of sound as the only way to read the acoustic practice. In effect, he abstracts sound and relegates it to an idealistic inner auditory space.⁷² He then accepts the ideology of orality as the 'reappropriation of presence'. By accepting the Aristotelian definition of voice as the 'producer of the first symbols' in which sound is a 'relationship of essential and immediate proximity with the mind', Derrida denies the practice of sound in the experiential world.⁷³ In his negation of the 'otherness' of sound, he subsequently serves to reinforce the position of secondary orality theory. In assuming sound as the auditory imagination of interior landscape (and spirit of Corpus Christi harboured in the human spirit), Derrida falls prey to the ideology of McLuhan.⁷⁴

Notes to Chapter Two

¹ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 166.

² *The Presence of the Word*, p. 162.

³ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 163.

⁴ Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word*, p. 82.

⁵ *Orality and Literacy*, p. 2. For Ong, like McLuhan, acoustic space is the personalised interior present in all human beings and through which they contact the ultimate interiority of God's Word as omniscient presence (*Presence of the Word*, p. 164). Sound becomes the metaphysical medium of God's space. The minimisation of the ear and the maximisation of the eye accompanying typographical transformation of the word is for Ong the ultimate dissociation of the sensorium; the silencing of the essence.

⁶ Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, p. 11.

⁷ *Orality and Literacy*, p. 23.

⁸ *Orality and Literacy*, p. 183.

⁹ *Orality and Literacy*, p. 3.

¹⁰ Ong, *Interfaces of the Word*, p. 292.

¹¹ Ong, *The Presence of the Word*, x.

¹² Ong suggests that for earlier societies, including those well acquainted with the alphabet, 'the Word, even when written, was much closer to the spoken word than it normally is for twentieth century technological man. Today we have often to labour to regain the awareness that the word is still always at root the spoken word' (*The Presence of the Word*, ix-x). For Ong, this awareness has been dulled by centuries of typography that have muted sound and disconnected the word from the original event of the Word in history. However, as Ong sees it, electronic media seem to hold the unique promise of 'making it possible to discover the word with new explicitness, if less directness, in its original and still natural habitat, the world of voice, of sound' (x).

¹³ Ong, *The Presence of the Word*, p. 3.

¹⁴ For Ong the world of sound is the original place of language and no matter what its form the word is inextricably of spoken origin. The spoken word is seen to contain the original balance of the sensorium. Representations of this origin reshape, distort, and 'overspatialize the universe so that everything is reduced to models picturable in space, and what is unpicturable [. . .] is discarded as impossible or unreal' (*Presence of the Word*, p. 7). This spatialisation or 'exteriorisation' of the word disrupts the sensory balance of the initial spoken word. Aligning himself with the work of Innis and McLuhan, Ong emphasises that the study of the word must thus focus on the sensorial change resulting from shifts in communication technologies, shifts from the lost sense of primary orality to the promised rediscovery of the origin in secondary orality.

¹⁵ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 9.

¹⁶ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 13.

¹⁷ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 15.

¹⁸ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 18.

¹⁹ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 22.

²⁰ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 33

²¹ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 40.

²² *The Presence of the Word*, p. 43.

²³ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 44.

²⁴ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 58.

²⁵ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 70.

²⁶ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 88.

²⁷ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 92.

²⁸ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 111.

²⁹ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 113.

³⁰ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 114.

³¹ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 161.

³² *The Presence of the Word*, p. 160.

³³ *The Presence of the Word*, pp. 117-118.

³⁴ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 119.

³⁵ Ong suggests that the evolutionary purpose to human life can be understood in terms of the struggle to achieve the supra-interiority of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin's 'noosphere'. The evolutionary scale then aligns greater interiority with greater intelligence: 'Intelligence, in its subhuman analogue as in its human analogue, is closely associated with sound' (*Presence of the Word*, p. 121). In this sense, people are 'pure interiors' and human communication is the encounter of one interior with another (*Presence of the Word*, p. 125).

³⁶ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 138.

³⁷ *The Presence of the Word*, pp. 155-56. This epiphant moment of truth 'comes as a flash, only more instantaneously than a flash [. . .]. Functioning in a statement, where its relation to truth can be tested, the word thus rises out of and above time' (*Presence of the Word*, p. 155). In the moment of truth inside spokenness, Ong finds participation in the Word in 'earth-time' (the Word made flesh) and beyond time in the eternity of the divine spokenness of the life-world.

³⁸ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 159.

³⁹ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 160.

⁴⁰ Ong identifies his own theory of communication as a response to the urgency of Teilhard de Chardin's quest for the means to re-associate the living world with the living spirit, an essential relationship torn apart in modernity (pp. 177-79).

⁴¹ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 181.

⁴² *The Presence of the Word*, p. 186.

⁴³ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 259.

⁴⁴ *The Presence of the Word*, pp. 271, 286, 295.

⁴⁵ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 310.

⁴⁶ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 57.

⁴⁷ *The Presence of the Word*, p. 101.

⁴⁸ For Ong, the significance of sound is in the eternal echo of the original: 'The thing about sound is that as it goes out of existence, its power is retained in the mental images it creates and those images echo the acoustics of the original, albeit in an abstract 'acoustic resonance', or acoustic aesthetic, long after the sound itself has gone' (*Interfaces of the Word*, p. 136).

⁴⁹ Ong, *Interfaces of the Word*, p. 109.

⁵⁰ By helping to define orality and restrict its study to primary and secondary forms and the technological associations between them, Ong fails to address 'participation' as a potential vehicle for power in and through electronic media. Because he conforms to a 'book ends' categorisation of orality (i.e., a division of history into primary orality and secondary orality) and indeed helps to construct it, he finds correspondences between the participatory communion he assumes in oral tradition and sees reborn in the electronic. He distinguishes primary and secondary orality by confusing and equating oral authority and oral interaction. Where Havelock notes the institutional role of primary orality, Ong celebrates an idealised spirit of oral participation. Both views deny the contradictory tensions in orality and thereby negate its history. Ong points out that: 'This secondary orality, however, so strikingly like primary orality in its bent for participation, is also totally unlike the primary orality of mankind in that its participatory qualities are self-consciously planned and fully supervised [. . .]. Nothing is left to chance in the world of secondary orality [. . .]. The only way to succeed is to plan your spontaneity carefully and circumstantially. Otherwise how can you be sure it is spontaneous? And you have to be sure. A seriously ironic mood would disintegrate this totally masked total control, so 'stable' irony, or irony pretty well labelled as such, is all that television can normally tolerate' (*Interfaces of the Word*, p. 292). Here, Ong fails to recognise that 'participation', the appearance of multi-layered juxtaposition and spontaneity, and irony act as vehicles of power in and through electronic media.

⁵¹ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 18.

⁵² *Of Grammatology*, p. 26.

⁵³ Derrida, *Margins*, xi-xii.

⁵⁴ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 37.

⁵⁵ Norris, *Derrida* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987), p. 84.

⁵⁶ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 15.

⁵⁷ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 34.

⁵⁸ Derrida points out that: 'The meaning of the outside was always present within the inside, imprisoned outside the outside, and vice versa'. Derrida also suggests that a science of language 'must recover the natural - that is, the simple and original relationships between speech and writing, that is between an inside and an outside' (*Of Grammatology*, p. 35). Ironically, he points out that by considering the 'audible as the natural milieu within which language must naturally fragment and articulate its instituted signs, thus exercising its arbitrariness, this explanation excludes all possibility of some natural relationship between speech and writing' (*Of Grammatology* p. 42). In the *Phaedrus*, Plato suggests that the evil of writing comes from

without and contaminates the spirit. In Derrida's view, the platonic concept of writing is a contamination of the inside by the outside. The exteriority of writing (the body) breaches the interiority of speech (the soul). It is not writing or speech that Plato is addressing here, however, it is the authoritative system of writing uprooting the authority of oral tradition. The power relations of language systems are forms against form. 'Writing, the letter, the sensible inscription, has always been considered by Western tradition as the body and matter external to the spirit, to breath, to speech, and to the logos. And the problem of soul and body is no doubt derived from the problem of writing from which it seems--conversely--to borrow its metaphors' (p. 35). As a means of positing the pre-existence of writing, Derrida refers to Socrates. Socrates raises the question of mimesis (truth); in terms of how painting and other forms of graphic inscription can best convey truths to the mind properly attuned. The good painter 'reproduces images always already engraved in the soul, pictures whose authenticity is proved by appealing to a wisdom that naturally precedes the mere instance of graphic reproduction' (Norris, *Derrida*, pp. 46-47, see also Plato's, *Phaedrus*, 275 d-e). Plato's metaphor of orality, as writing in the soul, is the pure spirit of writing; an interior form that must be distinguished from the corrupt outside or exterior forms of graphic marks on a page. The Platonic doctrine of truth is a form of inward sacrament or revelation, above the material relations of orality and writing. As a writing in the soul, truth makes itself 'visible in the mind in a state of receptive wisdom'. The 'visibility' of truth in the mind is beyond aural-oral and visual- written form. The 'light' of knowledge as interior sacrament addresses the true essence of things 'closer to the origin and the nature of things--than any truth attainable by a mere copying of external reality' (Norris, p. 54).

⁵⁹ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 57.

⁶⁰ *Of Grammatology*, p. 57.

⁶¹ *Of Grammatology*, p. 63. Saussure also contributes to associating sound to the inner spiritual realm and the relegation of sensory experience to spiritual imprint. The sound-image is the sign -- the inner meaning -- to be distinguished from the purely physical thing, the material of sound. The sound in the world is to be distinguished from the interior process of the sound being heard; there is the inner auditory and the external auditory. This is the ideological structure of technological mimetics (inside) over historical poetics (outside): 'It should be recognised that it is in the specific zone of this imprint and this trace, in the temporalisation of a *lived experience* which is neither *in* the world nor in 'another world', which is not more sonorous than luminous, not more *in* time than *in* space, that differences appear among the elements or rather produce them, make them emerge as such and constitute the *texts*, the chains and the systems of traces. These chains and systems cannot be outlined except in the fabric of this trace or imprint. The unheard difference between the appearing and the appearances [. . .] between the 'world' and 'lived experience' is the condition of all other differences, of all other traces, and *it is already a trace* (p. 65). Writing, then, is the experience of space and time.

⁶² *Of Grammatology*, p. 51.

⁶³ In the realm of experience, the interlocution of culture and nature transgresses discursive systems and signification. Material relations are radically exterior to discourse. They 'speak' what discourse cannot say. The unpredictable, palpable poetics of connection occurs in the experiential realm of spatial practice. Here is the sound of the 'felt experience' of lived poetics. The material world of sensed experience 'sayable' in the experience itself, in the production of that space is the realm of transgression, unreason, multi-directionality, intonational diversity and rhythm.

⁶⁴ Derrida is positing fissures in writing as a way to challenge what he has accepted as the given of orality. Arche-writing is seen as incorporating sound as simply another 'mark' or textual inscription. Textuality is seen as a challenge to the logocentric bias inhabiting Western thinking about mind, language, and reality. Derrida suggests the assumed priority of speech over writing accompanies the idea of a pure and self-authenticating knowledge. The intrusion of written signs - mere arbitrary marks upon a page - could only represent a deplorable swerve from truth. Deconstruction should not simply invert oppositions (speech-writing, philosophy-literature), but should attempt to be conscious of the system in the course of using it. Metaphor, for Derrida, is evidence of the writing process. Metaphors are present even when Socrates 'speaks' with maximum force against 'writing' as something that contaminates the wellsprings of wisdom and truth. The problem with this is the assumption that metaphors are forms or techniques of writing

process, as opposed to interplay between world and poetics. Metaphors speak to this spatial connection. McLuhan's 'juxtaposition without connectives' (the mosaic overlay of all kinds of images) is an attempt to 'engineer' acoustic space. Derrida's deconstruction of assumed connections feeds the replication of ambivalence. The deconstruction of 'form' negates the spatial practice of poetics by retreating into form.

⁶⁵ Derrida quoted in David Carroll, *Paraesthetics: Foucault, Lyotard and Derrida*, (New York & London: Methuen, 1987), p. 100.

⁶⁶ Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 85.

⁶⁷ *Of Grammatology*, p. 86.

⁶⁸ *Of Grammatology*, p. 86.

⁶⁹ *Of Grammatology*, p. 10.

⁷⁰ Deconstruction, reversals, and inversions of language can be seen to 'reverse and reinscribe the dominant'. Both McLuhan and Derrida play with witty puns 'but these reversals do not transform the asymmetrical power relations in which they are involved. In fact, the unserious, the funny, and the parodic secure those relations in a more ecumenical, casual, democratic and noncoercive (hegemonic) manner' (Zavarzadeh and Morton, *Theory as Resistance: Politics and Culture after (Post) structuralism*, London: The Guildford Press, 1994, p. 45).

⁷¹ V. N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, pp. 9-16.

⁷² Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, pp. 7-8.

⁷³ *Of Grammatology*, p. 11.

⁷⁴ An ideology constructed around T. S. Eliot's 'auditory imagination' and the simultaneity of symbolist poetics.

CHAPTER THREE –THE MEETING OF ‘PRIMARY’ AND ‘SECONDARY ORALITY’

Innis, McLuhan, and the Recovery of a Lost Orality

McLuhan focuses his criticism of Innis on the latter's failure to align electronic media with the reincarnation of lost oral culture. McLuhan wonders how this is possible, since Innis's work is full of historical demonstrations of the space-binding power of the eye, the time-binding power of the ear, and the contradictions between them.¹ McLuhan sees Innis inexplicably shifting the world of radio into a visual orbit and the centralising power of the eye when in fact it follows the time-bound oral tradition of collective participation in the body of memory. For McLuhan, electronic technology is acoustic: instant, omnipresent, it creates multiple 'centres-without-margins'.² Visual technology, on the other hand, 'creates a centre-margin pattern of organisation whether by literacy or by industry and a price system'.³ In the contemporary moment, marked by the mosaic patterns of electronic, McLuhan focuses on the rupture of the linear-visual tradition.

For McLuhan, electronic patterns evolve a mimetic oral harmony beyond the ancient interface of oral tradition and alphabet: 'Without the mirror of the mind nobody can live a human life in the face of our present mechanised dream'.⁴ Electronic co-operation with orality offers the chance to technologically reconstruct an oral world, as this 'orchestration permits discontinuity and endless variety without the universal imposition of any one social or economic system'. McLuhan finds this potentiality inherent in 'symbolist art but also in quantum and relativity physics. Unlike Newtonian physics, the latter 'can entertain a harmony that is not unilateral, monistic, or tyrannical. As such it is neither progressive nor reactionary, but embraces all previous actualisation of human excellence while welcoming the new in a simultaneous present'.⁵

Interestingly, the acoustic elasticity that Innis celebrates in oral tradition speaks to, and serves to establish, the means of oral pattern recognition in the organic mosaic of McLuhan's electronic media. However, their conversation meets in technology not history. In effect, the dialogue between them constructs a technological equivalence between orality and electronic media. Both define the vitality of the oral in terms of its technology and form, not as lived social and historical experience. Submerged in the simulated oral world of the electronic, both their theories become immersed in the paradox of orality, the contradictory tension between technological mimesis and historical poetics.

Innis tends to focus on the ancient while alluding to a contemporary electronic connection. However, his sense of the contradictory relationship between oral tradition and mechanisation does suggest the possibility of an oral resistance to centrality and monopoly. He sees mechanised media as a colonisation of space that silences the spirit of land and people, and his concern about mechanised media is a plea for human experience outside technology.⁶ He is intent on revealing the contradictions between 'historical beings buffeted by social forces beyond our control and the silent language of industrial technology that structures social experience'.⁷ In this light his 'Plea for Time' becomes an appeal for the survival of story and imagination, for history and memory to speak of a social connectedness to a non-monopolised 'reality'.⁸

As mentioned, Innis examines the historical conflict between oral tradition and written tradition by focusing on the metaphorical constructions of time and space. The tensions between them articulate the contradictions between margins and centres with technologies of space overriding technologies of time. In Innis's view, the experience of time counteracts the mutation of space into territories of power. When time interrupts

space, it speaks to social connectedness and challenges the reduction of space to official versions of truth. Although developed by way of a theory of oral tradition, Innis's 'time' is about lived experience. It stands against the silencing of the land and against a history reduced to a master narrative of spatial conquest.⁹ In the Canadian context, inundated with the contestatory social experience of margins and centres, Innis's writings can be interpreted as a recovery of time from the 'monopolies of space' imposed by technological society.¹⁰ For Innis, the only way to become aware of the social control of media technology is by the retaining of a sense of lived experience.¹¹

Innis senses the historical importance of technological replication but refuses to equate the vernacular with mechanised orality. McLuhan believes Innis makes a fundamental mistake 'in regarding radio and electric technology as a further extension of the patterns of mechanical technology'.¹² Electronic patterns allow a harmonic convergence and cultural vitality in the mechanics of oral tradition that are subsequently advanced beyond words in the electronic acoustic environment. For McLuhan, electronic media are qualitatively different processes that re-empower the voice of orality. It is here that the land and the people can recover voices silenced by mechanical ordering. Where Innis sees the potential of the technology for monopolistic power, McLuhan sees the potential for a new society.

In Innis's view, radio 'overcame the division between classes in its escape from literacy', even as mechanised communication has made understanding more difficult.¹³ Indeed, he notes that 'even science, mathematics, and music, as the last refuge of the Western mind' have come under 'the spell of the mechanised vernacular'.¹⁴ As an evolved alternative to linear culture, McLuhan sees radio as 'of the ear'. It is the return of the oral tradition Innis sought to recapture as well as a sound rising from the margins

of visual dominance. Innis, on the other hand, is not referring to the 'oral ear' when he is talking about radio, but rather to the 'mechanical ear' as yet another stage in the mechanisation of communicative space. In the politics of technology that establish monopolies of time and space, Innis sees the mechanised vernacular not as the new electric pattern of culture, but rather as a new means of social control. McLuhan criticises Innis for not applying his theory of the space-binding power of the eye and the time-binding power of the ear to radio. Applying Innis's theory of oral resistance, McLuhan suggests that since radio is 'of the ear' it should therefore resist monopoly.

For McLuhan, electronics and acoustic space achieve a mimetic relationship between orality and a technologically evolved cosmic harmony. In electronic media the oral is reborn in electronic space. The co-presence of time and space takes the place of centres and margins in a simultaneity of the senses that actually achieves the balance Innis is seeking.¹⁵ Addressing Innis's concern about the rigidity of visual science, McLuhan suggests that the 'acoustic' is not just oral dialogue, but the space in which it speaks as well, a space of no point of view and therefore all points of view.¹⁶ McLuhan begins to look not so much for a balance of time and space, but for simultaneity that might allow a reconciliation of Word and World. He finds it in the electronic continuum that re-invents an oral form above the fractures of time and space. The acoustic technology is seen to return the world to a tribal equilibrium and sensory balance missing since the printing press tipped the scales in favour of the eye.

Orality and Nature in McLuhan

McLuhan undertakes a humanist quest to liberate aesthetics and imagination from the reductive forces of a mechanised world. He is greatly concerned to distinguish his own work from the 19th century Romanticism he views as mired in the mechanics of the

external world. Kroker calls McLuhan's probes into the electronic era 'technological humanism'. The precise way in which the latter defines and connects nature and orality, however, has the makings of a 'poetics of technology'.¹⁷ In any case, his ideas about the shifting hierarchies of the senses that accompany changing modes of production can be useful tools for studying relations of power in the communicative sphere – although, it must be noted that McLuhan quite consciously ignores questions of power and is soundly criticised for it.¹⁸

Coming at the radical end of the new media issues of the 1950s and early 1960s, McLuhan's writings sound a warning about the developing 'total environment' of mass media. His concern with the alienation and disconnectedness of modern life places him in the critical theory debates with Benjamin, Marcuse, and Barthes, as well as in the later semiotic strain with Derrida, Kristeva, Foucault, and Lyotard. Also, his familiarity with the works of Eliot, Joyce, and Leavis leads him to discover a simultaneity of the senses in electronic media that promises to mend the 'dissociated sensibilities' of modernity. McLuhan embraces media technology as a way to reunite an 'oral-aural' world free of the sense disorders and epistemological limitations of a linear print world. He views the environment of electronic media as essentially acoustic, and it is by way of this oral-aural dimension that he conceptualises a 're-tribalisation' of the world.¹⁹

McLuhan enters the orality debate as the technological replication of the spoken word and the new sound environment is fully emerging.²⁰ Focusing on the effect of electronic poetics, his media theory attempts to project itself back into the technologies that are responsible for its creation. In this manner he seeks to consciously re-create a psychic correlative to the aesthetic state he finds realised in electronic technology. In an ordering that disconnects human voice from world, McLuhan's poetics mimetically

arranges the interior landscape in such a way as to 'speak' the transcendental language of electronic simultaneity. In this electronic form, poetics becomes 'otherworldly', that is, an internal formulaic arrangement of technologies and interior landscaping conjured to produce controlled exterior effects. As perpetrators of the Fall in the original sins of Eden and Babel, body and speech are banished from history, world, and sound environment. In McLuhan's view, they finally find redemption in a technology that transcends the material world altogether. Interestingly, this electronic poetics is open to interpretation as a return to the mimetic powers of oral tradition, a tradition with a history of using the techniques of memory and oral performance for purposes of social control.

McLuhan's efforts lead him to reclaim the 'human' inside the electronic environment through an understanding and control of how the involved technology works. He seeks to bring out the unconscious operation of its 'invisible environment'.²¹ He wishes to tap 'a great flowing of technical and mechanical imagery of whose rich human symbolism [humanity] is mainly unconscious'.²² In explaining and justifying its workings, McLuhan comes to embrace the technology as an evolution of the human body that surpasses nature itself. As the negation of nature, the electronic environment establishes an entirely new structure for human becoming and communicating. In an electronic environment the electronic word realises a poetic unity of orality and worldliness within the evolution of technology. Electronic poetics achieves a mimesis that unifies human language and the language of nature.²³

From his early media writings onward McLuhan's strategy is clear. What seems ambivalence towards electronic technology becomes a celebration of the 'human-made organism'. For McLuhan, the electronic media itself is not the problem, but rather the

problem is in the limitations of the physical body to reconcile its own obsolescence as the exteriorisation of the senses reaches the totality of a 'techno-structure'. As electronic technology extends the central nervous system, consciousness becomes distributed outside the body.²⁴ A techno-organicism envelops both the body and external world creating the potential restructuring of the unconscious interior landscape as the centre of aesthetic moment. With technologies such as satellites and computers the techno-sphere is seen to become the ultimate exteriorisation of the senses, a cosmic consciousness in mimetic union with a cosmic nature.

In turn, this cosmic nature is seen as an evolutionary achievement of the human biological organism in which history reveals a mutation and adjustment of the senses to survive external threats. With a modern technological reconstruction of the senses that envelops the world in a 'global membrane', this evolution achieves the 'simultaneity' of inside and outside worlds. In overcoming the limits of the body, the rationalised aesthetic moment is achieved. There is a conscious participation in the potentiality of a new nature. 'Electric technology favours not the fragmentary but the integral, not the mechanical but the organic'.²⁵ As technology exceeds consciousness in the electronic era, the separating of ourselves from the techno-sphere limits our potential. For McLuhan, any such separation represents the failure of the unconscious to recognise itself in the cosmic extensions of the human sensorium. Rather than limiting technology, the better strategy is seen to involve an understanding and copying of its patterns. In this way human beings can match the creativity of their own technologised bodies.

In McLuhan's view, the sensory overload of the electronic age creates social anxiety precisely because the techno-extensions of the senses have evolved beyond our sense perceptions.²⁶ The techno-replication of the experiential world has become so

complex and 'super-creative' that the sense-circuitry of the human body cannot cope with the overload. In turn, the only way to deal with this crisis is to update the human circuitry to conform with the experiential voltage inside the techno-sphere. The unconscious interior landscape of perception must be renewed to correlate with the newly evolved exterior landscape of the electronic world so as to allow a managing of this 'excess'.

In McLuhan's poetics, correlating the sensory perceptions of the body to the patterns of the techno-body liberates us from the strictures of linear thought and connects us with 'the psychic layer of mankind above all other living things'.²⁷ As the extension of the nervous system, the electronic media create the technological conditions for a sacramental communion between global membrane and the consciousness of collective human thought. This is the technological realisation of world body, that is, the bio-technical evolutionary stage of 'convergence' and 'super-cerebralization' in human society.²⁸

In this vision humanity finally develops a technology that overcomes the Gutenberg technology's separation of the oral from the tribal body of the past. In the transcendental electronic body, human beings are released from the visual domination of the sensorium to be relocated and reorganised in the simultaneity of mass media. The simultaneity reincarnates the spirit of the 'collective unconscious' and signals a return to the collective participation in the Spirit.²⁹ By mimetically following these patterns of balanced sensory interaction, humanity may achieve the technological extension of consciousness itself.³⁰ As a collective correspondence of the Word, electronic media achieve the extension of humanity and the collective articulation of 'God's language'. While limited by the dominance of visual landscape and linear print technology, human

language must flounder in its efforts to speak poetically in the simultaneity of the Word. Only with electronic second nature can humans come close to achieving 'Language'.

Electronic poetics is a reconstruction of the classical oral world in which tradition is the collective storehouse of society as well as oral participation in the social body. In this case, electronic orality is understood as the evolution of a bio-technical-form capable of automating the storage of the collective memory:

For man [. . .] unlike merely biological creatures, possesses an apparatus of transmission and transformation based on his power to store experience. And his power to store, as in a language itself, is also a means of transformation of experience.³¹

In *Understanding Media* McLuhan attempts to bring to the level of consciousness what he regards as the largely unconscious design of the electronic environment. He considers electronic orality to contain the potentiality of a collective 'prayer', the oral as participation in the Word. Quoting Herbert, he suggests that 'prayer is reversed thunder. Man has the power to reverberate the Divine thunder, by verbal translation'.³² The intersection of electronics, orality, sound, and environment is seen to create the bio-technical elements of a transcendental redemption. What is impossible in nature may now be possible above nature.

McLuhan feels that 'as the unity of the modern world becomes increasingly a technological rather than a social affair, the techniques of the arts provide the most valuable means of insight into the real direction of our own collective purposes'.³³ In his view, the electronic media are an outcome of 'the long revolution by which men have sought to translate nature into art'. In the 'artefact' is a world where 'all things are translatable into anything else that is desired'.³⁴ He sees electronic orality achieving a technological orchestration of nature in which humanity 'can play back the materials of the natural world in a variety of levels and intensities of style'.³⁵ It is the construction of

a 'magical' sphere where the technology is the realisation of the creative 'spirit'.³⁶ As sensory 'antennae', the artist in this age has a responsibility to show others how to match their interior lives to the patterns of simultaneity in the media.³⁷

McLuhan argues that following the patterns of the electronic landscape makes possible an artistic landscaping of the mind. Superseding the problem of an external world, the electric reincarnation of world lays the foundation for a 'fusion between mind and nature [. . .] to effect an instant of inclusive consciousness by the juxtaposition without copula of diverse and even paradoxical situations or states of mind'.³⁸ A metamorphosis of humanity occurs 'as an extension of nature into Nature as an extension of man through major technological innovations'.³⁹ In this way 'ecology' becomes not our interaction with the external world, but rather how to link ourselves to the interior landscape of the unconscious. This second environment is the locus for a rationalisation of world and consciousness. Indeed, the electronic media may be viewed as an objective correlative for Jung's collective unconscious. Ultimately, McLuhan's poetics becomes a reconciliation of body and soul, a meeting of electronic simultaneity and collective unconscious to create a cosmic consciousness.⁴⁰

McLuhan suggests that the electronic enclosing of nature allows humanity to work on the interior landscape by 'seeking pattern recognition' in technology and fitting imagination to this pattern.⁴¹ In effect, electronic technology is an evolutionary realisation of auditory imagination that achieves 'the pattern of the spiritual and intellectual quest'.⁴² The capacity of the media to simultaneously 'juxtapose without connectives' through sound and speech is the techno-emancipation of the auditory. This occurs within the absolute spirit of the spoken Word, 'as our age translates itself back into the oral auditory modes' under the 'electronic pressure of simultaneity'.⁴³ In this

technology human beings create an aesthetic environment as a renewed orality creates the conditions for a unity of inner and outer spheres of being. This process involves the techno-biological use of all the senses at once to achieve maximised aesthetic spirit. Electronic media change the dominant cause and effect models of the Newtonian world into radial multi-sensory probes:

Whereas in external landscape diverse things lie side by side, so in psychological landscape the juxtaposition of various things and experiences becomes a precise musical means of orchestrating that which could never be rendered by systematic discourse. Landscape is the means of presenting, without the copula of logical enunciation, experiences that are untied in existence but not in conceptual thought.⁴⁴

McLuhan believes this is a means to survive ecologically in the techno-sphere. In his interpretation, 'ecology' becomes a theory of techno-systems that sets a limit on destruction by virtue of the effect of electronic sensory-balancing functions and a collective insight into the working of these. The capacity of electronic technology to re-articulate the mimetic world of the pre-literate in a multi-sensory simultaneous way sets the conditions for the global inclusiveness of a centre without margins. McLuhan concludes that electronic media realise what the aural symbolists sense in interior landscape, the union of inner and outer worlds in the technological reconstruction of the world. In tribute he suggests that the symbolists 'had recovered some of the spirit of the oral tradition -- its inclusiveness, its sense of multiple perspective, its delight in color and sound'.⁴⁵

For McLuhan, the electronic media set the conditions for a physical transcendence in which modern science can invent whatever it needs to solve problems.⁴⁶ These media become a sensory system in equilibrium, a new body of total extension, and a reconstitution of humanity as a techno-organism. McLuhan senses that there is disequilibrium in this technological world by virtue of the body's failure to recognise

itself in the electronic replica. It would seem that there is a hypnotic spell cast by the electronic media that derives from the humanity's inability to see what is of human making. This spell can be broken, however, through the recognition of electronic media as a multi-dimensional restoration of previously impoverished human senses. Achieving this recognition would be the simultaneous emergence of world harmony in which the biological body and the technological body would be free to merge into one living organism.

The orchestration of multi-dimensional electronic exteriority and mimetic interiority may be seen as a sensory practise of resisting the hypnotic power of media. In this view, the history of media from speech to computerisation is viewed from the vantage of overcoming the sensory imbalance of a mechanically ordered world. The impoverishment of experience is seen as a biological-systems problem requiring a historical mutation of the body from a mechanical to an electrical network. In this mutation is the evolutionary reconstitution of the experiential world as rationalised multi-sensory techno-sphere. The world as electronic sensorium becomes the basis for accessing the interior landscape. With 'electric orality' as the model for collective consciousness, the auditory landscaping of the interior allows infinite orchestrations of the sensorium without the danger of any one human sense overpowering the others.

The evolution of the electronic world is the 'counter-gradient' to the Gutenberg Galaxy in which the visual linearity of the West has 'confused reason with literacy, and rationalism with a single technology'. Indeed, in the electronic age 'man seems to the conventional West to become irrational'.⁴⁷ However, in the multi-dimensionality of electronic orality is the survival strategy of an organism defending itself against centuries of mechanistic sensory imbalance. Such renewal requires a technological evolution

capable of constructing a 'living machine', as the solutions to problems created by technology cannot be found in adaptations of 'social biology'. Human beings must learn to use their technological bodies as the means to orchestrate their biological bodies. For McLuhan, the electronic age becomes a qualitative leap whereby humans not only master nature, but also bypass the entire historical paradigm of survival. Kroker notes that 'as we enter the electronic age with its instantaneous and global moment of information, we are the first human beings to live completely within the mediated environment of the technostructure'.⁴⁸

In this leap, McLuhan argues that ecology demands an orchestration of the senses within this electronic world such that humanity becomes what it is capable of beholding.⁴⁹ As a technological system the body and the external world demand that the interior world abandon all outdated notions of time and place. For McLuhan, 'the electric word retrieves the tribal village -- everybody HERE. And, by time compression, history becomes mythic -- all times NOW'.⁵⁰ Global participation in the 'here' and 'now' necessitates the remaking of social history into continuous 'discontinuity'. This serves to create a mimetic correspondence between the human being and technology. The anxiety of this new society is tied to the inability of human beings to recognise themselves in their technology:

The critical anxiety in which all men now exist is very much the result of the interface between a declining mechanical culture, fragmented and specialist, and a new integral culture that is inclusive, organic, and macroscopic. This new culture does not depend on words at all. Language and dialogue, in fact, have already taken the form of interplay between whole areas of the world.⁵¹

Interiority and Re-tribalisation

While the rest of the world was locked into the de-tribalising exteriority of Newton, the symbolists of the 19th century were seen to be ahead of their time by McLuhan.⁵² In the simultaneity of the unconscious landscape, the symbolists had found a transcendental orchestration of voices and a poetic unity of inner and outer being. As well, they had significantly exposed the Romantic error of attempting to use the organics of the natural world as a means of aesthetic renewal against the non-organics of the mechanical world.

McLuhan views the poetic use of Newton's external landscape 'as a means of projecting and controlling states of mind' through the perceptions of the 'seer'.⁵³ This domination of nature as the primary agent of perception blocks the exercise of a 'secondary imagination', that is, 'the auditory dimensions of language that could control great vistas of erudition and collective experience'.⁵⁴ Subsequently, McLuhan divides poets into 'hearers', who possess the secrets of an auditory landscape and the poetic technique to access this interior world, and 'seers', who are part of an exclusively visual external world. Thus, Coleridge is seen to access the auditory inner world while Wordsworth, who cannot detach himself from the external world, is denied access to such a realm. Indeed, Coleridge is the poet of the 'auditory labyrinth'; Wordsworth is the limited 'seer'.⁵⁵

The relationship McLuhan wishes to establish is between an interior auditory landscape and history in a continuous present. In an interior landscape the 'secondary imagination' orchestrates sound, nature, and orality, bringing art into existence as a controlled echo of perception.⁵⁶ This interior thus becomes a rationalised poetics in which nature and orality are realised in the simultaneity of an eternal present. For their

part, the electronic media become the technology of this poetic allowing the world to achieve a collective participation in the auditory body. In McLuhan's view, it is the technologies of perception that construct and order the world:

Now, in the electric age, the very instantaneous nature of co-existence among our technological instruments has created a crisis quite new in human history. Our extended faculties and senses now constitute a single field of experience which demands that they become collectively conscious. Our technologies, like our private senses, now demand an interplay and ratio that makes rational co-existence possible.⁵⁷

McLuhan admires the early Romantic poets for their resistance to the cultural impoverishment of the mechanical world, but he adopts a de-politicised and de-historicised definition of their project. It would seem McLuhan's reading of the Romantic project adopts the approach that both Newtonian and Romantic viewpoints share a common position with respect to the externality of the natural world. Thus, contrary to positioning Romanticism within any sense of a contradictory orality, McLuhan's analysis centres on a duality of mind and world where the inner richness of auditory imagination is opposed to the outer impoverishment of an exterior visual landscape. From McLuhan's perspective, the Romantic project involves 'manipulating external-nature situations' in order to create aesthetic 'states of mind'. The notion that the Romantics attempt to address nature as 'other', as a place of social resistance to the industrial model, is not explored. Indeed, McLuhan argues that it is impossible for Romanticism to construct a qualitatively different vision out of the 'otherness' of nature because there is no such thing. Nature as 'wild' construct has been tamed.⁵⁸

McLuhan's media theory owes a great deal to his interpretation of Romanticism and the manner in which he locates the inadequacy of its poetics in the external landscape.⁵⁹ McLuhan sees the Romantics' connection to nature as a failure to address the complexities of modernity that have exceeded 'nature' through such developments as

the marketplace and the city. For McLuhan, the symbolist poets envisioned an outcome the Romantics could never achieve due to their singular attachment to a mechanical world of impoverished senses. Ultimately, the Romantics' effort to leap to another kind of vision is seen as frustrated by their connection to nature: because they were trapped on the ground in the orders of the external world, 'they could not discover the technique of flight'.⁶⁰

For McLuhan, the technological revolution of the 20th century is the technospheric materialisation of a symbolist aesthetics that unifies the sense-world within an inner auditory imagination, reclaiming the sense-world from the 'hierarchy of the visual'. This historical development allows an overcoming of modernity's impoverishment of experience through a technological return 'to the dark unconscious' of 'tribal auditory magic'.⁶¹ He suggests that electronic technology at first takes on the 'unfriendly countenance of an inhuman wilderness even less manageable than that which once confronted prehistoric man'.⁶² However, as the electronic media construct a new external world, the technology frees poetics to go inside and create a symbiosis of simultaneity. It is electronic simultaneity that records the aesthetic world of a harmonious sensorium in the 'realms of the subconscious and unconscious'.⁶³ This technology is the evolutionary step that frees interior landscape to speak its own language, the language of the Origin that is repressed by the totemistic relations of the mechanised world.

McLuhan characterises tribal societies as original centre-without-margins cultures. In turn, he equates electronic media as a return to tribal integration, a technological reconstruction that transcends history and geography.⁶⁴ Electronic orality

is seen to end the dialectic of time and space by transcending social and cultural dimensionality altogether:

But whereas the visual power extended by print does indeed extend the means to organise a spatial continuum, the auditory power extended electrically does in effect abolish space and time alike. Visual technology creates a centre-margin pattern of organisation whether by literacy or by industry and a price system. But electric technology is instant and omnipresent and creates multiple centres without margins.⁶⁵

McLuhan celebrates the possibilities of this electronic ambivalence:

Now behind us are those unimaginative centuries that strove to eliminate ambiguity and suggestion from language in the interests of 'the one clear meaning'. Recovery of *auditory imagination* with its awareness of the total life of words has banished the tyranny of visual, printed forms of language with their intolerance of complex modes.⁶⁶

Early in his writings McLuhan comes to the view that advertising and mass entertainment are the mimetic methods and 'totem images' through which a re-tribalised people negotiate and share the wilderness of technology. It is in this way that the inner auditory imagination speaks to the outer electronic world, allowing us to become part of the creature by imitating it. However, the electronic evolution reconstitutes both human being and wilderness making possible a further level of civilisation. In this subsequent development symbolic life becomes a permanent aesthetic state within both electronic body and world. McLuhan identifies 'technology' as the bio-evolutionary replacement of 'first nature', this latter being the means by which the human organism masters its environment. In effect, the machine becomes the external world, a 'second-nature' predestined to be a higher stage of humanity and world.

In this development McLuhan sees the electronic media as the modern means of returning to the origin of orality. Electronic sound becomes the technological 'invention' of auditory imagination. It is the inner language of aesthetics and poetics in spiritual harmony, 'the symphony of mind and nature', orchestrated by the artist as landscaper of

the spirit.⁶⁷ Once the world is enveloped in an electronic membrane, the evolutionary process of sensory extension is reversed. Human beings return to the sensibilities of the auditory and the tactile. The electronic world reintegrates human experience and returns society to the sensory balance of 'what has been lost'.

McLuhan claims that the electronic environment re-awakens an acoustic space characterising the tribal world of oral cultures. This re-awakening is achieved by virtue of both radio and television being fundamentally aural media communicating their message through sound. Indeed, the aural is held to possess a crucial attribute over the other senses, opening avenues to a more complex sensory information than is possible by the visual, in particular. In his own acoustic awakening and invoking of the Muse, McLuhan rejects the linear consciousness of modernity and the repressive environment of typography. In turn, he encourages a perceptual shift to an acoustic sensibility. This, he suggests, reveals what 'an oral consciousness could be which follows its own distinct rules or thinking and feeling, existing in a historical past, but now being revived through modern technology in the historical present'.⁶⁸ Specifically, the acoustics of electronic media are seen to produce an environment in which the predominance of sound re-orders the senses, bringing them into the balance required to attain a true understanding. Indeed, just as linear typography was the death of the oral spirit, the 'electronic-field' is its resurrection, the return of language to its role of perceptual revelation.⁶⁹ Through this realignment competing ways of knowing are capable of being unified into an 'epistemology of sound', as opposed to an 'enlightenment'.

For McLuhan, this is the evolution of humanity back to the point of origin, the simultaneity of tribal participation in time-space through the mimetic form of electronic poetics. The technology orchestrates acoustic materials thus producing and reproducing

rhythmic and intonational complexities to systematically formulate the desired effect. The immediacy of electronic media results in the power to mimic the full-sensorial experience of speech on a global level. It is the entry to a world of the 'blind, all-hearing Homer'.⁷⁰ In turn, this effect of electronic media is the secret to a rationalised modern poetic capable of expressing and harmonising the complexities of city, market, and tribe: 'The unique power of the electronic media is to shape the content of peoples imagery, and in that particular way determine their behavior and their views'.⁷¹ Electronic communication frees words back into the acoustical environment of oral culture where the global expansion of the acoustic dimension can embrace the entire population of the planet. This is the 're-tribalisation of man' inside a global village.

McLuhan sees electronic media as the evolutionary emergence of humanity from the wilderness. The new technology allows a transcendental positioning required to recreate the balanced sensorium of preliterate people who 'sought to maintain an equilibrium among the components of [their] environment in order to ensure survival'. Electronic society now renews this world through the technology of 'simultaneous information', that is, 'a world of resonance in which all data influence other data'. For McLuhan, this world of simultaneous interaction transforms itself into an acoustic art form, an instrument to be played by humanity: 'Under conditions of instant information the only possible rationale or means of order involves us in the musical structuring of experience'.⁷² Since the external world has achieved the state of music, consciousness of this harmonic convergence cybernetically creates an interior landscape of acoustic resonance and equilibrium.

As Theall notes, in McLuhan the aesthetic potential of mass media 'is always close to a certain marriage of the technological future with the Catholic vision of an

apocalyptic age of participation'.⁷³ By clinging to the external world and subjecting themselves to the 'accidents' of history, human beings have been counteracting their own evolutionary pattern into technological beings. McLuhan, however, sees the means for humanity to supersede the chaotic course of human evolution and nature by way of the electronic environment of media. Eventually the transubstantiation of social space to cyberspace frees the physical body from its ties to nature. The 'body' as the spirit of bio-technical extension acquires a life of its own and the human body is made redundant in the process. In turn, the total atmosphere of technological sound re-tribalises human society into a 'global body' free from the weight of earthly corruptions. This global spirit allows a universal participation in the 'corporate body'. The electronic media become a transubstantiation of words, biological body, and environment into a technological species being.

Oral Rationalism in the Spirit of Technology

In McLuhan's estimation a truly historical development is at hand, for 'today we live on the frontier between five centuries of mechanism and the new electronics, between the homogeneous and the simultaneous'.⁷⁴ He is expansive about the cybernetic possibilities: 'Since all organic characteristics can now be mechanically produced, the old rivalry between mechanism and vitalism is finished'.⁷⁵ As an engineer of this emerging 'second nature', McLuhan plays the part of physiognomist of the age, recognising the patterns of human potential in the body of new technology. Just as the Gutenberg technology had furthered the 'psychic transformation' of the market economy into a market society, he looks to electronic technology to identify the psychic patterns that will further the transformation to an information society.⁷⁶

McLuhan sees the electronic media as an evolution of the body, a kind of biological mutation defending itself against the fragmentary forces of the modern age and the linear repressions exerted on the organism. The phenomena of 'orality' and 'inner landscape' thus become reconstituted as internally programmed technological extensions of the body that allow the human organism to adapt to the external world by evolving beyond it.⁷⁷ In addition, by transforming the human organism into a creature adapted to its re-constituted and transcendent environment, the electronic orality that makes this possible comes itself to supersede both history and nature.⁷⁸ More particularly, electronic patterns evolve an oral form that achieves the internal speech of a technological rationality.⁷⁹ For McLuhan, this transubstantiating of world into technology by way of reconfiguring social beings into technological organisms holds the potential for a new ecological balance, a 'homeostatic interchange' between human organism and technological environment.⁸⁰ In this development the auditory spirit of electronic poetics suggests the means to harmonise world and spirit. The space of auditory imagination becomes the sound of the cosmic chorus.⁸¹

In McLuhan's electronic environment, technology actually replaces nature. The more global the media, the more total this replacement in a development that technologically remakes the world into an art form:

Electronically [. . .] this total history is now potentially present in a kind of simultaneous transparency that carries us into a world of what Joyce calls 'heliotropic noughttime'. We have been rapt in 'the artifice of eternity' by the placing of our own nervous system around the entire globe. The first satellite ended 'nature' in the old sense. 'Nature' became the content of man-made environment. From that moment, all terrestrial phenomena were to become increasingly programmed artefacts and every facet of human life now comes within the scope of the artistic vision.⁸²

McLuhan recognises the potential power of this development to landscape emotional experience. However, he continues to perceive this power in artistic terms as a means to

re-associate the senses and re-order poetics as the language of collective harmony.⁸³ In reproducing and instantly replaying and juxtaposing multiple layers of sounds, meanings, times, places, speakers, and languages, he suggests the possibility of the electronic media liberating poetics from the world of objects into the inner world of 'symbolic ritual'.⁸⁴ In this manner the electronic technology achieves a ritualisation of nature setting the pattern for sacramental moments of 'pure' poetics.

McLuhan's own poetics involves retrieving oral sensibilities made obsolete by centuries of typography, something accomplished through the juxtaposing of forms to reach a moment of Platonic clarity in the electric 'light' of acoustic technology.⁸⁵ This act of juxtaposition is seen to create an energised 'pattern recognition' in the 'vortex' created by the electronic environment.⁸⁶ On the surface, the new technology may seem to deepen the fragmentation and repression of the modern spirit. However, the electronic technology is seen to be an evolved biological form both transgressing mechanised form and accessing the 'untumultuous' core of knowledge.⁸⁷ In this case, juxtapositional technique emerges from the epistemological mosaic McLuhan finds inscribed in the new a-linear language patterns of electronic space. 'Putting on the skin' of this technology provides the means of breaking through the violence on the periphery and into a heart of 'absolute calm'.⁸⁸

McLuhan's concept of 'acoustic space' as the interior landscape of reason is central to his theory of electronic orality. It is this space that provides the patterns for a Platonic clarity in the new orality of an electronic poetics. For McLuhan, the electronic environment is the technologically realised 'form' of an interior reason that signals 'the complete break with 5000 years of mechanical technology'.⁸⁹ It is 'sound' achieving the speed of 'light'.⁹⁰ It is further the creation of 'a unique unvisualizable space'.⁹¹ In this

space is to be found an evolution beyond the corruptions of the body and superficiality of writing that had confounded Plato's quest for the 'form' of truth. With electronic technology, 'sound' achieves 'light' and resolves the Platonic paradox. Electronic orality redeems sound as a spiritual form, as the rationality of inner truth.⁹² In effect, the 'sound of light' is written onto the soul of the learner. This electronic poetics is not the irrational bodily passions rejected by Plato and celebrated by the Romantics; rather, it is an oral logic arrived at through the evolution of a technology capable of speaking the interior language of the inner spirit.⁹³

For McLuhan, the acoustic space of electronic orality is an exterior embodiment of the illusive interior pattern of spiritual insight. This interior landscape is 'materialised', that is, turned inside out, in the poetic patterns of a secondary orality. In McLuhan's view, the prototype for this acoustic space can be found in Eliot's auditory imagination:

What I call this 'auditory imagination' is the feeling for syllable and rhythm, penetrating far below the conscious levels of thought and feeling, invigorating every word; sinking to the most primitive and forgotten, *returning to the origin*, and bringing something back, seeking the beginning and the end. It works through meanings, certainly, or not without meanings in the ordinary sense, and fuses the old and obliterated and the trite, the current, and the new and the surprising, the most ancient and the most civilized mentality.⁹⁴

Finding these notions especially realised in the works of Joyce, McLuhan uses Joyce's language to support the construction of his own theory and poetics.⁹⁵ Notably, he believes that 'the idea of speech as stuttering, as arrested gesture, as discontinuities or aspects of the *single Word* [. . .] serves to illustrate the profundity of the traditional philological doctrine in Joyce'.⁹⁶

In the electronic rupture of the 'Gutenberg Galaxy', McLuhan sees the freeing of the senses from the constraints of linear reason. In turn, an oral poetics is made possible

by the electronic simultaneity of sound released into the visual domain of modernity, a transgressing of absolute meaning and re-spatialising of human sensibilities in a form of sustainable potentiality. McLuhan's construct seeks to be a 'poetic' juxtaposition of words or forms, patterns engineered to produce singular truth in moments of mimetic illumination. For purposes of his beatific moment he appropriates of the simultaneity of the present, the rupture of the 'old' by the 'new', and the 'tactility' of eventness.

Electronic Materialism

McLuhan's acoustic sensibilities also derive from his fascination with the oral-linear collisions of medieval scribal culture, a conflagration of forces closely resembling in reverse those at work in the electronic age.⁹⁷ Innis had identified the power of the medieval church not just as a clergy elite possessing the secrets of the manuscript, but also as the means to silence other forms of speech. Following this line of thought, McLuhan attacks linear rationalism as something that represses the 'otherness' of the interior spirit. In searching to counter this he finds a precursor to his own intentions in the 'materialisation' of the Word as found in the medieval 'oral manuscript'. Here, he discovers both the incarnation of Logos as transcendental signifier and its symbolic power as Sign of authority made tangible. In the mimetic relationship between manuscript and the essential interiority of bodily writing, the Word is both inscribed and embodied.

This 'Writing' of the Word makes both body and manuscript the incarnating material of spiritual realism. The manuscript form becomes a physical enactment of the central theological truth that in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was made flesh.⁹⁸ In this the text is the embodiment of an eternally present, if hidden, Language of the Origin. In turn, it serves as a model for a kind of materialism that can ground a

transcendentalism working through technology. Ultimately, the electronic is seen to transfer the spiritual to the material sphere of earth and body in an indissoluble technological unity. The organic acoustic patterns of electronic orality re-construct the 'lost' language of the Book of Nature.⁹⁹

McLuhan's realm of the interior spirit is grounded in a transcendental linguistic second nature that extends the body beyond the limits of physicality through technology. This technological incarnation materialises the language of the Spirit in the bio-technical 'body' of the people.¹⁰⁰ For McLuhan, the new technology overcomes time and space, representing and finally stabilising change within a controllable and delimited form. In this second life of the oral, the body is turned inside out releasing the harmonies of spirit and technology, and orchestrating the polyphonics of heterogeneity. McLuhan uses the technologically extended postmodern body to write God into the World. God's work is represented and inscribed in the symmetry of the Book of Nature, and God lives in the body of the people, now electronically reincarnated.

As realised sacrament of the Word, secondary orality is the totality of information re-articulated in the electronic reincarnation of originary form. The spoken words of the new orality become aspects or pieces of the Original Word. Removed from socio-political circulation, the spoken is re-placed in its proper orbit around the Word. The sound of human beings and the Word are embodied and re-harmonised in technology. With this development human evolution finally reaches the aesthetic heights God had intended.¹⁰¹ In this meeting of Spirit and technology, McLuhan finds this other world materialised: 'The concept of the mystical body – all men as members of the body of Christ – this becomes technologically a fact under electronic conditions'.¹⁰² In addition the second world of electronic making places the human race inside the acoustic space of

the Word, as 'electricity tends to evoke the presence of Christ immediately via the ear'.¹⁰³ Ultimately, this world of electronic sound is able to overcome the 'historical blunder' of linear technology by creating a sensory 'symmetry between the secular environment of information and the environment of grace'.¹⁰⁴

The ideological role that sound comes to play in McLuhan's electronic poetics is arguably the result of a struggle that at once locates and negates the space of acoustic transgression. The electronic environment suggests a revolution in language capable of accessing and releasing the energies of a repressed oral logic in which sound, as medium of resistance, transubstantiates life into an organic technology complete with a language beyond the limits of the said.¹⁰⁵ With the actual circumstances of electronic media, however, the power of representation confounds and paradoxically interiorises the space of acoustic resistance. The electronic environment colonises spatial perception, as opposed to space itself, and thus reduces a self-awareness of the external world through a naturalised form of representation all its own. As a result of this the subversive potential of sound is located within an electronic space that circumscribes the world and releases a synthetic carnivalesque resistance through the 'language' of the people, thus reborn. 'In the electric world change is the only stable factor'.¹⁰⁶

The time and space of the electronic media as 'other' is intended by McLuhan as a means to challenge the ideological urge to totalise and homogenise. Accordingly, the electronic world becomes a de-naturalised return of the given world, a second language of a second nature. However, when McLuhan suggests that the auditory power of electronic media abolishes space and time, he eliminates the sound of the social body by virtue of eliminating the co-ordinates and conditions of its contextual acts. McLuhan's electronic world can thus be likened to a technological form of Saussure's synchronic

realm, a place, as Cavell notes, where ‘in its extreme form, representational space merges with the cyberspace of pure information’.¹⁰⁷ However, ‘space’ forced into the synchronicity of ‘epic time’ is the means by which sociality is denied a materiality.

McLuhan bases his notion of acoustic space on the evolution of a reproducible technology of managed electronic space uncritically taken to be the equivalent of an otherwise autonomous cultural sphere. In the earlier context of an ideology of visual space, it is significant that McLuhan senses the subversive agency of oral culture and the potentiality of oral transgression. However, because he ignores the contestations and fissures within the oral, he rationalises a new authority in the form of an oral resistance that can be sensed, but not addressed. Submitted to the acoustic logic of an oral absolute, ‘orality’ itself is reduced to authoritative text.¹⁰⁸ In effect, McLuhan reduces the oral to a technified space of paradoxical multi-vocality in which the restoration of an oral transgression is celebrated as it is trivialised.¹⁰⁹ When he equates electronic technology with simultaneity of the senses, orality must be separated from the places of speaking and listening.¹¹⁰

McLuhan’s poetics appropriates the radical and imaginative potentials of the everyday to colonise this vernacular and reconstruct orality according to the reproductive capabilities of electronic technology. The resulting electronic vernacular is both a commercialisation of orality and an instrument of power. By removing this replicated orality from the sociality of lived context, electronic technology becomes a monopoly of the mechanised over the non-mechanised. The authority-resistant agency of human speech is thus placed in the peculiar position of having to resist a reproduction of itself. In this context the dialectic of orality both hides and addresses the differences between mechanised and non-mechanised sound environments. The fact that the ‘sound of

resistance' and the 'sound of monopoly' speak from the same place disguises margins that might otherwise serve as places of resistance.

In the technified electronic world a material oral resistance must speak against a reproduction of itself immersed in a reproduction of world. When McLuhan's electronic world denies the material one, he subsequently encloses words in an appearance of 'otherness' and disconnects orality from social construction. More specifically, the problem is not with electronic representation, but rather with the media as an indistinguishable social construct. The ideological importance of McLuhan's analysis lies precisely in his technologically oriented mapping of the sensory world that makes oral space and its electronic replicant indistinguishable. Indeed, he uses his acoustic paradigm to define technology as social space, making himself something of an architect of the latter's ongoing rationalisation.

The externalisation of the repressed interior into the electronic world is the heart of McLuhan's technological inversion. It not only prefigures the postmodernist focus on the textuality of nature and its continually shifting signifier, but also heralds an electronic materiality as the text of that ceaseless intertextuality. In McLuhan's case, a postmodern oral logic is elevated to the realm of reason and held to finally radicalise the actual space of human experience in a second nature of intertextuality. The lived relation to the electronic world is seen to be the realised excess of signification that denies textual authority. It can be argued that those theories that seek to redeem space by placing it in the simultaneity of the 'symbolist' moment address transcendence, not history. This is the case with McLuhan. His poetics has no need of history; his language is narcissistic echo, orchestrated harmony, as opposed to the heteroglossia of colliding classes and ideologies.¹¹¹

Theories positing the radicality of semiotic excess cannot address or transgress the electronic circumstance of contemporary corporate power. This would also seem to be the case with McLuhan. His electronic orality becomes a complex replication of the aesthetic 'magic' of sound that appropriates, reproduces, and retrieves this sense world in the context of a rationalised hyper-commodity. In the emerging Information Age it further becomes a means to 'control speech, ritual and art' in order to build an official view of reality, a new Mythic construction.¹¹² Ultimately, McLuhan's electronic poetics makes a major contribution to the new myth of global corporate harmony. In response, one must ask if there is a language that is not mythical within the circumstances of an electronically 'materialised' world. One must also ask what implications arise for a political resistance when the dominant ideology assumes a technological form giving the appearance of a multi-vocality and radical indeterminacy.

Notes to Chapter Three

¹ McLuhan, 'Introduction', in Harold Innis, *The Bias of Communication*, xii.

² *The Medium and the Light: Reflections on Religion*, ed. by Eric McLuhan and Jacek Szklarek (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited, 1999), p. 208

³ 'Introduction', *Bias of Communication*, xiii.

⁴ *The Mechanical Bride*, p. 97. *The Mechanical Bride* was published in the same year Innis published the first edition of *The Bias of Communication*.

⁵ *Mechanical Bride*, p. 34. Marshall McLuhan frequently refers to the 'avant-garde space of the 20th century as 'Einsteinian space' which 'is acoustic or simultaneous once again' (that is as it once was in the pre-literate world of ancient Greece): 'Cornford's theme in 'The Invention of Space' is that 'normal' space for the Greeks is the preliterate or acoustic space, which has suddenly re-emerged in our 20th century world under the aegis of Einstein and relativity theory. What we would call 'normal' or common-sense space remains visual and Euclidean for us in the 20th century while the avant-garde or Einsteinian space is acoustic or simultaneous once again' (Eric and Marshall McLuhan, *Laws of Media*, Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1988, p. 22).

⁶ Space in Canada is produced in palpable association with nature. Efforts to map the Canadian nation and construct its physical, economic, and cultural contours have relied on technology. However, the centrality of transportation and communication technologies is permeated by tensions between the transcribed and the experienced. Settlement, transportation, and communication systems have been technologically engineered and used to establish 'grammars' of social and environmental space. Linear authority over the land has constructed the text of history in an attempt to order the unruly excesses of wilderness that resist fixed identity. McLuhan speaks to this paradox in a letter written to Pierre Elliot Trudeau on December 2, 1968 advising the Prime Minister to recognise in the lack of Canadian identity, a country already synchronised with the 'mosaic' patterns of electronic media and therefore in a position to use the power of this technology. 'Canada is the only country in the world that has never had a national identity. In an age when all homogeneous nations are losing their identity images through rapid technological change, Canada alone can 'keep its cool'. We have never been committed to a single course or goal. This is now our greatest asset. The parallel is to be found in the recent need of the business world to switch from private enterprise to tribal conglomerates on the pattern of medieval dynastic marriages, another massive example of decentralism foisted upon us by electric speeds'. In other words, Canada's non-identity finds its mirror image in the assumed decentralising powers of electronic technology. In this new 'man-made environment' McLuhan suggests is the redundancy of the lived in the transcribed. It is, however, the contradictions of spatial practise that resist homogenous forces of technology, not the harmonisation of culture with technology. In the same letter, McLuhan steps more explicitly into the political arena congratulating Trudeau on his media savvy: 'Your Grey Cup kick-off was, of course, a media triumph. This is audience participation and image making at its best. Fireside dialogues with small groups of students would be even more potent' ((McLuhan, *Letters*, p. 359). The difference, between Innis's plea to recapture the spirit of the oral and McLuhan's suggestion of electronic orality as the realisation of that spirit is between culture and technology.

⁷ Arthur Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind: Innis/McLuhan/Grant* (Montreal: NewWorld Perspectives, 1984), p. 91.

⁸ Innis, *Bias of Communication*, p. 91.

⁹ *Bias of Communication*, p. 62.

¹⁰ Arthur Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind*, p. 92. Canadian oral theory is then a product of this paradoxical sense of space in which the impermanence of nature and world transgresses the permanence of story and the circumvention of technology. Survival is a matter of negotiating with the land not conquering it. Technology attempted to stabilise or balance the land by silencing the margins and reducing

the wilderness. Efforts to map the country by orders of technology imposed abstract co-ordinates of time and space that served to rationalise and privilege a history of order. As Innis noted in his 'Idea File' (1949), the reduction of space to official version has been a significant force in the politics of power. 'Geography emphasising maps and charts subject to fatal tendency to make difficult matters look easy and consequently to continually emphasise information and neglect interpretation' (p. 168: 4). As much as transportation technology controls space, it also tends to emphasise stories of the centres and to silence voices on the margins. In the process of technological circumvention and control, as Innis so astutely recognised, both *here* and the sounds of *here* are reduced to orders of information and places of monologic inscription.

¹¹ Innis clearly recognises a parallel to the economic forces of time-repression and space-conquest in the cultural sphere of Canadian experience. The economic history of Canada is a power struggle between the locus of industrial and informational power in Central Canada, and the raw material base in the margins or periphery regions. The experience of economic power is the experience of 'horizontal' relations - power resides in a space distant from margins -- horizontal hierarchy as opposed to the palpable vertical hierarchy of European class power. This experience of economic power, that is, of the centre exploiting the riches of the periphery, is something that Innis as a Canadian could recognise in the history of communications where a similar conquest of space dominated and undermined voices from the margins. This analytical base is particularly palpable in the sections titled, 'A Plea for Time' and 'The Problem of Space' (*The Bias of Communication*, pp. 61-91, 92-131). The tension between the media of space and media of time translates into the specific power relations of the centre/margin thesis in Canadian economic history that Innis marks out so strongly in *Canadian Economic History and its Problems* (1934), *Essays in Canadian Economic History* (1956). Canadian economic history is a discourse on power and Innis recognises that discourse in the history of 'empire and communication'.

¹² McLuhan, 'Introduction', *Bias of Communication*, xii.

¹³ Innis, *Bias of Communication*, p. 82.

¹⁴ *Bias of Communication*, p. 30.

¹⁵ Judith Stamps, *Unthinking Modernity: Innis, McLuhan and the Frankfurt School* (Montreal & Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), p. 140.

¹⁶ McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, pp. 110-11, 127.

¹⁷ Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind*, p. 14.

¹⁸ See, in particular, Jonathan Miller, *McLuhan* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1971).

¹⁹ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, p. 50.

²⁰ Innis, of course, hints at the new problems posed by the mechanisation of orality and the potential of electric media to become a monopolising force. The electronic media brings the technical ability to overcome the spatial limitations of oral communication. This technology extends to 'orality' powers of the commercial dissemination (across space) of information commodities once possessed only by print technology. This in itself poses an entirely new order of conflict between empire and communications creating new conditions of monopoly.

²¹ McLuhan, 'On Pope's Dunciad', in *Interior Landscape*, ed. by Eugene McNamara, p. 175 (See also McLuhan, *War and Peace*, p. 36, *Letters*, p. 319). In *Understanding Media*, McLuhan suggests that: 'All media are active metaphors in their power to translate experience into new forms. The spoken word was the first technology by which man was able to let go of his environment in order to grasp it in a new way. Words are complex systems of metaphors and symbols that translate experience into our uttered or outered senses. They are a technology of explicitness. By means of translation of immediate sense experience into vocal symbols the entire world can be evoked and retrieved in an instant' (p. 56).

²² McLuhan, *Mechanical Bride*, p. 4.

²³ McLuhan sees electronic media as the answer to Innis's plea for 'recapturing' the spirit of orality. In the power McLuhan gives technology to transcend time and space, he articulates the monsters Innis is trying to resist. By reconstituting time and space, sound and orality, electronic media become tools of spatial monopoly and cultural power. They enforce a controlling version of reality that becomes 'one meaning' while appearing to be many. This is the reality of the electronic fusion of world and imagination and the threat it poses to the survival of the vernacular as the time and place of cultural renewal in world. Innis's earlier interest in tracing the links between transportation systems, commodities and economic power carries over into his analysis of communications technologies, words and cultural power. Just as control over the transportation of goods is the key to economic power, Innis believes that the fundamental form of social power is the power to define what reality is. Since systems of communication control the flow of knowledge, they also control the definition of and the access to that knowledge.

²⁴ McLuhan, *Laws of Media*, p. 117, *War and Peace*, p. 177, *Understanding Media*, p. 43.

²⁵ McLuhan, 'Introduction', *Bias of Communication*, xiv.

²⁶ McLuhan, *War and Peace*, p. 65.

²⁷ Klonsky, *McLuhan: Pro&Con*, p. 127. See also Stearn, *McLuhan: Hot & Cool*, p. 121. Teilhard de Chardin calls this the 'noosphere'. McLuhan is strongly influenced by this notion of a planetary 'noosphere', and of a 'noospheric brain, the organ of collective human thought', (Klonsky, p. 127). This concept contains the combination of Joyce's HCE (Here Comes Everybody), the 'noosphere', and the technological achievement of 'corpus Christi' into McLuhan's Cosmic 'Man' (Marshall and Eric McLuhan, *Laws of Media*, p. 28. See also McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, p. 80).

²⁸ Klonsky, *McLuhan: Pro&Con*, p. 127. See also John Crowe Ransom, *The World's Body* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968).

²⁹ McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 273.

³⁰ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, pp. 56-61.

³¹ *Understanding Media*, p. 59.

³² *Understanding Media*, p. 57.

³³ *Understanding Media*, p. 87.

³⁴ *Understanding Media*, p. 58.

³⁵ *Understanding Media*, p. 59.

³⁶ The problem with the electronic 'epic-model' is its acceptance of the electronic world of experience as THE world of experience and the 'objective correlative' of interior imagination. Cosmic 'Man' is transcendental human and electronic orality is harmonic vocalisation of the Word. Replication becomes world. Electronic media are technology and commodity, both world and the commodification of that world (privatised into corporate concentration). Media become powerful instruments of social control precisely in their ability to ideological 'present' techno-world as experiential world, thereby reconstituting experience itself into use-value on the commodities market.

³⁷ Marshall McLuhan and Eric McLuhan, *Laws of Media*, p. 6.

³⁸ McLuhan, 'Tennyson and Picturesque Landscape', in *Interior Landscape*, ed. by Eugene McNamara, p. 141.

³⁹ Barrington Nevitt, 'Via Media with Marshall McLuhan', in *Marshall McLuhan: The Man and His Message*, ed. by George Sanderson and Frank Macdonald, (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, Inc., 1989) p. 153.

⁴⁰ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, p. 80.

⁴¹ *Laws of Media*, p. 117.

⁴² McLuhan, 'Coleridge as Artist', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 133.

⁴³ McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 72.

⁴⁴ McLuhan, 'Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 144.

⁴⁵ Claude T. Bissell, 'Herbert Marshall McLuhan', in *Marshall McLuhan: The Man and His Message*, ed. by George Sanderson and Frank Macdonald (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, Inc., 1989), p. 5.

⁴⁶ McLuhan, 'Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry', p. 138.

⁴⁷ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, p. 15.

⁴⁸ Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind*, p. 56.

⁴⁹ *Understanding Media*, p. 41.

⁵⁰ Nevitt, 'Via Media', p. 156.

⁵¹ McLuhan, *War and Peace*, p. 65. McLuhan locates the modern dilemma of technological-anxiety and sensory overload by probing Joseph Campbell's *Hero with a Thousand Faces* (referred to by McLuhan in *Mechanical Bride*, p. 33). According to Campbell, the greatest problem is how to locate humanity in a wilderness also occupied by fearsome animals such as the sabertooth tiger and the mammoth. To psychologically link themselves to the task of sharing this world, 'an unconscious identification took place, and this was finally rendered conscious in the half-human, half-animal, figures of the totem-ancestors [. . .] through acts of literal imitation [. . .] an effective annihilation of the human ego was accomplished and society achieved cohesive organisation' (p. 33). With industrialisation, the 'wilderness' becomes a place occupied by 'alien' creatures called machines. To survive in this new world, human beings make themselves into totem-images of that which they fear; by physical and mentally imitating mechanised 'nature'--by becoming half-human, half-machine.

⁵² McLuhan finds his notion of symbolist poetics best articulated in Mallarme who said that: 'The poetic act consists in seeing suddenly that an idea fractions itself into a number of motifs equal in value, and in grouping them; they rhyme' (quoted in McLuhan, 'The Aesthetic Moment in Landscape Poetry', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 164). Poetic insight occurs in 'arrested moments' of clarity where poetic orders achieve the patterns of interior landscape (pp. 155-158). He includes among those who achieved this special correspondence, or at least pointed in that direction, Coleridge, Baudelaire, Mallarme, Rimbaud, Poe, Eliot, and Joyce (see also 'Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry', pp. 137-151). Ross argues that Mallarme's 'lifelong concern with hygienically rescuing a truly 'poetic' language of evocation from the hegemonic vulgarity of bourgeois utilitarianism and precision' must be distinguished from Rimbaud's project to work with the continuously shifting and displaced vernacular' (*The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune*, p. 89). Rimbaud explicitly leads away from 'the textual toward lived practises', that is practises of multiaccentuality or 'oral aggression' (pp. 133-135). Such lived practises contaminate the 'text' and 'produce poetry that would be an agent as well as an effect of cultural and political change' (p. 27). However, having pointed out this distinction, Ross notes Rimbaud's equation of a 'materialist' future to a return to the 'eternal art' of 'Greek poetry' as the mark of democracy (p. 27). This notion permeates the emphasis on discovering a poetics of permanence in the oral theory of the 20th century, and in particular, feeds into McLuhan's electronic poetics as the functional realisation of democratic citizenry.

⁵³ McLuhan, 'Coleridge as Artist', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 119.

⁵⁴ 'Coleridge', p. 124.

⁵⁵ 'Coleridge', p. 119. In what I suggest is a misreading, McLuhan blames what he calls the failed efforts of the Romantics to resist the aesthetic impoverishment of mechanisation on their obsession with 'external landscape', that is, the Newtonian world of linear orders permeated by rules of visuality which monopolised the other senses. This is the world McLuhan also sought to challenge in his early critiques of modernity and mechanised life (see *The Mechanical Bride*). For McLuhan, once transcended by technology this context must also be transcended aesthetically and culturally in order to realise the liberating potential of the electronic model of the world. McLuhan believes the Romantics were seeking the inner 'harmony of mind' that he seeks, but that they were blocked by their search for aesthetic moments in nature, i.e., in an exterior landscape which had been conquered or 'fixated' by mechanics and the visual domination of the picturesque. It can be argued, however, that the radical poets among the Romantics reject this view of nature as ideological. It is the importance of maintaining the material, contextual 'life' of nature that the Romantics address in their political act of opposing social life in the machine age. The radicals among the Romantics are clearly attempting to intersect aesthetics and lived poetics in a language beyond the reach of mechanisation and utilitarian value. Their sense of world and nature is very much tied to their sense of story and poetics as productions in the world, not above or beyond it. It is their appeal to the 'otherness' of the experiential world that grounds their poetics as a radicalising link between the industrial exploitation of human condition and environment. They see the mechanisation of creativity and nature as bourgeois construct.

⁵⁶ McLuhan, 'Coleridge as Artist', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 120.

⁵⁷ McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 5.

⁵⁸ McLuhan, 'Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry', p. 154.

⁵⁹ See McNamara's collection of McLuhan's literary criticism, *The Interior Landscape*, which provides an important understanding of how the latter's construction of nature and poetics collapses into a theory of 'media as metaphysical techno-sphere'.

⁶⁰ McLuhan, 'Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry', p. 154.

⁶¹ *Mechanical Bride*, pp. 32-34.

⁶² *Mechanical Bride*, p. 34.

⁶³ Emery Neff, *A Revolution in European Poetry 1660-1900*, p. 248. See also Eugene McNamara, 'The Beatrician Moment', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 96.

⁶⁴ McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 4, 273 and *War and Peace*, p. 25. See also Stearn, *Hot and Cool*, p. 43.

⁶⁵ McLuhan, 'Introduction', *Bias of Communication*, xiii.

⁶⁶ McLuhan, 'The Effect of the Printed Book on Language in the 16th Century', *Explorations*, ed. by Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan (Boston: Beacon, 1960), p. 132.

⁶⁷ McLuhan, 'Coleridge as Artist', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 120.

⁶⁸ Eric Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, p. 27.

⁶⁹ McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 293, notes # 137 and # 161.

⁷⁰ *The Medium is the Massage*, pp. 113-14.

⁷¹ *Laws of Media*, p. 71.

⁷² McLuhan, 'At the Moment of Sputnik', in *The Man and His Message*, ed. by George Sanderson and Frank Macdonald (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, Inc., 1989), p. 71.

⁷³ Donald Theall, *The Medium is the Rear View Mirror: Understanding McLuhan* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1971), p. 146.

⁷⁴ *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 141.

⁷⁵ *The Mechanical Bride*, p. 34.

⁷⁶ *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 272. McLuhan does not hide his appreciation for the market society. Indeed, he argues that under 'conditions of simultaneous information movement' the mass market holds the promise of a 'total human interdependence' (p. 276). He also notes a connection between commodification and art in society: 'Art has become as total in its mandate for human order as the mass markets that created the plateau from which all can now share the awareness of new scope and potential for everyday beauty and order in all aspects of life at once. Retrospectively, it may well prove necessary to concede to the period of mass marketing the creation of the means of a world order in beauty as much as in commodities' (p. 275).

⁷⁷ Again echoing McLuhan's sense of the originary technology of the oral (the 'Word'), *Laws of Media* re-emphasises that: 'The Greeks had two words for 'word' or 'utterance', logos and mythos, of which logos was the much the older and more complex. The spoken word, logos, functioned in oral society as the principle technology both of communication and of fashioning and transmitting the culture. Logos was also related to formal cause, the existential essence of things' (p. 34-35). Orality is a *technology* as opposed to a historical spatial practise. McLuhan rediscovered in electronic technology the logos of lost orality.

⁷⁸ See 'Marshall McLuhan to Barry Day, Feb. 4, 1970', in *Letters*, p. 397. With electronic media, and once satellites encircle the planet, technology engulfs nature. The planet becomes the content of the medium: 'new technology is new environment' ('McLuhan to Harry J. Skornia, Oct. 3, 1964', in *Letters*, p. 319). See also 'Marshall McLuhan Gets Processed' where he points out that 'thanks to electricity. Speed, huge speed-up, means there's no more past. Now, there is no more history' (*Ideas*, Toronto: CBC, 2 December in *Understanding McLuhan*, CD-ROM, 1995).

⁷⁹ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, p. 35. Electronic technology inverts the relationship between humanity and world by creating potentiality in its form of perpetually engineering the inner harmony of the senses. Electricity speaks the language of the interior and therefore allows communication with the inner spirit, with the soul, and among souls. McLuhan notes W. B. Yeats's recognition of this reversal: 'The visible world is no longer a reality and the unseen world is no longer a dream' (p. 35). Electronic orality (the language of the 'unseen world' holds the promise of 'cultural ecology [. . .] a reasonably stable base in the human sensorium' (*Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 35).

⁸⁰ John Fekete, *The Critical Twilight Explorations in the Ideology of Anglo-American Literary Theory from Eliot to McLuhan* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p. 140.

⁸¹ McLuhan, 'Coleridge as Artist', p. 133. For McLuhan, electric technology announces that the dominion of writing is over: 'with the omnipresent ear and the moving eye, we have abolished writing, the specialised acoustic-visual metaphor that established the dynamics of Western civilisation. By surpassing writing, we have regained our WHOLENESS, not on a national or cultural, but a cosmic plane. We have evoked a super-civilised sub-primitive man' (McLuhan and Carpenter, 'Five Sovereign Fingers Taxed the Breath', in *Explorations*, pp. 207-208).

⁸² McLuhan, *War and Peace*, p. 177. In *Understanding Media*, McLuhan re-articulates the 're-tribalisation' of the world in the capacities of electronic technology: 'Tradition in a word is the sense of the

total past as *now*. It awakening is a natural result of radio impact and of electric information in general' (p. 301, see also pp. 304, 306, 347, and pp. 351-352).

⁸³ Electronic orality is a technology that does not concern itself with elite culture or literature, but that seeks its power inside the everyday vernacular of shared experience. Its power is directly connected to the technological theft of the 'complex' ordinary. It is connected to the appropriation, replication, grand-scale reduction and reconstruction of orality in 'the vision of 'processed information' as somehow consonant with the perfectibility of the human faculties' (Kroker, *Technology and the Canadian Mind*, p. 128). The ability to exchange experiences is reduced by the technical capacity to process experience as information in 'story-form'. In this circumstance electronic orality becomes story and commodified for the marketplace. Where stories have the traditional role of social and experiential exchange, they are reconfigured into controlling Myths that remove storyteller and story from the context or place of the telling.

⁸⁴ *Mechanical Bride*, pp. 33-34.

⁸⁵ For McLuhan, 'the instant speed of electric information [. . .] permits easy recognition of the patterns and the formal contours of change and development [. . .]. Electric speed is synonymous with light and with the understanding of causes' (*Understanding Media*, p. 352).

⁸⁶ McLuhan, *The Vanishing Point*, p. 183 (see also McLuhan's article, 'Wyndham Lewis: This Theory of Art and Communication', in *The Interior Landscape*, pp. 93-94). Here, we see McLuhan borrowing the notion of the vortex from Lewis's explication of the role of the artist. The special talent of the artist is the ability to find 'creative cores or vortices of causality. In the heart of these cores or vortices there is an absolute calm, but at the periphery there is violence' (p. 94). It is the artist's role 'to energize [society] by establishing such intellectually purified images of the entelechy of nature' (p. 94). McLuhan further defines his notion of 'entelechy' in a letter to Claude Bisell in 1971: 'Entelechy or energeia is the recognition of the new actuation of power brought about by any arrangement of components whether in the atom or the plant or the intellect' (McLuhan, *Letters*, p. 429)

⁸⁷ 'Marshall McLuhan to Robert Fulford, June 1, 1964', in *Letters*, p. 300. See also 'McLuhan, 'Wyndham Lewis'', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 94.

⁸⁸ Creativity is the manipulation and then achievement of form. See Barrington Nevitt and Maurice McLuhan, *Who was Marshall McLuhan: Exploring a Mosaic of Impressions*, ed. by Frank Zingrone, p. 15. In this sense of medium, electronic technology becomes a kind of 'channelling' or meeting of the human body (now evolved or extended into electric being) with the previously inaccessible patterns of the inner spirit. Electronic orality is the spiritual *medium* through the tumult of modernity into the logic of the soul; the inaccessible, interior landscape of reason.

⁸⁹ 'McLuhan to Robert Fulford, June 1, 1964', in *Letters*, p. 300.

⁹⁰ Interview with McLuhan by Louis Forsdale, 'Technology and the Human Dimension', in *Marshall McLuhan: The Man and His Message*, pp. 12-24. 'Transmitted at the speed of light, all events on this planet are simultaneous. In the electric environment of information, all events are simultaneous. There is no time or space separating events. Information and images bump against each other every day in massive quantities, and the resonance of this interfacing is like the babble of a village or tavern gossip session. [. . .] The acoustic or simultaneous space in which we now live is like a sphere whose centre is everywhere and whose margins are nowhere' (pp. 23-24). McLuhan finds in electric technology an 'agent [that] could double the speed of all events in the world', such that we can now 'discern a great loss of richness in experience'. Sound at the speed of light foregrounds the loss of simultaneity marked by centuries of 'visuality as abstracted from the other senses'. It was this visual abstraction, this reduction of consciousness to one thing at a time, that 'seemed to Plato a diminution of ontological awareness, or an impoverishment of Being'. In McLuhan's sense of sound as the language of Being, electronic orality is the re-enchantment of the 'Experience of Being'. The interiorisation of typographical visuality marked the corruption of ontological awareness: 'The magical mode disappears in proportion as interior events are made visually manifest' (*Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 52). Visual manifestation disconnected the 'unified field

of Being' between the spoken and the Word. The visual exterior corrupted the auditory interior; visual space poisoned oral space. Once interiorised, 'electric all-at-onceness' reinvents the 'unified field' (p. 63). The speed of electric orality overrides the 'one-at-a-timeness' of visual typography and the domination of the classical past. It recreates the simultaneity of the present in a technology of eternal Being. Electronic speed becomes the agent of original inner simultaneity that highlights the epistemological limits of history as visual succession. Electronic technology allows the sacral moment of simultaneous insight; history obsolesced by a return to Being. For McLuhan, secondary orality brings us back to the present: 'That the world of sound is essentially a unified field of instant relationships lends it a near resemblance to the world of electro-magnetic waves' (*Understanding Media*, p. 275).

⁹¹ 'The Medium is the Message', *Forum* (Spring, 1960), p. 19.

⁹² *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 106.

⁹³ McLuhan criticises Mircea Eliade's (*The Sacred and the Profane*) definition of the sacred as the relationship between pre-literate peoples and 'the symbolisms and cults of Mother Earth, of human and agricultural fertility, of the sacrality of women [. . .] sacrality manifested equally in the animal world and in the vegetable world' (Eliade, p. 17 quoted in McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 70). McLuhan sees this as the equation of the 'religious' and the 'oral' with 'the irrational' (p. 69). McLuhan is troubled by Eliade's division of the world into 'two modalities of experience -- sacred and profane' (Eliade in McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 69). The concern is not so much with the notion of sacred and profane, but rather in the alignment of sacrality with the passions and ritual of *irrationality*, and the profane with the measured literate culture of *rationality*. Eliade's emphasis the sacredness of pre-literate man's relationship with the external world undermines McLuhan's project of linking the sacral to an inner oral rationality of acoustic authority. For McLuhan, electronic orality is the achievement of oral rationalism. The 'cosmic consciousness' made possible by the 'all at onceness' of electronic media environment realises the sacred via technological rationalisation. Oral logic is an inner balance inside interior landscape; an oral authority. McLuhan's orality then is the Word 'imprinted on the hearts' of hearers. Quoting Aquinas, he emphasises his own meaning of the oral as authoritative form; the 'oral mode of teaching' by 'one having power' such as Christ (from Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, quoted in *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 98).

⁹⁴ Eliot, *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*, pp. 118-119 (emphasis added), quoted in McLuhan, *Laws of Media*, p. 102, 'Coleridge as Artist', p. 123. McLuhan clearly borrows this 'sense' of acoustic space as the closest articulation of his own sense of the term.

⁹⁵ McLuhan is continually trying to raise the stature of his media theory to a level of academically accepted 'science'. As many of his collaborators, friends, and biographers note, McLuhan is painfully aware of his 'outsidedness'. For a critique of McLuhan's interpretation and use of Joyce's work in *Understanding Media*, see Nathan Halper's 'Marshall McLuhan and Joyce', in *McLuhan: Pro&Con*, pp. 58-81.

⁹⁶ McLuhan, 'James Joyce: Trivial and Quadrivial', in *Interior Landscape*, p. 39. Italics added.

⁹⁷ Bakhtin's interest in articulating the oral life of language is also reflected in McLuhan's recognition of its radical potential and the realisation of this potential in the oral transgression of modern authority and linear typography via electronic technology. McLuhan suggests in *The Gutenberg Galaxy* later linkages he would make between what he saw as the unique and 'essentially oral' powers of electronic technology and the release of the repressed oral spirit (p. 137). He argues that the 'oral polyphony in the prose of Nashe offends against lineal and literary decorum' (p. 293, note # 201).

⁹⁸ Andrew Taylor, 'Playing on the Margins: Bakhtin and the Smithfield Decretals', in *Bakhtin and Medieval Voices*, ed. by Thomas Farrell (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1995), p. 31.

⁹⁹ In his work on the history of the trivium, grammar-logic-rhetoric, McLuhan notes that in medieval times and back into classical antiquity 'grammatica [. . .] means the book of nature. Reading the whole text of nature as a book. That was called Grammatica'. It is concerned with 'eloquence and with the word, the logos. And the study of the word as resonating with wisdom [. . .] resonating with therapeutic power' (McLuhan, 'Live Lecture' *Understanding McLuhan*, University of Toronto, 17 July 1978) [CD-ROM] pp.

71-74). Oral eloquence is thought to hold the power to 'heal sick minds'. With Christianity, the whole idea of the Word is the 'divine word as healing', especially when sung and performed (pp. 71-74). The spoken Word resonates with divine wisdom. The 'text' of Nature was the eloquence of God's Word.

¹⁰⁰ Eric McLuhan notes in his 'Preface' to *The Medium and the Light* that in 1979 Marshall McLuhan was to give a talk at the University of Toronto on the topic of 'Discarnate Man and the Incarnate Church. [. . .] Just before he was due to give the talk he had the stroke that took away his power of speech' (xxviii).

¹⁰¹ McLuhan's poetics uses the radical and imaginative potentials of 'grotesque' excess and the everyday to colonise the vernacular, indeed to reconstruct it to meet the transcendental standards already set by the electronic reproductive technology. Our inner life is at odds with the technological world of the electronic. McLuhan's world of the senses is not a human world of social experience, aesthetics, imagination, and struggle but 'world as technology' -- the bodiless, voiceless, environment-less 'participation' in the technological body. McLuhan's poetics of technology emphasises the rise and fall of the visual not as a human sense of the world but as a technology above that would. This stands against the use of visuality (in objectified, propertied form) as a colonising power over the culture of speech -- as a tool of class hegemony. Historically, that is until the 20th century, sound has been marginalised because it had not achieved 'technology' status -- in other words it was not useful as an instrument of hegemony. It was a site of contestation but did not wield the imperial power Innis showed it to exert in history.

¹⁰² *McLuhan: Hot and Cool*, ed. by Gerald Emmanuel Stern (New York: Dial, 1967) p. 267. McLuhan sees art and creativity as the materialisation of divine creativity in human agency: 'Because human perception is literally incarnation. So that each of us must *poet* the world or fashion it within us as our primary and constant mode of awareness' (*The Medium and the Light*, p. 169).

¹⁰³ McLuhan, *The Medium and the Light*, p. 148.

¹⁰⁴ McLuhan, 'Spectrum of Catholic Attitudes' (1969), quoted in *The Medium and the Light*, xxvi.

¹⁰⁵ In *The Medium and the Light: Reflections on Religion*, McLuhan suggests that: 'It is possible that our new technologies can bypass verbalizing [. . .]. In a sense, the *surround* of information that we now experience electrically is an extension of consciousness itself' (p. 88).

¹⁰⁶ McLuhan, *Understanding McLuhan*, [CD-ROM] (1995), p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ Richard Cavell, 'Spatial Form', in *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory*, ed. by Irena R. Makaryk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), p. 630.

¹⁰⁸ This is what Rabelais tries to break down in the neo-classical confrontations between the vernacular and the new mechanical spacing and repression of the oral 'dialect'. He addresses the creative connection between literature, acoustic space and social world by using 'virginal words' (Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World*, trans. by Helene Iswolsky, London, England: The MIT Press, 1968, p. 462). To bring life to his works, he uses words outside the printed page not yet disciplined by the technologies and rules of writing. By using these words in a comic fashion, in a manner outside the rules, he is able to borrow and use them in a unfixed way, which maintains their circulation in acoustic space. Reduced to unilateral meanings, words become models and fixed names; reductions of world rather than connections to it.

¹⁰⁹ When Walter Ong coined the term 'secondary orality', he recognised that the new orality has 'striking resemblances to the old in its participatory mystique, its fostering of a communal sense, its concentration on the present moment, and even its use of formulas' (Ong, *Rhetoric, Romance and Technology Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture*, Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1971, pp. 284-303, and *Interfaces of the Word*, pp. 16-49, 305-41).

¹¹⁰ The equation of electronic orality and simultaneity is key to McLuhan's theory of the technologically acoustic return to oral culture and the subversionary potential of the electronic to challenge linear domination of print (See especially, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, McLuhan's 'Introduction' to Innis's *Bias of Communication* and also *Understanding Media*).

¹¹¹ *The Bias of Communication*, pp. 22-23 and 53-55.

¹¹² When McLuhan posits the obsolescence of nature in the 'new media', he silences 'the remains' and denies the existence of and the relationship between nature and human beings, as anything but use-values. If electronic technology is nature, it is alienated human labour and commodification extraordinaire. The relationship between human beings and nature becomes an impoverished relationship; commodity to commodity in the absence of non-commodity. Speech is unable to get outside artificial replica. Just as the commodity masks the face of human labour, electronic orality hides the voice of human speech. More profoundly, 'secondary orality' as Myth steals and then reconstructs speech outside time and space. When McLuhan's electronic media become nature, the technology takes over speech and place. In other words, how do we position ourselves in the world if we cannot see, hear, or feel ourselves in that world? In a world in which orality appears to have achieved 'world status' in technological replication, where do speakers go to find an alternative world and a context for determining their own location in time and place? If we accept McLuhan's configuration of electronic media as nature, then 'the new media are not bridges between man and nature: they are nature' (McLuhan, 'Five Sovereign Fingers Taxed the Breath', in *Explorations*, p. 208). There are effectively no other places and no other words to speak. The relationship between the oral and social constructs of nature is then central to McLuhan's theory of the electronic re-tribalisation of the world.

CHAPTER FOUR – ORALITY AND AMBIVALENCE

Authority and Resistance in the Ancient World

There is a ‘recorded’ and an ‘unrecorded’ history to the oral. Having been denied by categories that ‘eliminate ambiguity [. . .] in the interests of the one clear meaning’, the unrecorded history of the oral remains alive in the complex intonations, rhythms, and ambivalence of the world.¹ In everyday life people produce their own histories and stories that can be resistant to the official and formulaic compositions of traditional authority. This in turn suggests the existence of a bifurcated memory of reality involving the local and immediate on the one hand, the national and universal on the other.² The duality of experience allows the stories of the people to survive in spite of the predominance of officially sanctioned mythology, and it is in this way that the powerless produce a knowledge of their own past.³ In oral cultures where knowledge is based in ongoing natural and cultural processes, people transcend the ‘more general histories focused on throne and nation’ by embellishing those histories or by departing from them altogether within their own stories.⁴

Oral cultures produce a complex explanation of the connection between nature and culture that incorporates magic, myth, and practical knowledge. ‘Sound’ and ‘world’ are interconnected and immersed within these relationships of people, nature, and the gods. Among Aboriginal peoples in North America, for example, ‘the trickster’ figure personifies this connection.⁵ For its part, the trickster possesses metamorphic powers that allow it to interrogate high positions of reason, status, and wealth, and in the process to reveal the contingency of hierarchical relations. It ranges through worlds reaffirming the conservative role of tradition while at the same time encouraging sounds and acts of dissent. The trickster’s disorderly acts are produced in a sensed, but unseen,

place and outside assumed orders of space. Escaping fixed texts in the ambivalence of lived space, the prevalence and cross-cultural survival of this figure is a challenge issued by the supposed historyless to authorities and hierarchical constructs.

Sounds are tied to the rhythms of the physical world. Connected to ceremonial performance, the regeneration of oral culture is a process that weaves together the sounds of the world with the acoustic potentials of the body. In this process there is a reliance upon the acquisition of technical skills to manipulate such sensibilities into the oral traditions of authority. In some instances, individuals build and stake proprietary claim to acoustic talents based on memory skills that record knowledge as the significant details of a collective past. In other instances, whole families of skilled 'remembrancers' emerge to demand status and respect within the community, their stature strengthened by seemingly secret powers carefully guarded and passed from one generation to the next. In oral cultures both the 'authority' and 'life' of the oral are inscribed in the collective body of the people and sustained in the physicality of the relationship between sound and audience participation.⁶ The oral response to acoustic cues in religious and cultural rituals even today speaks to this sanctioning – the act of saying is a means of belonging to the said.

In their acoustic environment human beings produce and share knowledge through 'an intense experience of the concrete pressures of life'.⁷ It is certainly worth noting, however, that sound in oral culture escapes the traditional forms of official ratification. More specifically, it is party to the authority of tradition, but beyond the control of such tradition. In the complex experience of sound, acoustic authority provokes acoustic ambivalence. This resonance connects collective memory to the acoustic potentiality of the social world. There is a relationship between body and ways

of knowing that creates a contextual depth. As a result of this the poetics of history haunts the oral everyday, it is a sense of sound holding on to the acoustic world.⁸

The polytheism that typifies the spiritual culture of the tribal and ancient worlds is rooted in early efforts to survive the elements of nature. The interanimation of everyone and everything articulates this process and the potentialities of such association. The telling of stories reinforces the efficacy of ritual connection and co-existence in a sensory world full of noisy creatures and deities who possess the secrets of life. 'Early peoples make no distinction between symbols and the things they stand for.'⁹ Ritual performances are meant to dramatise, address, and reproduce the magical forces of nature upon which so much depends. Oral performance joins the other elements and deities as acoustic co-inhabitants reinforcing a mutual reliance.

As well poetic lore is deeply entrenched in the mythological world of nature. In return for favour, and sometimes to appease its anger, humanity issues the sounds of nature back to nature, creating a complex poetics of mutual survival. The knowledge of this mutuality is part of the 'secret' of poetic power. When poets invoke the Muse, they invoke nature and seek to translate its complexity into cultural potential. The sounds of the Muse are spoken between the language of nature and culture. This is where dramatic action produces the poetic space to speak and act in the world. Invoking the Muse is similar to calling up the place for stories in partly fictionalised times and places. The Muses are mythical goddesses who encourage the production of this middle ground between nature and culture, the inter-translation of voices in nature through the poetics of experience.¹⁰ This is the place for stories to be told.

Oral tradition develops over generations as the collective product of the community. In this way 'any given oral tradition is but a rendering at one moment, an

element in a process of oral development'.¹¹ The structure of this tradition involves a process of legitimising and reworking stories with very deep historical roots. The oral performance involved is life renewing inasmuch as 'the sanctioning description of reality in oral tradition corresponds with and interprets the lived experience of reality'.¹² Such tradition serves to 'locate' people through the establishing of a shared time and space. It is not the 'pastness' or 'presentness' that makes an action significant in this context, but rather its experiential quality, how it informs the character of the place upon which it stands.¹³ Knowledge in nonliterate cultures is very much contained within the poetic acts and memories of its people. Memory, the Mother of the Muses, is intimately connected to oral powers and the articulation of remembered places.

In tribal and ancient societies the role of elders guides actions in the present and motivations for the future, but it also exhibits a quasi-authoritarian and conservative pull. In an important respect oral tradition involves a matter of political control in which the cultural dynamic of orality is set against the textuality of a dominant worldview.¹⁴ In such tradition there is evidence of culturally rejuvenating powers linked to the complexity of sound and mythology as an improvisational element that keeps orality alive in the social practice of acoustic exchange.¹⁵ However, there is also evidence of an officially sanctioned interpretation, a basis for the 'the elite and the formulaic' in the kind of word that embodies 'the necessary composing devices for oral ex tempore composition'.¹⁶

With the advent of the epic-form in ancient Greece, the communal power of orality develops into the authoritative power of the spoken word. This arises with the occurrence of tribal territorial wars and further develops with the emergence of more definite structures of order and power.¹⁷ Belief-systems incorporated into the incantation

of oral traditions serve as a means of tribal solidarity and social control. In turn, the emergence of class divisions serves to weaken the bonds of kinship, splitting oral culture into an underworld of 'story' and an overworld of 'tradition'.¹⁸ In such a situation stories perform the rites of community while tradition maintains the dominant social order.

The epic tales are very much the product of this hierarchical social structure. As chronicles of the heroic they emanate from the normative centre and are formulaically tied to the renewal of a fixed past. They are adaptations of stories recast by epic formulation and placed into the service of maintaining a tradition that is both of the elite specialist and the peasant vernacular. In the epic, traditional formulas and vernacular stories are combined into a new language of poetry constituting 'a memorised version of social and civic tradition and government'.¹⁹ The epic thus becomes the dominant language of a hegemony that articulates a complex of opposing forces within the spoken word. In this, 'composition' becomes an act of memory while 'performance' becomes an 'act that seeks to imprint that memory on others'.²⁰ As a tool for socialisation the epic reflects its society. The composition and performance of epic poetry validate traditional social values 'by emphasising historical precedents and ideal paradigms in which these values were based'.²¹

Recitations and oral performances also serve as a means of popular participation in a ritualised authority. Oral traditions are versified hierarchies reflecting their society in a carefully constructed image. The reflection is designed to produce idealised and easily retained images that function 'as messages [. . .] emanating from society's past'.²² In effect, epic language uses the spoken to construct an idealisation that encourages allegiance to a fixed world regenerated in the act of participation.²³ Indeed, the words

and sounds of the epic contain the story of a totalised past presented in a way to ensure that the epic outlook is continually renewed.

The epic poems are thus constructions of a special language designed for maximum memorisation, social imprint, and secure transmission. As Havelock suggests, these 'linguistic statements could be remembered and repeated only as they were specially shaped: they existed solely as sound, memorised through the ears and practised by the mouths of living persons'.²⁴ Ultimately, the oral 'tradition' of the ancient epics becomes an engineering of sound and repression of space directed to the renewal of the past from the past. Shaping sound into patterns of mnemonic recall is a pre-requisite for composing the dominant oral text necessary to inscribe traditional authority.²⁵

In oral culture, composition and recitation follow rules of oratory that come to be crafted, and eventually controlled, by a specialised group.²⁶ The historical development of the more formulaic epic recitation and oral performance of late tribal and traditional societies reflects the development of such hierarchical power relations. In classical Greece the increasingly sophisticated formulaic structures lead to a complex and heightened form of epic tradition. The emergence of this fixed oral 'text' places oral tradition into the hands of those skilled in memory and other secret devices. In these circumstances both text and orator become a new order of property, an objectification of language in which both together form a unified mechanism for the transmission of dominant messages.

Homer, Hesiod, and the Fissures in Orality

In the epic tales of Homer and Hesiod is the only 'record' of the interaction between oral composition and the vernacular in ancient Greece. In these tales a striking contrast between the two poets becomes clearly evident: Homer assigns authorship to the

Muses; Hesiod describes the song as something the Muses teach in the course of living. Homer sees himself as a mediator between Muse and audience; Hesiod sees himself as the earthly material of the goddess who is the breath-form.²⁷ Homer's words reflect the power of the spoken-word as authority; Hesiod finds his place in the 'works and days' of nature.²⁸ The stories of Homer are the recorded 'history' of oral form; the stories of Hesiod are the experience of lived poetics, a rare 'record' of an 'other' orality. Homer's stories involve battles for power designed to legitimate and inculcate the rightful place of the ruling elite; Hesiod's stories are the stories of everyday life among the peasant-class of the country.²⁹ In Homer are the tales of heroic deeds; in Hesiod, the sentiments and circumstances of a shepherd poet.³⁰ Homer sanctifies hierarchy; Hesiod fashions moral responsibilities and judgements.³¹ Homer invokes the Muses; Hesiod addresses them.³²

In the introduction to his translation of *The Iliad of Homer*, Pope credits Homer as the first to use the gods as 'a system of machinery for poetry'. He suggests that 'after all the various changes of times and religions', it is Homer's gods that 'continue to this day the gods of poetry'.³³ For Pope, Homer represents the true father of poetry, the man who teaches the 'language of the gods' to men.³⁴ It is this language of the gods that holds the secrets of 'applying the sound to the sense', the mimetic alliance of language and order.³⁵ Arguably, however, Hesiod is the more interesting figure. Hesiod uses the oral to challenge traditional authority. He transgresses the absolute past of the Homeric epic with questions of the present. He wants to know 'why are things as they are, not as we imagine they used to be, and why does God, who should be man's friend, appear as his enemy?''³⁶ He interrogates the Muse from his place in the present and wants to know how she casts her spell – and how his own poetry works.

In the opening lines of *Works and Days*, Hesiod directly addresses the Muses, the gods, the thunders, and the earth. He calls upon the Muses as the power that decides who will be 'renowned or remain unsung' and who will be 'named in speech or remain unspoken' (1-5). He then proceeds to distinguish his world from theirs by articulating his own rules of life from the experience of works and days on earth. There is undoubtedly a certain insolence in Hesiod's poetics that pays homage to the gods while questioning the application of their rules to everyday problems:

Hear me, see me, Zeus: hearken:
 direct your decrees in righteousness.
 To you, Perses, I would describe the true way of existence (5-10).³⁷

As Havelock and Lattimore note, Hesiod may follow the formulaic conventions of the oral epic, but he uses chronicle, catalogue, and genealogy to articulate a poetics of the present as against the epic tales of the past.³⁸ Hesiod is not 'primarily a story-teller, but rather a recollector and describer' who inverts the heroic past by using the rules and conflicts of working lives in real time. When Hesiod addresses the gods 'it symbolises the fact that the province of the Muses is that political and moral order which under Zeus has come to be established'. This is what the 'poetry itself commemorates'.³⁹ While the songs of the Muses are both encyclopaedic and narrative, the chronicle contains the rules and hierarchy of order institutionalised through the oral performance of the story. By chronicling the works and days of human survival, Hesiod is basically questioning a social order immersed in an epic form emanating from the distant past. Hesiod's works may address the same gods and heroes as Homer's epics, but they articulate a world where everyday problems of survival cut across the immutability of the heroic narrative.

For Hesiod, poetry is the record of hierarchical order, but it also speaks of life, death, and the cycles of human survival on earth. He uses the Muses, the gods, and

nature's elements to categorise history and human morality 'under the guise of an immense divine genealogy'. Indeed, in his work 'Gods, demons, nymphs, and demi-gods, disposed in appropriate family trees, gather up the "facts" of life into an encyclopaedia of information which is now no longer to be discovered by implication in the saga, but is gathered together and exists *per se*'. By using present human conditions to rationalise the orders of the gods and produce proper rules of conduct in the course of working days, his 'intention is to dismiss the epic tale altogether'.⁴⁰

The Muses who inspire Hesiod's tales come from the 'dales and slopes of Helicon', a place remote from the towns. In this world, nature and poetics share a mutual resonance:⁴¹

At the time when you hear the cry of the crane
 Going over, that annual
 Voice from high in the clouds, you should take notice
 and make plans.
 She brings the signal for the beginning of planting,
 the winter
 season of rains, but she bites the heart
 of the man without oxen.⁴²

In *Works and Days* and *Theogony* the world is explicitly connected to nature through acoustic exchange. As elements of nature give birth to human forms, and vice-versa, ritual and sound reaffirm this connection in the creation of the world.⁴³ Hesiod's verse resounds with the industrious murmur of bees, the music of pastoral flutes, the noise of waterfalls, and the sounds of work. In effect, invoking the Muse is to call up the poetic space between with its mingling of the sounds of nature and the poetics of experience.⁴⁴ Hesiod recognises this interconnection when he credits the Muses for his poetic calling:

So they spoke, these mistresses of words,
 daughters of great Zeus,
 and they broke off and handed me a staff
 of strong-growing

olive shoot, a wonderful thing;
 they breathed a voice into me,
 and power to sing the story of things
 of the future, and things past.⁴⁵

Hesiod's sayings and words of advice are products of a farmer's conscious poetic effort to address the connection between humans and nature. His words reveal an exchange of learned experience and wisdom in relation to nature as well as among its animate and inanimate inhabitants. He seeks to connect the works of humanity to the motions of the stars. The peasant is told, for instance, to cut the corn with the rising of Pleiads in May and to plough the fields when they set in November.⁴⁶ Hesiod knows the bumps and bends on the roads his listeners travel. His words involve the sounds the peasant wagons make on their working journeys, and his stories their tales shared along the way. His detailed description of how to make a wagon-axle is the 'poetry' of the husbandman, linking word and work in sounds of the everyday:

Work up thyself a waggon of thine own,
 For to the foolish borrower is not known
 That each wain asks a hundred joints of wood:
 These things ask forecast, and thou shouldst make good
 At home, before thy need so instant stood.⁴⁷

Hesiod's 'Works and Days' is a poetic diary, a connection between culture and nature interwoven with personal history and myth. He is a 'working class' poet of ancient times who spins tales of the ordinary and everyday. Davies points out that 'in Thespieae, to which realm he belonged, agriculture was held degrading to a freeman, which helps to account for his being, in his own day, a poet only of the peasantry and the lower classes'.⁴⁸ Indeed, Hesiod gives equal status to the bard and the beggar pointing out that the gaps between rich and poor have consequence for all.⁴⁹

Hesiod explicitly puts the gods to work in the organisation of everyday rules of conduct. In his *Works and Days* and *Theogony*, the poet is seen as the 'tribal

encyclopaedist' and 'the story-teller who delights by his command of the art of relevance'.⁵⁰ As Havelock suggests, Hesiod's work foregrounds not only his contrast with Homer, but also the double role of orality within the Homeric epic. Homer's poetics is about the inaccessible period long before his own time. In contrast Hesiod breaks with Homer's past and 'starts from the present'.⁵¹ Indeed, his poetics emerge from a world of survival to hint at the future and an 'incomplete process of a world-in-the-making'.⁵²

In the time of Plato some two centuries later, this struggle between authority and poetics became the struggle for orality itself. The oral world found itself within an increasingly literate environment, since 'singing, recitation and memorisation [. . .] and reading and writing [. . .] were coming into competition and collision'. The struggle of Homer and Hesiod becomes far more complicated in this collision. There is a merging of environments as the spoken word moves into the written. As Havelock suggests, the Muse learns to write but still sings inside the written words: 'The Tablet shouts, it cries aloud. Look, look at what I have seen in written letters - a song speaking aloud'!⁵³

Socrates, Plato, and the Paradox of Orality

Whether a historical or fictional character, Socrates is the product of a historical paradox.⁵⁴ Existing at the heart of the ancient transition from oral to written worldview, he personifies the contradictory forces of his time. Specifically, he lives at the moment of contradiction between traditional oral authority and an 'other' orality that arises to challenge the institutionalised rigidities of life. Socrates is important not only because he comes at the meeting of orality and literacy, but also because he brings a focus to the complexities and hierarchies within the spoken word itself.⁵⁵ The paradox of Socrates can be sensed in his discovery of an 'other' orality within a threatened oral environment. In

his dialogues he seeks to save the acoustic power of orality by transforming it into dialectic inquiry. Yet, as a practical matter, these same dialogues serve to encourage the development of an abstract written thought. Ironically, as Socrates lives inside the transition from the oral to literate culture, his ideas about this transformation contribute more to the new written environment than to a preservation of oral environment.⁵⁶ He fears the consequences of writing, yet writing encourages the dissemination of Socratic dialogue.

Socrates exists at the edge of a literate culture that will eventually displace oral tradition with a historical 'record'. Because of these circumstances his insight into the power struggles of the spoken word has been largely overlooked. Socrates speaks to save the acoustic sphere of the spoken as it is enveloped by the mimetic relations of visual imitation.⁵⁷ Alphabetic 'phonetic pictures' capture the spoken word and transform the 'invisible world' of sound into a peculiar unity of opposing, yet interacting, forces. Once the articulation of mythological relations between humans, gods, and nature, the spoken word enters a new environment with this development. The ability of the Greek alphabet to work in correspondence with the 'sound' of orality eventually serves to merge the spoken and written into a contradictory rapport of word forms. In this, the spoken word creates the visual images of the imagination; the written word sounds the spoken underneath the letters. The power of the alphabet to give form to the sound of the spoken builds the technological foundation for the political power of written form. At the heart of Socrates' concerns is this control of the oral, a control he seeks to resist dialogically.⁵⁸

Socrates sets about to demythologise the spoken word, to free it from the grip of epic tradition, and to transform it into a tool for active and conscious learning. He seeks

to unleash the oral from the authority of tradition by demonstrating the practical means of producing knowledge to be found in the oral experience. Graves notes that 'one of the most uncompromising rejections of early Greek mythology was made by Socrates'.⁵⁹ Indeed, the latter wishes to restructure the oral ways of knowing so as to break the hold of tradition, but do so in a way that does not lose the epistemological power of the spoken. As Ong notes, he develops an oral logic that encourages argumentation and critical articulation:

Socrates blasted apart mimesis [. . .] by substituting for imitation and repetition the asking of questions. [. . . In this] he represented the age in Greek culture when the effects of the alphabet on thought were finally being felt [. . .] and when the old oral world could no longer go on quite as before.⁶⁰

This new form of orality Socrates envisions is set against writing and the power of the poets in order to break the spell of oral tradition. Homer is seen to represent a mythological world steeped in superstition, and not a material world that can be probed and analysed. While Homer's epics describe battles, chariot races, and political systems, it is suggested that 'the true seeker after knowledge would do better to consult the experts rather than Homer' such as 'the general, the chariot driver and the politician'.⁶¹ Socrates wishes to use the spoken word to question and demand understanding rather than celebrate the epic bible.

While Homer's epics represent the oral inspiration of the Muse, the Socratic dialogue searches for a new rhythm of the spoken word free from the conventions and meters used to immortalise the mythical deeds of rulers.⁶² This new rhythm seeks to kindle the diversified sounds 'given to us by nature' through an active interchange and the connection of such sounds to the 'soul' of the learner. Further, it is to be a conscious dialectic involving questions and answers about human sociality, and the relationship

between becoming and world.⁶³ In this new spoken form, nothing is to be assumed and everything is to be spoken aloud so as to be orally dissected and experienced as 'heard'. The act of speech is to be an acquisition of knowledge in its own right, achieving its dialectical character in social interaction and living language.

Socrates wishes to involve the speaker in a conscious process of making words. He wants to create the actual material space where knowledge can be produced through face-to-face encounter. In this interactive space of dialogue, things are studied and investigated 'in their connexion with one another'.⁶⁴ In turn, the spoken word carries the social responsibility to question and seek answers. Socrates considers himself a great lover of processes: 'they help me to speak and to think', he says, 'and if I find any man who is able to see "a One and Many" in nature, him I follow, and walk in his footsteps as if he were a god. And those who have this art, I have hitherto been in the habit of calling dialecticians'.⁶⁵ For Socrates, dialectics is the poetics of materialising the one and the many, a consciousness of various and ambivalent forms 'in the environment of life and action'.⁶⁶

There is in Plato as well a revolt against tradition, a revolt that would seem to lie behind his puzzling rejection of the poets.⁶⁷ The epic tradition reflected the hierarchical relations of ancient Greece and reinforced the political control wielded by the leading families of Athens.⁶⁸ Undoubtedly, the poets had a role to play in this society in which the entire system of educational, political, and social controls was passed on by the spoken word. When the poets sang, their songs contained the whole tradition of Greek society.⁶⁹ Their recitations were the mythological renditions of deeds, rulings, and precedents necessary to reinforce and maintain ruling authority. The powerful in ancient Greece were 'all reciters and performers', and the oral notably served to define and

maintain this society until the latter half of the 5th century.⁷⁰ In these circumstances, the epics were the social institution of a complex tradition that ruled by allowing the past to speak while remaining closed to the voice of challenge in the present.⁷¹

Plato wishes to banish this mimetic spell from the *Republic*. He is not opposed to poetry in the modern sense, but rather to the ancient sense of poetics and its authoritarian tradition of oral institutionalisation. Havelock unravels this Platonic puzzle in translating the notion of mimesis from the modern artistic context to the social and political framework of an oral culture.⁷² The poetic authority Plato rejects holds a power, a power that Socrates and those like him threaten to unleash by way of discarding the constraints of the imitative environment of poetic 'tradition'. The survival of oral tradition depends not only upon the powerful, but also upon a popular participation that is of the people. Socrates recognises this sociality, as well as the mimetic hold of tradition, and wants to develop the former. Plato, however, does not. What he proposes is a new system of political control in which the condemnation of the poets serves to diminish both the traditional authority and the living word. In Plato's *Republic*, one 'form' of authority is to be replaced with another.⁷³

For his part, Socrates constantly forces dialogue away from text and into living discourse where sound in space is the real movement of speaking bodies in the act of social exchange.⁷⁴ He does this in an acoustic space of encounter that dislodges the singular meaning of textual space.⁷⁵ By way of contrast, Plato sees the act of speaking as an instrument for seeking truth, but not the arrival at the truth, and he finds both the spoken and written word to be inadequate as representations. Drawn as he is to living dialogue, he nonetheless concludes that such dialogue is occupied by the sound of poetic superstition and unreason. He much prefers the more abstract notion of truth as the

‘flooding of the mind by light’.⁷⁶ In such an instance, ‘light’ as a visual excess coterminous with speech becomes ‘truth’ beyond the ‘spell’ of sound. With such a conceptualisation, and as a matter of defeating poetic authority, Plato is set on overcoming the acoustic sense of space.

Plato’s strategy is first to repress the stories, then the music and rhythms of accompaniment, then the emotional intonations, and finally the poetics of oral performance altogether. He calls for the elimination of all stories, legends, myths, and narratives in poetry or prose, including all fictitious tales such as ‘the stories in Hesiod and Homer and the poets in general’.⁷⁷ Plato sees the acoustic excesses of the passions corrupting the essential purity of Truth in the knowledge of the soul. In particular, the ‘sound’ of stories must be dispensed with:

We must [. . .] get rid of all that terrifying language, the very sound of which is enough to make one shiver: ‘loathsome Styx’, ‘the River of Wailing’, ‘infernal spirits’, ‘anatomies’, and so on [. . .]. We are afraid that fever consequent upon such shivering fits may melt down the fine-tempered spirit of our Guardians. [. . .] we must banish [. . .] the wailing and lamentations of the famous heroes’.⁷⁸

Plato begins by attacking the poets as the primary ‘books’ that educate the young. He is particularly concerned with stories that represent the gods and heroes as something other than the personification of goodness. The poetic tradition that dramatises the outlandish behaviour of gods and warriors is seen to corrupt young minds with falsehoods. Such symbols of goodness are not to be depicted in any negative way, since this denies the essential immutability of inner bravery and wisdom of spirit they represent. To suggest that goodness can be touched by the external influence of evil falsely denies the natural state of goodness.⁷⁹ Fictitious accounts are simply dangerous illusions that implicitly negate the pure knowledge of the soul and the immutable

goodness of the gods. Stories of misdeeds, mischievous behaviours, or evil intentions 'may not be told about gods and demigods, heroes, and the world below'.⁸⁰

Plato seeks to censor dramatic recitation after finding a corrupting tendency in the sound of the recitation itself. As might be expected tales of evil deeds and licentious behaviour are to be banned, as are all stories of eating, drinking, and bodily pleasure that encourage a lack of self-control among the masses. However, laughter must also be denied, as it 'tends to provoke an equally violent reaction'. Indeed, the poets are not be allowed 'to describe men of worth being overcome by it; still less should Homer speak of the gods giving way to "unquenchable laughter"'.⁸¹

For Plato, access to Truth must be achieved by eliminating all distractions and outside excesses. It is to be seen that 'ignorance in the soul which entertains untruth is what really deserves to be called the true falsehood; for the spoken falsehood is only the embodiment or image of a previous condition of the soul, not pure unadulterated falsity'.⁸² Thus, the spoken words of the poets with their sounds of an outside excess are already a falsity that cannot represent the essence of the soul. The acoustic effects of poetic performance confuse the intellect as the many negate the one. Ultimately, when the poets 'speak' about such things as the immoral behaviours of the gods, they lie twice: the tales of immoral gods falsify their essential goodness, as gods are incapable of magic, illusion, or lies; in addition, speech itself is a falsity.⁸³

Plato also wishes to banish the poet's impersonation of more than one character in a story, as this is seen to detract from the goal of distinguishing people by a singular natural talent. In a related matter, he is especially concerned to condemn the mimetic practices of popular participation in oral performance, such as those that have the masses 'imitate horses neighing and bulls bellowing or the noise of rivers and sea and thunder'.⁸⁴

Acting like a horse or a person of low character is seen to undermine the right of the ruler to lead the masses, as well as encourage disorder among the vulgar who 'will impersonate any type and even give musical imitations of the cries of animals and inanimate noises'.⁸⁵ In effect, Plato identifies classes of people according to the sounds they 'perform'. Those of lower character who are attracted to excesses of animate and inanimate noises, and 'whose nature and upbringing are of a different sort of sound variation', will imitate any sound and rhythm no matter how base.⁸⁶ In contrast to this, men of breeding must use 'pure narrative' and speak only in the sounds of the like-minded and 'fine character'. Of particular importance, the Guardians of the Republic are not to be distracted from their leadership role by virtue of performing out of character.

In Plato's view, 'the content of the poetry and the manner in which it is expressed depend, in their turn, on moral character, [. . . on] a nature in which goodness of character has been well and truly established'.⁸⁷ Indeed, 'the absence of grace, rhythm, harmony is nearly allied to baseness of thought and expression and baseness of character; whereas their presence goes with that moral excellence and self-mastery of which they are the embodiment'.⁸⁸ In short, a true poetics is produced and 'performed' by those who possess an innate goodness of character. Plato thus seeks to educate the Guardians in a poetry of high moral spirit that allows 'rhythm and harmony sink deep into the recesses of the soul and take the strongest hold there, bringing that grace of body and mind which [. . .] makes a man quick to perceive any defect or ugliness in art or in nature'.⁸⁹

Plato suggests that cultivation of such high-minded character depends upon an ability to recognise the essential 'Forms of temperance, courage, liberality [. . .] and other kindred qualities'. It is important as well that such character be able to 'discern the

presence of these Forms themselves and also of their images in anything that contains them'. Indeed, for those who can see such things, 'there can be no fairer sight than the harmonious union of a noble character in the soul with an outward form answering thereto and bearing the same stamp of beauty'.⁹⁰ It is the Guardians who protect this spirit of 'inward conviction'.⁹¹ Therefore, they must have the inner strength to resist all 'bewitchment' and preserve that perfect rhythm and harmony of the soul.⁹² To this end the Guardians must be inculcated with modes that 'fittingly represent the tones and accents of a brave man in warrior-like action'.⁹³ In this role they become the 'auxiliaries' who enforce the decisions of the rulers.⁹⁴

For Plato, sound is inextricably a 'luxurious excess', a noise of the passions attacking the path to inner knowledge that must be purged from the commonwealth.⁹⁵ As dramatic recitation and the public participation in oral performance are seen to threaten order and authority, Plato reasons that the Republic must thus 'employ poets and story-tellers of the more austere and less attractive type, who will reproduce only the manner of a person of high character and in the substance of their discourse conform to those rules [. . .] laid down'.⁹⁶ The masses can be distracted by the powers of the poets to give pleasure. As well, the utopian goal of the 'higher truth' can be defeated by the passions unleashed in dramatic performance. The Republic must therefore seek to 'discover the rhythms appropriate to a life of courage and self-control' and to silence metres 'expressive of meanness, insolence, frenzy, and other such evils'.⁹⁷ In ridding poetics of such excess it is necessary to control musical tones and rhythms, and to condemn sounds that recall the passions – no 'dirges and laments', no sounds associated with 'drunkenness, effeminacy, and inactivity'.⁹⁸ Once free of the disease of the passions brought on by 'luxurious excesses' of sound, the rhythm of inner harmony can emerge.

While in the earlier books of the *Republic* Plato condemns character impersonations and the imitations of noises as distractions from the inner harmony of goodness and reason, he later condemns the entire acoustic practice of oral performance, setting the philosophers and poets in opposition to each other.⁹⁹ Whereas the philosopher is characterised as seeking to control emotional excess, the poet is characterised as placing passion and illusion over reasoned truth. For Plato, true knowledge is achievable only in the reasoned discernment of immutable Forms, and the philosopher knows the intelligible world of Forms; the poet knows only the sensory world of shifting appearances. This is the only knowledge the poet can possess because an acoustic means of learning is contaminated by such a world.

As Havelock suggests, 'Plato attacks the very form and substance of the poetised statement, its images, its rhythm, its choice of poetic language'.¹⁰⁰ Notably, the latter suggests that the poet's words lose their power when they are stripped of the acoustic magic of 'poetic colouring': 'It is like a face which was never really handsome, when it has lost the fresh bloom of youth'.¹⁰¹ In Plato's *Republic* the poet's time has passed:

So we shall be justified in not admitting him into a well-ordered commonwealth, because he stimulates and strengthens an element which threatens to undermine the reason. As a country may be given over into the power of its worst citizens while the better sort are ruined, so, we shall say, the dramatic poet sets up a vicious form of government in the individual soul [. . .] and he is an image-maker whose images are phantoms far removed from reality.¹⁰²

In the *Republic* the patterns of sound are to be purified so as to speak the interior language of Truth. To achieve this, Plato specifically targets the orality of the poetic performance, since the acoustic 'spell' of poetics must be undermined along with its institutionalisation. He characterises all oral performance as mimetic action appealing to the passions, passions which, like the senses, are subject to illusions'.¹⁰³ In poetic performance the path to Truth is blocked by a 'bewitchment' that 'occurs when a man is

beguiled out of his opinion by the allurements of pleasure or scared out of it under the spell of panic'.¹⁰⁴ Although he concedes that discourse is required to seek knowledge, Plato argues that Truth must exist on a higher plane, a plane that can only be 'represented' by the spatial image of a mind flooded with light. In effect, dialogue, or 'living speech', may be the means of getting to the light of Truth, but it is not one and the same as that light.¹⁰⁵ In the education of the young, therefore, the sound of poetic performance should be rejected as an institution of learning. Rather, in its stead there should be the 'pure narrative' of the high-minded character who encourages harmonious order and the discernment of Truth in interior 'images' of spiritual perfection.¹⁰⁶ Such a soul and such a narrative become the 'Image' of the 'Forms', 'their archetypes in the world of unseen reality'.¹⁰⁷

Still immersed in the sound of an oral culture, yet determined to undermine it, Plato cannot but point to the limitations of the world of 'appearances'. Generally speaking, 'sound' is the medium through which it is possible to access knowledge, but the political authority of oral performance dominates the public space of sound. Dialogue carries the Logos, but the space of dialogue is entranced by poetic spell. Oral tradition is a political institutionalisation of performance within public space, accessible to the many, but in reality controlled by a hegemonic poetic form. The issue thus becomes one of transforming the public space from one of acoustic authority to one of visual authority. In effect, delegitimise acoustic variation as a lowly imitation of higher Form and sound can be controlled; control sound and the grip of oral tradition is broken. With the political purpose of breaking the mimetic spell of oral tradition, Plato demands that the traditional languages of the poetic, the epic, and the dramatic be replaced by a

language of pure forms inside the light of reason as possessed by the exceptional thinker.¹⁰⁸

The abundance of spatial imagery in the *Republic* testifies to a visual conquest of acoustic space both undermining the authority of poetic tradition and concealing the social practice of sound.¹⁰⁹ The insertion of visual spatial metaphors into the dramatic act of speaking is the means by which Plato seeks to colonise dialogue and challenge the oral domination. He recognises the political significance in the ability of writing to conquer the space of the oral, although during his life the written text is far from achieving political authority. Often the written text remains only an accompaniment to oral performance and acquires its influence from the acoustic powers of a performing speaker. For writing to acquire its own authority, it must finally be freed from the space of oral performance.

In the midst of this, 'writing' offers Plato the means to craft the logic of dialogue into something that can silence speech while freeing reason. It creates the potential for an alternative sphere that is separable from both the 'poetic' spell and the spatio-temporal relations of living dialogue. Interestingly, Plato continues to condemn writing as superficial: 'No one who possesses the true faculty of thinking, and therefore knows the weakness of words, will ever risk framing thoughts in discourse, let alone fix them in so inflexible a form as that of written letters'.¹¹⁰ However, in managing to delegitimise the acoustic practice of an oral society by way of the representational authority of visual metaphor, Plato's mimesis becomes one of the earliest forms of modern ideology.

Space and Visualisation in Early Modernity

The transformation of the many into the one is a complex hegemonic process that relies upon a splitting of world, sound, and image into upper and lower domains.

Reflecting the difficulties of re-ordering the pagan world into a monotheistic hierarchy complete with strict division of the divine and human worlds, early Christianity embraces, yet condemns, both sound and image. As opposed to the polytheistic magic of a surplus of animate earthly inhabitants, and as the powers of sound and image are transposed into the divine realm to create a universal presence of the unseen and unheard, the one God represents a reduction of the copious sensory environment. This reconstruction of Nature, and taking of human beings out of nature, serves to privilege reason over passion and experience, allowing the ideological separation of language from its earthly space of production to underpin a monotheistic and monologic authority.¹¹¹ Theologically inscribed, 'sound' is thus able to become the eternal presence of God within language. The Word of God in this divine inner space stands against external space and becomes the record of Truth.

In the Middle Ages there thus develops an effort not only to capture sound, but also to deny the complex imagery of the pre-Christian world and privilege the one true god. In this process words could be captured in the Sacred Book, but the sound of the spoken escapes possession by the church.¹¹² In effect, 'sound' fails to 'let through' the singular meaning of the Scripture intended by God.¹¹³ Since the Word of God is easily corrupted by the earthly acoustics of the spoken, the spoken word remains suspect – as opposed to something like an authoritative message transmitted by simplified diagrams. Although the Church tries to appropriate 'sound' for the purposes of religious authority, it proves to be a less than reliable way to transmit the divine world into popular consciousness.¹¹⁴

The power of the image would also have to be rescued from a pagan world in which the idolatry of the untamed serves to articulate and celebrate the creative

relationship between body and world. The authority of God would come to rest on denying the earthly sound and images of the pagan world. An example of this is found in Moses and his outlawing of the 'image' as the making and worshipping of false idols.¹¹⁵ It is carried on in the Christian order of things when the world, its images, and its language are transformed into the 'Word' of God. The sign-producing world of graven image and pagan vernacular is denied while the pre-Christian sense of nature's animistic complexity is banished to the 'lowly' earthly realm underneath God's divine authority.

Attesting to the difficulty of appropriating and undermining paganism in the Christian conversion, however, is the notion that humans are created in the image of God. Ironically, in this the human body itself becomes a recurring form of the idolatry that Christianity would outlaw. The creative acts of the human body are a constant presence of the pagan world, a sort of negation of God inside His creation in which the human body and language question the authority of divine Image and Word. Pearsall and Salter note that because of these contradictions 'convenient, and if possible, interesting formulas were needed in order that man's close physical emotional involvement with nature could be given a religious context which would frame but not inhibit the need for expression too severely'.¹¹⁶

To accomplish this, earthly labours and language are translated into the parables and images of the Christian re-ordering of the world. The human world becomes the inferior part of the universe 'to distinguish it from the universe as God's seat; the environment which is everywhere and yet above the human world'.¹¹⁷ Also there emerges a tripartite ordering of the world with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost articulating a version of the ancient unity of heaven, earth, and soul. Within

this framework, Truth becomes belief in a divisible and omniscient being able to envelop the ambivalence of paganism within an over-arching framework.¹¹⁸

Christianity offers to resolve the contradiction between faith in one god and experience in a polyphonic material world.¹¹⁹ However, in order for reason to assume a place of ontological authority, the connection between humans and nature as the life force of pagan mythology must be severed. This is accomplished through the process of enshrining the power of image and word in the Book of Scripture and its portrayals of hierarchy. The myth of the Fall is the Christian version of the Platonic separation of culture and nature. In Plato the world is divided into earth, soul, and idea; in Christianity the boundaries become body, spirit, and God:

The creation-fall is the starting point of the whole complex of social acceptance, in which laws, rituals, customs, and the authority of warriors and priests and kings are all manifestations of the otherness of the spirit. [. . .] Everything man has that seems most profoundly himself is thought of as coming to him from the outside, descending from the most ancient days in time, coming down from the remotest heights in space. We belong to something before we are anything [. . .] stretching in an iron chain of command back to God.¹²⁰

The Fall is an early subversion of the mytho-physical world as well as a condemnation of unholy bodily passions. The story chronicles the replacement of an identification with world by an identification with God. Before the Fall 'the purpose of work was just for experience or experiment not for necessity. [. . .] The first acts of man in paradise consisted of the two summary parts of knowledge; the view of creatures and the imposition of names'.¹²¹ After the Fall the physical world becomes the place of human toil and suffering, and a continual struggle to regain the garden.¹²² By the words of God's curse, humans are punished for challenging the word of God and must win their sustenance from a cursed earth.¹²³

In the biblical narrative of the Tower of Babel, God punishes the builders of a tower into the heavens for violating the divine claim to creative power. In the process of constructing this iconic image to human ingenuity, the builders abuse the privilege of language. In this case, God's wrath takes the form of the 'babel' of a world inhabited by beings unable to speak the same language and, consequently, unable to finish the tower. In Eden humans are separated from nature; at Babel they are separated from the word.¹²⁴ After the two falls there is a change in the state of nature, society, and language. Life outside the garden appears as evidence of a now sinful external world in conflict with a re-ordered inner spiritual world struggling to re-enter the garden. Ultimately, the material world is displaced by an otherworldly promise of paradise in which the only way back to Eden is through God.¹²⁵ For its part, language becomes a struggle to silence the 'babel' of the world in order to hear the 'Presence of the Word'.

During the Middle Ages the 'book' becomes a metaphor for power as well as a means by which human attachment to pagan nature can be absorbed: 'The concept of the world or nature as a "book" originated in pulpit eloquence and was then adopted by medieval mystico-philosophical speculation'.¹²⁶ Within the divine world of God there are two scriptures, the 'book of revelation' and the 'book of nature'. With its authority still resting in the power of the oral, written text becomes oralised manuscript in which the text is seen to be the 'immediate voice of the author' and therefore 'authoritative in an oral way'.¹²⁷ The Middle Ages may thus be viewed as an intersection between oral and literate cultures in which an interchange between manuscript culture and orality temporarily maintains the authority of the oral. Diagrams and figures are inscribed with words to be read aloud to the illiterate, reflecting the widely held view that purely visual representations are inadequate depictions of world and idea.

Until the 16th century the powers of literacy are possessed by a caste educated in a foreign tongue. This furthers a division between learned and popular culture that relegates the oral to the margins of the vernacular. This erosion of orality leaves the newly emerging world unevenly divided between oral and literate modes of social exchange. With the invention of printing, however, the written word comes into its own. The Gutenberg technology serves to break apart the connection between oral authority and scribal manuscript, removing the vernacular from any role of power. The powers of the oral are left to the common people whose tidings, gossip, and minstrels' tales address the 'other' life on the outside of authority.¹²⁸ In contrast, and as the property of an elite, the printed word and its 'alien' tongue become a new form of authority.

Writing represents the acquisition of new skills and habits of mind. Importantly, it also represents the technological means of constructing a new world based on knowledge and validated through records extending back through centuries. Such records of the past serve to re-awaken the ancient philosophy and become a subtext for the emerging revolt against religious belief. In this development the Platonic sense of truth and beauty as visual essence of form is reasserted in the neo-classicism of the Renaissance. The Renaissance spirit breaks into the rigidities of a penitent medieval world to transgress the divine claim to knowledge. In turn, it seeks to transform the classical seat of reason into an image of light as the 'model by which God spread His grace to the world'.¹²⁹ This 'light of reason' suggests the possibility of human access to the divine realm denied by the hierarchical structure of the Medieval Church. It is the secular means for human beings to breach the domain of knowledge controlled by God.

This 'light of reason' also clears the way for an empowered Adam to possess the tools to conquer a new world.¹³⁰ Under its auspices the instruments of the eye are treated

as ancient prophecies come true. The optical inventions of the microscope and telescope are considered further verification of the notion that knowledge is to be found in extensions of the eye and in images of the world. These technologies are seen to validate that which the classical philosophers could only speculate about. The properties of visualisation become 'the forms invisible entities [. . .] assume to make themselves understood to the limited human mind', allowing access to a world beyond the reach of the senses.¹³¹ In the manner of the spoken word in classical oral culture, the visual image comes to achieve sufficient power to make present the absence of things and reassert an historical tension between mystery and intellect.

During the Renaissance mystery and wonder move from the acoustic sphere into the visual image as vessel of epistemological and ontological complexity.¹³² Nature becomes the place to observe the intricacy of God's work, technology the means to supersede nature through science. Technology, as the art (*techne*) of human invention, opens the way for human art to supersede the artistry of nature. The concept of art as an imperfect imitation of nature is reconstructed into the notion of 'artifice', the means by which human invention can probe creation itself. God remains the creator, but it is reason that allows access to divine power and knowledge. Consequently, the oral path to knowledge is abandoned for the sake of clarity of image and substantial proof, that is, a record of knowledge in the written word.¹³³

Newton's theory of 'Opticks' becomes the scientific validation for the philosophy of light. Science represents a change from the classical quest for truth to the 'how' of the empirical world. 'Imagination as grace' is replaced by 'imagination as scientific tool'. However, light continues to metaphorically represent the intersection of inner reason and the world of scientific rationality. In responding to the scientific magic of visual

illumination, the 18th century 'poetics of light' plays a role similar to that of oral tradition in Ancient Greece. Newton's redefinition of the natural world demands versification of that knowledge, a translation of the physics of the external world into a poetic language of epic proportions.¹³⁴

The poets of the 18th century set about describing and analysing the physical properties of optics, and seeking patterns for a new poetics of light. The telescope and the microscope spark the poetic imagination to explore the largeness and smallness (the giants and fairies) of the world. Newton's optics also inspires the emergence of scientific poets who assume the role of translating the physics of nature into the technology of poetics. Much like the poets of oral tradition who study the properties of sound, rhythm, and memory, these modern scientific poets seek the secrets of the visual to empower their words.¹³⁵ To poeticise the optical universe the order of words moves inside that space by virtue of observing its mechanics, translating its complexities into images, and reducing its acoustic rhythms to objective patterns. These properties of light mark the dominant metaphorical tradition of the modern world.

The impact of science on the world of the spoken word is well documented by Nicolson in *Newton Demands the Muse*. She traces how Newton's discoveries with regard to the physics of light filter into the poetic consciousness of the time. In effect, the ordered world of science would demand recognition from the world of poetics in the form of translations of science into words of the 'imaginable'. Subsequently, light metaphors become a means of heralding a new hierarchical ordering of the senses. While the acoustic domain of the spoken word remains identified with past mysteries and unscientific passions, optics and mechanics comes to legitimate the visual domain of the written word. In these transformations of spatiality there is a corresponding shift from an

external to an internal perspective with humanity being located outside or above the 'world'.¹³⁶ The visual environment has the effect of forcing the oral out of the acoustic realm. In the poetry of the period sound becomes displaced from sense to symbol, place to image.¹³⁷

In the Age of Newton light colours the world into 'objects of the eye'. The order of the modern world is thus reflected in this re-ordering of poetic sensibilities on the visual plane. In this development the relations of the 'high' come to correspond with words of the sublime (light, reason, science, industry); the relations of the 'low' come to correspond with words of the earth (colour, voice, emotion, work). Ultimately, the visual relationship with the world is asserted as the source of reason and imagination. In these new circumstances knowledge acquired by the orders and objects of the eye supersedes the knowledge acquired through sound and speech. Speech may be able to interact with the visual, but only the image represents the empirical evidence of truth as physical fact.

These worlds of 'light' become ways to value the power of words, and 'sound images' become epic forms of the eye:

He with laborious, and unerring care,
 How diff'rent and imbodyed colours form
 Thy piercing light, with just distinction found.
 He with quick sight pursu'd thy darting rays,
 When penetrating to th' obscure recess
 Of solid matter, there perspicuous saw,
 How in the texture of each body lay
 The power that separates the diff'rent beams,
 Hence over nature's unadorned face
 Thy bright diversifying rays dilate
 Their various hues (Glover, 'A Poem on Newton').¹³⁸

In this fairly typical model of the scientific versifier is a new poetic credo. Without the science of light and colours nature remains unadorned, 'a dull affair, soundless, scentless, colourless', and undissected.¹³⁹ Out of sight, it is beyond the

knowable, perhaps not worth knowing. Only the poetics of the visible are considered able to capture nature's truths, and such poetry is full of the inspiration of nature and tributes to Newton's sun. In works so inspired, rainbows are illuminated by the physics of light and eye, and the colours of the rainbow are refracted on water, wings of insects, peacock's tails, spider's webs and bubbles in the morning dew.¹⁴⁰ Refracted into colours, light reveals nature to the human eye as beautiful and controllable. Indeed, Newton reveals to humanity the properties of what had been God's light; colour gives humanity a place of power on earth.¹⁴¹

All manner of things come to be filtered through the premises of light. In particular, the fascination with Newton leads to a general curiosity about the workings of the senses, albeit measured against the new standards of the visual. The senses are no longer considered to be invisible powers, but rather the organs of reason and tools of science. As a result, the eyes of human and animal alike are dissected to determine their inner workings. Being the new ground for knowledge in the modern world, the authority of optics eventually underpins many of the inventions of the day. There is, for example, the 'colour-organ', an instrument that attempts to prove that the deaf can 'see the music of the ears', the blind can 'hear the music of the eyes', and normal men 'who have both eyes and ears will enjoy music and colours better by enjoying both at the same time'.¹⁴²

The science of physiognomy emerges as an outgrowth of the secrets revealed through the powers of visual observation. Based on the theory that the facial features of all living things reflect inner character, physiognomy seeks to provide an explanation for all manner of phenomena. For example, proof of the elephant's fabled memory is believed to be recorded in the animal's broad forehead. In more serious instances it is maintained that the faces of murderers reveal their criminal character. In turn, and as the

physical features of the body come to reveal the inner truth of things, sounds emanating from the inner body are also studied for the 'scientific' messages and important revelations they carry. A case of this is found in the chapbook entitled 'The Everlasting Circle of Fate, or expounder of Things that are to be; being a New and Original Mode of Telling Fortunes'. Still in circulation around Edinburgh as late as 1840, this little book of physiognomy, fortune-telling, and strange facts includes a discourse on the sound of the voice as a means of determining character:

A great and full voice in either sex shows them to be of a great spirit. A faint and weak voice shows a person of a good understanding [. . .]. A loud, shrill, and unpleasant voice, signifies one bold and valiant, but quarrelsome. A rough and hoarse voice, declares one to be of a dull and heavy person [. . .]. A voice beginning low, or in the bass, and ending high in the treble, denotes a person to be violent.¹⁴³

Conflicting theories abound.¹⁴⁴ As science attempts to probe the visible in nature, such as the inner workings of the body, the invisibility of sound suggests an alternative world to empirical science. An ongoing search for the roots of language becomes grounded in the perceived need for a means to address the sensual and emotional. Some look to the 'sounds of the human body' as the root of language. Spoken words are seen to be copies of sounds such as groaning or weeping, the result of some disruption in the passions similar to thunder cracking the skies of nature's passions. For some, language is believed to emanate from the accidental or rude sounds of the body.¹⁴⁵ For others, different body shapes are seen to produce different sizes and forms of words; a thin man's words are long and skinny, a fat man's wide and fleshy.

The invisibility of human emotions is considered akin to the emotions of nature: the closer to nature, the more truly passionate and poetic. Bodies are observed and dissected in a quest for an empirical basis to the mysteries of the imagination. Theories emerge about bodily processes frustratingly invisible to the eye and 'the finest glasses'

available to science. Dr. Thomas Willis puts forward an influential idea he calls 'the channel theory of the nervous system', suggesting that a 'circle' of arteries running through the body is responsible for the passions: 'He considered that the brain produced a substance known as "animal spirits", the source of both imagination and memory'.¹⁴⁶

Further theories eventually lead to a fascination with 'primitivism'. The idea that climate awakens animal passions leads to contrasts 'between primitive poetry, as emotional and sentimental stirrings, and the modern literature of the word as rationalist and refined'.¹⁴⁷ Others conjecture that words of fantasy, magic, and legend are alien visitors from another place, since 'the Western climate gives birth only to "cold and barren conceptions"'.¹⁴⁸ Having been attached to the world of invisible animal spirits, true poetry is associated with the primitiveness of the simple life and the rude, even barbarous, manners residing in the uncontrolled forces of nature. As poetry is considered an alternative view of the world, a view that unleashes those uncontrollable passions conditioned by the erratic climatic passions of nature, there is an idealisation of primitive emotionalism. Ultimately, the place of the imagination becomes a territory of the 'raw folk', a domain of the low where the passions rule and only those who live with nature's passions are able to produce the truly poetic.

The fascination with things visible also produces a corresponding curiosity about the absence of light in the sound world of the blind.¹⁴⁹ Blind poets are believed to hold secrets locked inside an absolute darkness.¹⁵⁰ They are felt to possess subtle powers of sound that can versify a 'sensible difference between softness and sweetness'.¹⁵¹ Spence is known to have patronised 'indigent native geniuses' such as the blind poet, Thomas Blacklock. In his compendium of the times, Spence notes, 'To Mr. Blacklock, the *sweetness* of verses seemed to depend upon a proper management of the pauses,

softness on a proper intermixture of vowels and consonants'.¹⁵² Interest in the blind, however, is not so much about discovering the materials of the acoustic world, but rather about the means of transforming sound into the language of light. The ultimate test of the power of light is to discover its properties in the pure darkness of acoustics. Accordingly, experiments are conducted in an attempt to reconstruct the sense of light in the sound experience of the blind:

A studious blind man, who had mightily beat his head about visible objects, and made use of the explication of his books and friends, to understand those names of light and colours which often came in his way, bragged one day, that now he understood what scarlet had signified. Upon which his friend demanding what scarlet was? The blind man answered, it was like the sound of a trumpet¹⁵³

In this period it becomes a common pastime to test the scope and reliability of scientific explanation. There are bogus paintings and fossils, discoveries of long lost Shakespearean plays, and financial scams that cause ruin for many a gullible investor. Those things seemingly beyond the world of scientific observation serve to validate the inadequacies of empirical knowledge, as well as spawn a booming market for fraud. One such bit of trickery that circulated in the chapbooks involves the 'Learned Spaniel' whose knowledge and ability to speak is said to have stumped even the most learned of the age.¹⁵⁴ The Spaniel, it seems, 'maintained philosophical theses in English, French and Latin':

It may readily be conceived that the animal did not speak these languages; but he seemed, at least, to understand them. He always replied by designs, either shaking his head to express yes or no; or pawing with his foot to indicate numbers or letters, which, when joined together, formed the required answer.¹⁵⁵

On one occasion the dog competed against some of the finest minds of York and surrounding area. A lawyer 'disputed a long time against the spaniel'; others came up

with complex mathematical problems to confound the canine mind, but to no avail.¹⁵⁶ A sailor, the story is told, became particularly frustrated by the dog's know-it-all attitude:

‘If you are desirous of shewing your erudition’, replied the sailor, ‘do not, I beg of you, utter so many absurdities’. The master of the spaniel then addressing the animal, said, ‘Tell us, my friend, is it not true that a fire can be kindled with a piece of ice, if it be cut into the form of a lens [. . .]. ‘The animal, which was blindfolded, nodded with his head, to say yes; as if he had fully comprehended the question proposed to him’.¹⁵⁷

The Learned Spaniel (there are also learned pigs, learned marmosets, etc.) becomes a microcosm of the sites of contestation during this period.¹⁵⁸ The dog is a ‘lowly’ animal who can speak, although it is humans who have long ago been nominated the ‘talking animals’. In fact, the dog demonstrates an ability to answer the toughest challenges to its knowledge and reasoning powers. The animal’s speech is observably ‘of reason’ and not ‘of the passions’. If seeing is believing the dog is very learned indeed.¹⁵⁹

Ultimately, it is the science of trickery that is the true explanation of the dog’s intellectual prowess. Behind the learned faculties of the animal, and out of view, is a system of levers that when pulled directs the dog to indicate ‘yes’ or ‘no’. The dog’s adherence to this system guarantees a reward. Yet, its apparent ability to ‘speak’ challenges the exclusivity of the human domain and the artificial separation between human and animal worlds. The Learned Spaniel indicates an increasingly more domesticated construct of world that reduces sociality and relationships to the ‘hierarchy of man and language’.¹⁶⁰ Here the world of unreason becomes a means of encountering and making sense out of a transitional moment. These curiosities are efforts to come to terms with the crises of representation characterising historical transitions.

Stallybrass and White suggest that as human-animal the Learned Spaniel plays with ‘the thresholds of culture’, the points of entry and departure between nature and

culture.¹⁶¹ In their view, the pre-rational is not the exclusive territory of the passions or a primitive past. As wild territories of contact are colonised and tamed by the human domain they are brought inside the world of science, industry, and production during a time of contradiction within that world itself:

[These hybrids] amusingly transgress as well as reaffirm the boundaries between high and low, human and animal, domestic and savage, polite and vulgar. We might say that these token transgressions model the double process of colonialism. The Other must be transformed into the Same, the savage must be civilized (like the wild creature who smokes a pipe 'as well as any Christian').¹⁶²

The portrayal of animals as transgressors serves to highlight the human conquest of nature. Located on the border between nature and culture the speaking animal is a domestication of the animal and a transgression of the human.¹⁶³ The animal is the (savage) marginalised body attempting to speak in a world that silences the extra-human. Arguably, sound is a part of the grotesque body that escapes fixed form and is therefore outside the high and low of body image. The subversive potential of sound is subsequently indicated in the tension that arises as the animal encroaches on the human domain.

Notes to Chapter Four

¹ McLuhan, 'The Effect of the Printed Book on Language in the 16th Century', in *Explorations in Communications*, ed. by Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan (Boston: Beacon, 1960), p. 132.

² See Ullamajja Kivikuru, 'Communication in Tanzania: The Case of Tanzanian Villages' (unpublished paper, IAMCR XVI Conference, Barcelona, Spain, 1988).

³ The story history 'tells' depends on who is doing the recording and for what purpose. Bird and Dardenne note 'that while some voices are recorded, others are ignored or appropriated and distorted' ('Myth and Chronicle: Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News', in *Media, Myths and Narratives*, ed. by James W. Carey Beverly Hills, California: Sage, 1988, p. 83). The oral record also reflects these fissures of the historically 'significant'.

⁴ Cohen, 'The Undefining of Oral Tradition', *Ethnohistory*, 36:1 (1989), p. 11. Benjamin has pointed out that the telling of 'stories' has long encompassed the story of struggle. Chroniclers of the Middle Ages are the precursors of historians today who base their tales on 'a divine plan of salvation' linked to watershed events along the path to that salvation. Their words are words of authority and the sacred. In the tales of the storyteller the chronicler is preserved in changed secularised form; the words are the words of the profane. Social richness is 'revealed through the layers of a variety of retellings' (Benjamin, 'The Storyteller', *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt and trans. by Harry Zohn, London: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968, p. 93).

⁵ Like Benjamin's intriguer or fool, the trickster is a 'representative of the setting' -- the masks of the world (*The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 97).

⁶ Havelock notes that audiences would murmur along with oral performance: 'Today, concert audiences like to demonstrate sophistication by immobilising themselves as the sound of the music reaches their ears. No such intellectual isolation was ever possible for members of oral culture' (*Communication Arts, (Communication Arts in the Ancient World*, ed. by Havelock and Jackson P. Hershbell, New York: Hastings House, 1978, p. 11). Oral participation is a 'rite' of living in the realm of the spoken word, as well as the right to answerability, a demonstrable stake in the territory of communication. It validates the materiality of the body in the material of world. The bodies of the listeners would move to the rhythm of the words, spoken as an act of collective experience in the shared practice of acoustic space.

⁷ Terence Hawkes, *Shakespeare's Talking Animals*, p. 46.

⁸ Jesus Martin-Barbero, *Communication, Culture and Hegemony* (London: Sage, 1993), pp. 67-68.

⁹ Sam Gill, *Beyond the Primitive: The Religions of Non-Literate People* (Englewood Cliffs, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1982), p. 9.

¹⁰ The presence of the Goddess is strongly articulated in ancient mythology throughout the world. It is now recognised that there was not one cradle of civilisation dating back 3500 years but many cradles of civilisation thousands of years older. Archaeological excavations have found evidence in these civilisations that 'women held important social positions as priestesses, craftspeople, and elders of matrilineal clans' (Eisler, 'The Gaia Tradition and the Partnership Future: An Ecofeminist Manifesto', *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism*, ed. by Irene Diamond and Gloria Feman Orenstein, San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990, p. 25). In these first agrarian societies 'God was a Woman' (M. Stone, *When God was A Woman*, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976).

¹¹ Sam Gill, *Beyond the Primitive*, p. 15.

¹² *Beyond the Primitive*, p. 62.

¹³ *Beyond the Primitive*, p. 19.

¹⁴ The term 'oral tradition' has tended to refer to versifying collective memory into 'oral texts' which recall the past through ritualised recitation. Such traditions are orally composed and performed inside oral cultures that had not experienced contact with writing or other codified word-forms. This definition denies history by creating an impassable gulf between oral cultures and the surviving forms of orality in modern societies. On the other hand if oral tradition is defined as part of a larger trans-historical oral continuum, it becomes not a fixed word-form of the past, but a complex practice that embodies a historical power struggle over the realm of the spoken.

¹⁵ See Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (1963) and *The Ancient Art of Communication* (1978).

¹⁶ Havelock, *Communication Arts in the Ancient World*, p. 42.

¹⁷ Oral powers and the magical context of sound become tools of privilege and status. For instance, the most important symbols of early kingship in the lake states of East Africa were the royal drums. The beat of the drums allowed the ruler to communicate with his ancestors. The larger the drum, the stronger the sound power, and the more powerful the ruler.

¹⁸ Innis, *Empire and Communications*, pp. 60-1.

¹⁹ Eric Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, p. 13.

²⁰ Havelock, *Communication Arts*, p. 16.

²¹ *Communication Arts*, p. 49.

²² *Communication Arts*, p. 49.

²³ In Africa tribal rulers used orators as vehicles for reinforcing territorial power and continuing the family claim to the throne. Poets were an oral front guard who spread the word of the ruler's power and wealth. Oral traditions became more of a litany of conquest, a chronicle of the 'royal' right to tribal chieftdom than a collective social product (Bird and Dardenne, 'Myth, Chronicle and Story', pp. 72-82). Studies of contemporary African orality also demonstrate the existence of two contradictory streams of oral tradition. One stream is the formalistic reconstruction of the past inside oral texts and based upon 'those whose authority and position rest upon the creation, manipulation and projection of heroic tradition'. These oral texts are fixed chronicles of 'the heroic and collective history resident in royal tradition'. The other stream of oral tradition based upon the unrecorded stories of 'those almost historyless whose common lives are lived' in the absence of official oral record (Cohen, 'The Undefined of Oral Tradition', p. 10).

²⁴ Havelock, *Communication Arts*, p. 4.

²⁵ The acoustic realm is also the territory of historical tensions in orality. In *Communication Arts in the Ancient World*, Havelock seems to sense what could be called the dialectic of orality. He characterises oral tradition as a journey or 'hodos' where the spoken word 'symbolises both the route and the taking of the route' (p. 16). Here is a dialectical, yet contradictory, unity of subject and object -- opposing forces in the experiential world of sound. The kind of word used in the 'taking of the route' occurs in the aural sphere. It is a social process 'of overlapping structures that serve communication and take their meaning from the act of being spoken and heard' (*Communication Arts*, p. 42).

²⁶ *Communication Arts*, pp. 49-50.

²⁷ Interestingly, in the ancient Greek oral imagination, the word as breath and life draws itself from an oral sense of space, 'a spherical universe called "the heaven", a living creature, whose breath is drawn in from the boundless air enveloping it outside' (See Cornford, 'The Invention of Space', p. 223, in McLuhan,

Laws of Media, p. 34). Space is seen as a living process that physically interacts with the spoken, breathing space in and out of the body through the element of sound.

²⁸ Unless otherwise indicated all references to Hesiod's poetics are taken from *Hesiod*, translated by Richard Lattimore (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959). Hesiod fashions from those works and days rules of life that are the stuff of regeneration: 'Plough, too, in springtime; if you turn the earth / In summer, too, you won't regret the work. / Sow fallow soil while it is still quite light, / Remember, fallow land defends us all, And lulls our children with security (*Works and Days*, 460-468). There is scholarly debate about whether both *Theogony* and *Works and Days* are composed by Hesiod. Majority opinion is against the 'unity' theory. Lattimore argues for the unity of authorship ascribing *Theogony* to the work of Hesiod as a younger man and *Works and Days* as that of the later Hesiod who had become a more accomplished poet (*Hesiod*, pp. 1-13). Lattimore makes an important point that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are 'stories of the heroic age, some four centuries at least after the events themselves'. They are products 'of a long period of growth and crystalization of saga and metrical expressions alike, which involved generations of storytelling poets, now nameless and lost, between the events themselves and the completion of the two great Homeric poems' (*Hesiod*, pp. 1-2).

²⁹ *Hesiod: Works and Days*, trans. by D. Wender (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1973) p. 11.

³⁰ Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write and Preface to Plato*. See also, Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy and The Iliad of Homer*, trans. by Alexander Pope (London: Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1929)

³¹ In Homer, the power of the spoken-word is a tool of authority, and the poet's place is at the ruler's side: 'Slow they proceed: the sage Ulysses then / Arose, and with him rose the king of men. / On either side a sacred herald stands, / The wine they mix, and on each monarch's hands / Pour the full urn' (*The Iliad of Homer*, III, 318-365.) Indeed, the poet is able to advance the ruler's cause and warn his subjects of their place, as happens in a speech Ulysses makes to his troops: 'Jove loves our chief, from Jove his honour springs, / Beware! for dreadful is the wrath of kings'. / But if a clamorous vile plebeian rose, / Him with reproof he check'd or tamed with blows / 'Be still, thou slave, and to they betters yield; / Unknown alike in council and in field!' (*The Iliad of Homer*, II, 214-262.)

³² Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, p. 99.

³³ Pope, 'Introduction', *The Iliad of Homer*, xxxiv. All references to Homer's *Iliad* are taken from the Pope translation unless otherwise indicated.

³⁴ 'Introduction', *The Iliad of Homer*, xxxv.

³⁵ 'Introduction', *The Iliad of Homer*, Xliiii. However, as Havelock argues, Homer's works must be viewed as more than 'courtly poetry' moulded to suit 'the specific customs and mannerisms and pleasures of a restricted elite' (See Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, p. 119). It would also be difficult to explain Homer's hold upon the polis population of ancient Greece. Havelock notes that 'the fact that the Homeric was not the vernacular tongue only heightened its power of control' (*Preface*, p. 142).

³⁶ Hesiod in *Hesiod* (Lattimore), p. 11.

³⁷ Havelock points out that 'Plato's account remains the first and indeed the only Greek attempt to articulate consciously and with clarity the central fact of poetry's control over Greek culture'. However, he says, Plato was anticipated by Hesiod 'who was the first to attempt a statement of how the minstrel viewed himself and what his profession meant' (*Preface to Plato*, p. 97).

³⁸ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, pp. 97-111. Lattimore, *Hesiod*, pp. 1-15.

³⁹ *Preface*, p. 100.

⁴⁰ *Preface*, p. 104.

⁴¹ Helicon is the 'little Olympus' of the Muses, 'a remote habitation on a mountaintop whence they 'fare forth through the night' (Havelock, *Preface*, p. 103). It is from this place that Hesiod must carry out his poetic role to explain 'world history and the present civilised order' (*Preface*, p. 104).

⁴² *Works and Days*, 445-455.

⁴³ This world of exchange and struggle produces growth and understanding. However, produced jointly by humans, gods, and nature, it is not a perfect place. 'Night gives birth to "much pain" for mortals, to Nemesis, Deception, and Affection', and finally to 'malignant Old Age and overbearing Discord' (*Theogony*, 225-235) Indeed, this world is full of strange and dark creatures: 'Hateful discord in turn / born painful Hardship, / [. . .] the Grievances, the lying stories, / the Disputations, / and Lawlessness and Ruin, who share / one another's nature, and Oath, who does more damage than any other / to earthy men, when anyone, of his knowledge, / swears to a false oath' (*Theogony*, 220-225).

⁴⁴ The European-based poetic lore of the western world has deep roots in a 'magical language bound up with religious ceremonies in honour of the Moon-goddess of Muse' dating back to the Stone Age. According to Robert Graves this 'white goddess' has been the original inspirational voice behind the language of true poetry throughout the ages (Graves, *The White Goddess*, p. 11). Celebrations around this goddess celebrated the spoken word as the magic of the body voiced in the world body of nature.

⁴⁵ *Theogony*, 25-35.

⁴⁶ *Works and Days*, 594-624.

⁴⁷ *Works and Days*, 122-126.

⁴⁸ James Davies, *The Works of Hesiod, Callimachus, and Theognis*, trans. by The Rev. J. Banks and Elton, Tytler, and Frere, with James Davies, (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1856), p.17. Lattimore qualifies Hesiod's class affiliation somewhat by noting that he is not of 'poorest class', and that although Hesiod did manual work himself, he also had 'others working for him' (4-5).

⁴⁹ *Works and Days*, 1-27.

⁵⁰ *Preface*, p. 105.

⁵¹ Lattimore, *Hesiod*, p. 12.

⁵² Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 33. Bakhtin recognises in the novel a link to what he calls 'a living contact with the unfinished, still evolving contemporary reality (the open-ended present)'. This 'zone of contact with the present in all its 'openendedness' is anticipated in Hesiod's early efforts to articulate the sounds of the everyday and the 'extraliterary' (*Dialogic Imagination*, p. 7). The sounds of the everyday (even though they are used to rationalise the poetic order of classical Greece) suggest a renewal akin to the renewal of the seasons, 'forever contemporary' and forever challenging the immutability of tradition (*Dialogic Imagination*, p. 36).

⁵³ Havelock, *The Muse Learns to Write*, p. 21.

⁵⁴ Perhaps Socrates is Plato's alter ego; Socrates plays the oral to the prose of Plato.

⁵⁵ Excerpts from Cratylus are taken from *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. by B. Jowett, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953, III, pp. 1-106). In *Cratylus*, one detects the contradictions of orality in the efforts of Socrates to distinguish between higher and lower orders of speech, and the slipperiness of names which can never capture that to which they refer. Socrates compares speech to Pan, 'the double-formed son of Hermes' (408b). Like Pan, Socrates says, speech is the trickster who 'signifies all things, and is always turning them round and round, and has two forms, true and false [. . .]. Is not the truth that is in him the

smooth or sacred form which dwells above among the Gods, whereas falsehood dwells among men below [. . .]. Then surely Pan, who is the declarer of all things and the perpetual mover of all things, is rightly called (goatherd), he being the two-formed son of Hermes, smooth in his upper part, and rough and goatlike in his lower regions' (408c-d). Here Socrates suggests a correspondence between the higher and lower parts of the body, and the higher and lower articulations of orality; the higher voice of authority that dwells among the gods (truth), and the lower voices of the earth (falsehoods), the one transgressed by the many.

⁵⁶ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), p. 22.

⁵⁷ Unless otherwise indicated, all references to *Phaedrus* are taken from *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. by B. Jowett, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), III, pp.107-189. On one level, *Phaedrus* is a debate about the wild and the tame in oral speech *and* written word. This is especially the case since during the time of Socrates and Plato writing is still used in association with oral performance and recitation. In *Phaedrus*, one finds the contradictions of reason (the rule logos in the oral and the written) and unreason (the misrule of excess, wild language and the desire for pleasure) are played out in an oral argument. The dialogue between *Phaedrus* and Socrates is suspended between the misrule of 'dithyrambics' (passion) and the high-sounding rule of noble 'heroics', and written speech, intonationally tamed and recited out of a book (238d, 241e). Socrates contrasts excess and order inside orality itself and also in the 'two discourses; I mean, in my own and in that which you recited out of the book' (243c) as a rivalry between madness and sanity: 'the sane man disappears and is nowhere when he enters into rivalry with the madman' that is 'the madness of those who are possessed by the Muses' (245a-b). It is Socrates' inspired madness that uses the dithyrambics of dialogue to unseat the authority of heroic language and to suggest an oral 'other' outside epic formulations. *Phaedrus* compares the written speech of Lysias to the wildness of Socrates' orality, saying that Lysias, the 'speech-writer' will 'appear tame in comparison' (257c). Clearly, the recitations of the 'speech-writer' pale in comparison to the untamed dialogue of Socrates. The difference lies in the power of sound (in everyday interaction), in the intonational variations of Socrates against the 'tamed' acoustics of a written speech and the high-language of epic authority. Socrates finds proof of the politics of written speech in the way in which the politician begins the recitation by listing the names of his 'approvers'. The acceptance of the speech writing places the author in a position of power, 'of attaining an immortality of authorship' which 'while he is yet alive' makes him 'an equal of the gods' (258c). If the author is disgraced it is not 'in the mere fact of writing', but rather 'begins when a man speaks or writes not well, but badly' (258d). Given that both speaking and writing are at this time oral, the power (the immortality of authorship) lies in the sound. Yet, it is precisely this 'authority' that Socrates wishes to transgress through the inspired madness of oral dialogue. Here, one can see a contradiction in the oral sphere where the spoken is both the authority of high-language and the excess or misrule of the vernacular. Orality is Pan, the declarer of all things and the perpetual mover of all things (*Cratylus* 408d). Against epic tradition and in face of the emerging authority of written speech, Socrates poses 'a certain kind of fallen orality'. In *Phaedrus*, writing is beyond oral or written form, that is, beyond speech or mark. It is a metaphor for truth. As discussed later, Derrida finds in *Phaedrus*, that 'a certain fallen written continues to be opposed to it' (*Of Grammatology*, p. 15). Fallen writing and fallen orality share the world of otherness that Socrates is trying to reach and articulate. For Plato, the evil of writing (*Phaedrus*, 275a) and the poetic tradition come from without. Fallen speech and fallen writing are corruptions of truth, 'an archetypal violence: eruption of the outside within the inside, breaching into the interiority of the soul' (Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, p. 34).

⁵⁸ Unless otherwise noted all references to Plato's *Republic* are taken from *The Republic of Plato*, trans. and intro. by Francis MacDonald Cornford (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1962). *Cratylus* also offers insights into the oral world and the production of acoustic space through the Socratic challenge to proper names. The ambivalence of the spoken materialises in the contradictory space of names. For Socrates, the name is and is not that to which it refers: 'The world is always in the process of creation', always dislodging fixity, always in flux: 'you cannot go into the same water twice' (*Cratylus* 402a). Wisdom becomes the 'perception of motion and flux', the search for the new (411e) in the 'place of a double' (411e) where things are 'akin to each other' and can be questioned through relation and difference (438c), 'in their connexion with one another' (439b). Socrates questions the arrival at the one truth in the space of dialogue or interlocution among the many: 'if there very nature of knowing is liable to change, then it will be transformed into something other than knowing, and knowing will thereby cease to exist; and if the transition is always

going on, there will always be no knowing, and, according to this view, there will be no one to know and nothing to be known' (440b).

⁵⁹ Robert Graves, *The White Goddess*, p. 10.

⁶⁰ Walter Ong, *Interfaces of the Word*, p. 279.

⁶¹ O.B. Hardison Jr. 'Commentary', in *Aristotle's Poetics*, trans. by Leon Golden and comm. by O.B. Hardison, (Jr., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968), p. 66.

⁶² Horace, *Ars Poetica* 73-98. All references to *Ars Poetica* are taken from *Horace: Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, trans. by H. Rushton Fairclough (London: William Heinemann Ltd., Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1955). In Horace's framework 'Homer has shown in what measure the exploits of kings and captains and the sorrows of war may be written'. The Muse inspires Homer to tell 'tales of gods' and 'of the victor in boxing'. Homer's poetic gift is to recognise these 'shades of poetic forms' (73-98). Socrates, however, is the ambivalent fool who uses 'direct spoken dialogue framed by a dialogized story' to interanimate popular spoken language and the acoustic space of world into an oral poetics that challenged epic form and stature. In the Socratic space, we find 'living people who occupy it together with their opinions. From this vantage point, from this contemporary reality with its diversity of speech and voice, there comes about a new orientation in the world and in time (including the 'absolute past' of tradition) through personal experience and investigation'. Socrates builds his language out of degrading epic form. Bakhtin notes that Socrates constructs an 'entire system of metaphors and comparisons borrowed from the lower spheres of life -- from tradespeople, from everyday life, etc'. (*Dialogic Imagination*, p. 25).

⁶³ In *Phaedrus*, Socrates clearly argues against the authority of the word in written, poetic, or prosaic form: 'the spoken ones are no better if, like the recitations of rhapsodies, they are delivered for the sake of persuasion, and not with any view to criticism or instruction' (277e). He argues instead for a 'wild' dialectics, an inspired madness that resists the one in the many (266b): 'But nobler far is the serious pursuit of the dialectician, who, finding a congenial soul, by the help of science sows and plants therein words which are able to defend themselves and him who planted them, and are not unfruitful, but have in them a seed which others brought up in different soils render immortal, making the possessors of it happy to the utmost extent of human happiness' (277a). Here is the oral world in the process of its making.

⁶⁴ Plato, *Cratylus* 439b

⁶⁵ *Phaedrus*, 266b.

⁶⁶ *Phaedrus*, 266b, 270a, 271e. The oral 'otherness' of dialogue is captured in the 'grasshopper' tale as told by Socrates in *Phaedrus*. In an age before the Muses, grasshoppers are human beings. When the Muses came and song was invented, the people were spellbound. They forgot to eat and drink, and finally they died. 'And now they lived again in the grasshoppers, who, as a special gift from the Muses, require no nourishment, but from the hour of their birth are always singing, and never eating or drinking; and when they die they go and inform the Muses in heaven which of us honours one or other of them' (259b-d). Anyone who sings on earth is then favoured by the Muses and eternally touched by the 'sweetest utterance. For many reasons, then, we ought always to talk and not sleep at mid-day' (259b-d). It is the sound, the music and dance and 'philosophy' that is the world and is always in the process of creation. The song is the logic and 'reasoning' of the oral (259d).

⁶⁷ Eric Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, pp. 145-164. *The Muse Learns to Write*, pp. 7-18. Plato outlines his position on the poets in *The Republic*, II. 376 e - III. 412 b, III. 412 b - IV. 421 c and finally in Book X argues for a complete ban on poets and poetry.

⁶⁸ Havelock, *Muse*, p. 5.

⁶⁹ Havelock, 'Why Was Socrates Tried', in *Studies in Honour of Gilbert Norwood*, (Phoenix Suppl., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952), pp. 95-109 (p. 100).

⁷⁰ *Muse*, p. 87. See also pp. 1-18.

⁷¹ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, pp. 36-60, and pp. 87-96.

⁷² *Preface*, pp. 20-35.

⁷³ *The Republic*, III.: 412 b - IV. 421 c. For Plato, the Guardians are a select few who are 'naturally fitted to watch over a commonwealth. They must have the right sort of intelligence and ability, and also they must look upon the commonwealth as their special concern -- the sort of concern that is felt for something so closely bound up with oneself that its interests and formulas, for good or ill, are held to be identical with one's own' (412 b - IV. 421 c).

⁷⁴ In classical Greece orality and sound are not invisible but rather the motions and gestures of body and world (*Phaedrus* 238 a-d, 244d-e).

⁷⁵ Socrates pokes fun at the privilege of writing: 'there was a tradition in the temple of Dodona that oaks first gave prophetic utterances. The men of old, far simpler than you sophisticated young men, deemed that if they heard the truth even from 'oak or rock', it was enough; whereas you seem to consider not whether a thing is or is not true, but who the speaker is and from what country the tale comes' (*Phaedrus* 275c). Socrates questions the position of high over low, epic truth over tree lore, heroic over dithyrambics, sanity over madness, and writing over dialogue. He questions the notion that writing implies certainty and the achievement of higher truth through the ambivalence of the song (dialogue).

⁷⁶ *Phaedrus*, 275d - 277a.

⁷⁷ *Republic*, II. 377.

⁷⁸ *Republic*, II. 387.

⁷⁹ *Republic*, II. 380. Plato sees an innate goodness and wisdom in the select few who cannot be disturbed by such external influence. The soul resists outside corruption: 'So this immunity to change from outside is characteristic of anything which, thanks to art or nature or both, is in a satisfactory state'.

⁸⁰ *Republic*, III. 389.

⁸¹ *Republic*, III. 388.

⁸² *Republic*, II. 381.

⁸³ *Republic*, II. 382.

⁸⁴ *Republic*, III. 395-96.

⁸⁵ Cornford, *Plato's Republic*, (footnote, p. 84).

⁸⁶ *Republic*, III. 396.

⁸⁷ *Republic*, III. 400.

⁸⁸ *Republic*, III. 400-401.

⁸⁹ *Republic*, III. 401.

⁹⁰ *Republic*, III. 402.

⁹¹ *Republic*, III. 414.

⁹² *Republic*, III. 413.

⁹³ *Republic*, III. 398-99.

⁹⁴ *Republic*, III. 414.

⁹⁵ *Republic*, III. 399.

⁹⁶ *Republic*, III. 397.

⁹⁷ *Republic*, III. 400.

⁹⁸ *Republic*, III. 398-99.

⁹⁹ *Republic*, X. 595a-608 b.

¹⁰⁰ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, p. 5.

¹⁰¹ *Republic*, X. 600. Dramatic poetry is far removed from knowledge since it aims to stir the base emotional part of the soul undermining the element of reason, which alone can separate the real from the illusion through 'measuring, counting and weighing' (602). Since poetics appeals to the passions, it denies reason's power to challenge the illusions of poetic creation. Plato argues that 'works of art are far removed from reality, and that the element in our nature which is accessible to art and responds to its advances is equally far from wisdom. [. . .] This will be true not only of visual art, but of art addressed to the ear, poetry as we call it' (602). There are contradictory influences in the soul: 'the lawful authority of reason' and 'the impulse to give way to feeling' (603). Only 'reflection on what has happened' is the way to wisdom and resolution. The poets choose to 'represent' the 'fretful temper' because it gives a greater 'diversity of dramatic representation' (603). The wise, reflective character 'in its unvarying constancy is not easy to represent, nor when represented is it readily understood, especially by a promiscuous gathering in a theatre, since it is foreign to their own habit of mind' (603). The poet's art, Plato 'reasons', is therefore distant from the wisdom of calm reflection catering as it does to the base sounds of fretful emotions.

¹⁰² *Republic*, X. 604.

¹⁰³ *Republic*, III. 333. Plato outlines three parts of the soul: the craving of the passions, for example, 'drink', reason which says 'Do not drink', and the third which is the 'spirited' element, akin to our 'sense of honour, manifested in indignation, which takes the side of reason against appetite, but cannot be identified with reason, since it is found in children and animals and it may be rebuked by reason'. As Cornford notes, in Plato's myth of creation (*Timaeus*) the three parts are lodged in the head, the chest, and the belly and organs', and 'reason alone is immortal and separable from the body' (*Plato's Republic*, p. 130).

¹⁰⁴ *Republic*, III. 413.

¹⁰⁵ Plato, *Phaedrus*, 275d-277a. In this way meaning, truth, and spatial imagery become the epistemological unity and rationalisation of the modern world. Transcendental form supersedes material practice. The equation of truth to light negates the social potential of spatial acoustic transgression.

¹⁰⁶ The *Republic* is a theory of resistance to the power of sound. Plato is confounded by the power of sound. He cannot find the material of sound (outside of poetic tradition) so 'invents' light -- the purity of morality as abstraction. Abstraction is his only recourse to get outside sound. Abstraction is a product of the Fall of sound, the interiorisation of sound, its silencing/muteness, that is, the removal of sound from space and its placement in time as 'past'

¹⁰⁷ Cornford, *Plato's Republic*, p. 89.

¹⁰⁸ *Republic*, III. 414. For Plato, narrative form corresponds to the inner forms of the soul (reason) and oral poetics to the turmoil of the passions (unreason, excess and appetite). The *Republic* becomes a carefully constructed strategy for inverting the political power of the poets through the silencing of their connection to the masses. A hierarchy of reason would establish the divine element in man over the rest of human nature (Cornford, *Plato's Republic*, p. 176).

¹⁰⁹ For example, see the *Republic*, IV. 432b where in the search for justice Socrates tells Glaucon that 'we must, like hunters, now station ourselves in a circle around the thicket and pay attention so that justice doesn't slip through somewhere and disappear into obscurity. Clearly it's somewhere hereabouts. Look to it and make every effort to catch sight of it; you might somehow see it before me and could tell me'. See also IV. 432 d-e where truth can be found in the tracks its leaves for people to follow. Ophir argues that these spatial metaphors are more than prosaic ornamentation and that they serve the purpose of shifting attention from the content of dialogue 'to one's way of speaking about it' (*Plato's Invisible Cities: Discourse and Power in the Republic, Discourse and Power in the Republic*, Savage, Maryland: Barnes & Nobel, 1991, p. 134). The quest for justice becomes a search for signs of something hidden in the thicket, distinct and apart from the interlocation of the speakers, outside or beyond the realm of speech. Yet, at the same time, the speakers are seated in a circle around the thicket in a 'zone of contact' or acoustic space so central to the Socratic sense of the 'madness' or the slipperiness of poetics outside the strictures of the 'speech-writer' (*Phaedrus* 257 c-d): 'What the poet was saying was in Plato's eyes important and maybe dangerous, but how he was saying it and manipulating it might seem even more important and more dangerous' (Havelock, *Preface*, p. 146). Havelock also hints at the importance of the spatialisation of sound in oral composition: 'The patterns of the *Iliad* have been treated as though they are a visual arrangement, contrary to the premise that the composition was oral, and have then been compared to the visual arrangements in geometric pottery. Is it not more proper to view them as patterns built on acoustic principles, which exploit the technique of the echo as mnemonic device? If so, then the visual geometry of the plastic artist might be a reflex in himself of that acoustic instinct now transferred to the sphere of vision, and *vice versa*' (*Preface*, p. 128). Although Havelock is trying to find an acoustic explanation for epic genius in the rhythm of the Classical Age, for our purposes the important point is the suggestion that acoustic spatiality is crucial to the authority and political role of epic poetry. If Plato is to construct his republic of reason, he has to take into account and somehow transgress poetic tradition but also poetic space, that is, the material relations of sound.

¹¹⁰ Plato's *Seventh Letter*, 341 b-343a, paraphrase. Plato articulates the contradictory situation in which he finds himself perhaps most strongly in *Phaedrus* where he admits writing can be an aid to a memory weakening with age and to students with whom one discusses philosophy (276d). He must destabilise the oral powers of poetic authority, yet in the *Seventh Letter* Plato has serious misgivings about the writing of philosophy going so far as to suggest that there are certain matters he will never set down in writing. One finds Plato then in the peculiar situation of having to challenge the power of orality while at the same time retaining the route to truth by way of philosophic dialogue (*Seventh Letter*, 341c, 342e - 343c).

¹¹¹ See Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 207-243, for a discussion of the purging of the profane in the spoken carried out by Catholic and Protestant movements throughout Europe, particularly from the late 1600s to 1800s.

¹¹² Henry John Chaytor points out that in the Middle Ages 'the fundamental reason for the divergence between the spoken and the written language is the fact that a visual image is more lasting and more readily appropriated than an acoustic image' (*From Script to Print: An Introduction to Medieval Literature*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945, p. 35).

¹¹³ Walter Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (New York: Octagon Books, 1974), p. 284.

¹¹⁴ Ong, *Ramus*, p. 284.

¹¹⁵ 'Thou shalt not make unto thee (worship or serve) a graven image, nor any likeness (of any thing) that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth'. 'Being the one true God, He alone is to be adored, and all rendering to creatures of the worship which belongs to Him falls under the ban of His displeasure; the making of "graven things" is condemned: not all pictures, images, and works of art, but such as are intended to be adored and served First' ('The Ten

Commandments', John Stapleton, trans. by Marcia L. Bellafiore in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume IV, Online Edition, ed. by Kevin Knight. Nihil Obstat. Remy Lafort, Censor Imprimatur, John M. Farley, Archbishop of New York, 1999).

¹¹⁶ Pearsall and Salter, *Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World*, 128.

¹¹⁷ Thomas Burnet, *Sacred Theory of the Earth*, II, p. 9.

¹¹⁸ As sons and daughters of God, human beings are all 'members of the body of Christ', but for McLuhan who is ultimately seeking to realise the metaphor in the 20th century, this participation in the body of Christ 'becomes technologically a fact under electronic conditions' (interview with McLuhan, Stearn, *McLuhan: Hot & Cool*, p. 302). The makings of Walter Ong's theory of the oral as originary essence can also be detected in the notion of the Trinity (See in particular, *The Presence of the Word*).

¹¹⁹ Pearsall and Salter point out that: 'Christian philosophy very early on began its task of composing a picture of man and the natural world which would make peace between faith and experience' (*Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World*, London: Elek Books Ltd., 1973, p. 124).

¹²⁰ Northrop Frye, *Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), p. 182.

¹²¹ McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 188.

¹²² This notion of building utopia is a recurring myth of a disconnected world. The two disillusioned Greeks in Aristophanes' Cuckoo City build a bird city in the sky, Blake's poet-worker 'Los' toils on the New Jerusalem, John Owen builds his utopia, and heaven becomes the transubstantiated Eden, the promise of a reconciliation in the kingdom of God. Marshall McLuhan finds in the new world of electronic technology, the re-tribalisation of human society inside the realised mystical body of Christ. The *Works and Days* of Hesiod (6th century BC) records a similar story of life on earth before and after the Fall in Eden. While Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, Pandora, the 'ruin of mankind' (Hesiod 58-91, opened the forbidden box 'And scattered pains and evils among men. [. . .] Thousands of troubles, wandering the earth' (58-91: 61). Pandora had been Zeus's wrath against Prometheus who had stolen the power of fire from the gods. Just as human beings had lived in a 'garden environment', an ideal nature, in Hesiod's version 'Before this time men lived upon the earth / Apart from sorrow and from painful work, / Free from disease, which brings the Death-gods in' (92-129: 62).

¹²³ The seriousness of the Fall is represented by the curse of God that damns the species to a life of hardship outside a nature idealised by the harmony and richness of the Eden metaphor: 'Cursed is the earth in your labour: in toil shall you win sustenance from it all the days of your life: thorns and hardships shall it bring forth for you, and you shall eat the grasses of the earth'. In toil is 'the reconciliation of God and his creation in the harvesting of the resistant earth' (Pearsall and Salter, *Landscapes and Seasons*, p. 124).

¹²⁴ In this context, as will be discussed later, McLuhan sees electronic technology as undoing the consequences of the original sins by bringing us back into the Body (into Eden and into the word); the unification of man and nature and spoken word in the simultaneity of harmony on earth which is lost in the two original sins. The Book of Technology supersedes nature such that man can re-enter 'Eden' by replacing it with a technological version and thus eliminating the nature/human contradiction altogether. In a totally man-made world, human beings are no longer a reminder of the limits of God. In the absence of the ideal of nature man's world becomes god's world. Technology is the highest achievement of a creature that is god's highest achievement. There is no longer any need to return to Eden because Eden has been made redundant, thus eliminating original sin, restoring god's power and the supernatural force of technology.

¹²⁵ Given the echo of the Fall permeating the medieval sense of space, the natural world is the place where God's wrath is most felt, 'the land of confusion and sterility' (Pearsall and Salter, *Landscapes and Seasons of the Medieval World*, p. 1). The public square is a zone outside God's control. The public square is the inversion of the authoritative word of officialdom, but church and state also work to appropriate the

territory of the public square. This is achieved by turning fragments of pagan ritual into caricatures that are momentarily evocative but ultimately harmless as a real threat to hierarchical relations of the medieval world (Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, p. 21). The public square belongs to the people, the church and 'official' society (that is the privileged classes), with their 'official' arts and sciences were located beyond the square (Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 132). The fact that official society exists beyond the edges of the square also makes it untouchable. The public square is a noisy place even during specifically religious festivals such as Corpus Christi. The noise inverts the well-behaved words on the lips of whispering monks: 'the ears of the crowd would be assaulted by fireworks, bagpipes, tambourines, castanets, drums and trumpets. Devils had an important part to play, tumbling, singing, and engaging in mock battles with the angels' (Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, pp. 194-95). The sense world is being transformed into the religious world.

¹²⁶ McLuhan, *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 186.

¹²⁷ *Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 104. Chaytor reinforces this point in his explanation of Latin as an 'alien' language and exclusive property of Church authority in the Middle Ages (*From Script to Print: An Introduction to Medieval Literature*, 1945). The sacred manuscript was oralised in an unfamiliar language, the Language of God that only He and his representatives on earth could speak. Volosinov makes the point that this division of the oral into the vernacular of the low and the Latin authority of the high reinforced the power of the 'priest-possessors' of the Word and the Sound of God (*Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, p. 74). The alien language (the writing and the Latin) of the manuscript devalued the vernacular by locating oralised Latin closest to the Voice of God. Manuscript culture was a 'culture of the dead', a past which continually denies the present (Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, p. 16). Just as the memorised force of Homer created a totalising mimetic social identity, the copying of a dead language maintained its power. The technology of 'manuscripting' then was a magic power over an alien word possessed by priest-magicians. The word becomes an alien force when it is 'spoken' by those who are hierarchically alien. This word, alienated from the public and physical body, parallels the separation of humans from the public space of bodies and words: 'This role of the alien word led to its coalescence in the depths of the historical consciousness of nations with the idea of authority, the idea of power, the idea of holiness, the idea of truth, and dictated that notions about the word be preeminently oriented toward the alien word' (p. 75). The medieval memory which was still largely 'untrammelled by print could learn a strange language with ease and could retain in memory and reproduce lengthy epic and elaborate lyric poems' (Pearsall and Salter *Landscapes and Seasons*, p. 10). The extent to which medieval epic orality performed an authoritative function similar to that of ancient Greece is reflected in public recitations of the books of revelation and nature, as well as in the laws of Church and feudal state.

¹²⁸ Huizinga chronicles the incongruities of the meeting between a still largely oral culture and the 'sacral' writings of the clerical scribes who personified the shift from oral to visual, pagan to Christian, feudal to modern. The intersection is palpable in the world outside the mutterings of scribes in their secret carrels: 'all things in life were of a proud or cruel publicity. Lepers sounded their rattles and went about in processions, beggars exhibited their deformity and their misery in churches. Every order and estate, every rank and profession, was distinguished by its costume. The great lords never moved about without a glorious display of arms and liveries, exciting fear and envy. Executions and other public acts of justice, hawking, marriages and funerals, were all announced by cries and processions, songs and music' (*The Waning of the Middle Ages, A Study of the Forms of Life*, London: E. Arnold and Co., 1924, p. 9). Sound transgressed visual displays of lord and church.

¹²⁹ S.Y. Edgerton, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective*, pp. 74-5. Edgerton offers an in depth discussion of the 'divine' colonisation of the visual in the transitional moments between Medieval and Renaissance worlds.

¹³⁰ Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 242.

¹³¹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 177.

¹³² The artistic images of the Renaissance reflect a struggle to stretch the imposed one-dimensionality of medieval life into a depth and unity of perspective of harmony (the garden) within form. In the hierarchical

medieval world spatiality is represented as a fixed order of things, one on top of another. The change of spatial conceptualisation in the Renaissance is demonstrated by a more complex three-dimensional layering of forms and an attempt to represent form in space (McLuhan, *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 42.)

¹³³ While the written word's physical properties are observable, the unobservable source of that creativity is thought to be the consequence of irrational emotion and passion. The intelligible imagination is considered the illumination of matters in the mind, but the imagination inspired by the passions of nature is considered the soul trapped in the earthly body. While visible symbols are seen to be the essence of the idea, nature is seen to be a sublime language that could lead the to the plane where the idea resides -- in Christian terms, to the place of God (Gombrich, *Gombrich on the Renaissance*, London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1972, p. 177). In this way there occurs a peculiar redefinition of nature as the presence of God's language where light represents the achievement of intellectual understanding. This production of space is crucial to hegemonic strategies of domination.

¹³⁴ As Stallybrass and White note, in objectifying the experiential world the gaze disembodies the 'social body' of the people: 'we are placed by it as spectators to an instant -- frozen yet apparently universal -- of epic or tragic time' unable to participate in the act of becoming (*The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 21).

¹³⁵ In effect Marjorie Nicolson's examination of the changes from the 17th to 18th century in the poetic invocation of light is another articulation of what we have been calling the bifurcation of the oral. She notes that although poets of the 17th century are also inspired by the symbolic potentials of light, some poets in the 18th century begin to add Newton's scientific principles to Milton's tradition of the sublime. This creates poets dedicated to the 'still symbolic and subtle imaginings of light and poets who sought to re-empower words by studying the physical science of light and by observing nature 'with new eyes' incorporating a 'careful and often technical use and description of color and light' (*Newton Demands the Muse*, p. 19). What had been symbol becomes technique, a poetics of the empirical and demonstrable. The light of God is now observable in the light of the sun. Aesthetics and science merge to give humans the power and the right to probe the previously divine, creating the modern hierarchy of man over nature and legitimating Cartesian duality by way of scientific truth: 'Scientific' poets as these were, they labored to understand the physics of light and still more the physics of sight, becoming acutely aware of the structure and function of the human eye, that mysterious liaison between the world 'out there' and the mind 'in here'. Sight was exalted as the greatest of the senses (*Newton Demands the Muse*, p. 4). It is the exaltation of sight over the other senses, and the corresponding hierarchy of man over nature it encourages, which creates sites of conflict for the Romantics. The tools and techniques of science raise the status of man. Whereas art (imagination) interacts with nature, technology (machines) can control it.

¹³⁶ Stallybrass and White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 106.

¹³⁷ Aristotle's theory of the metaphor encapsulates the movement of human communication from the culture of orality to the culture of writing (or at least the ideology of the banishment of the oral, and its replacement by the visual and its space of rationality). The metaphor is seen to be a re-conceptualisation of the 'magic' at the root of the spoken word's power, a way to speak in images. Since the metaphor is conceived within a visual paradigm its acoustic resonance is ignored until the later 18th century. The presence of metaphor pre-supposes a cultural understanding that is grounded in sources of imagery. The interaction of oral and image, spoken and written, and the power of metaphor itself, are kept alive through this consciousness. Writing represented the ultimate metaphor for speech, the containment of one form within the image of another. Even though the written word achieves dominance, the visual that escaped form retains its link to the environment of oral culture and the transgression of inscription.

¹³⁸ Richard Glover's 'A Poem on Newton' in Henry Pemberton, *Observations on Poetry, especially occasioned by the late poem on Leonidas* (New York: Garland Pub., 1970), pp. 13-16.

¹³⁹ Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Free Press, 1967), p. 80.

¹⁴⁰ Nicolson, *Newton Demands the Muse*, p. 35 and pp. 20-74.

¹⁴¹ There are, of course, more contradictory expressions of this historical development. Finding himself caught between tradition and modernity, Pope locates in the modern meeting of reason and light a language to defend his traditional view of the unchanging harmony of God's nature as the source of poetic clarity. The eternal, unchanging sun (God and the pure light of reason) is seen to rise over the refracted colours of the prism (the confused or discoloured light of the passions). It is when he senses the principles of modern science replacing the laws of God that Pope begins to oppose the 'excesses of reason' and the forces of 'dullness' unleashed by the modern dissections of the world (Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, II, pp. 311-317).

¹⁴² Invented in 1735 by Peter Louis Bertrand Castel (Nicolson, *Newton Demands the Muse*, p. 86).

¹⁴³ Stirling Library Chapbook Collection, Stirling, Scotland, p. 12.

¹⁴⁴ In other words, as Stallybrass and White point out: 'It is indeed one of the most powerful ruses of the dominant to pretend that critique can only exist in the language of 'reason', pure knowledge', and 'seriousness'. Against this ruse Bakhtin rightly emphasised the logic of the *grotesque*, of excess, of lower bodily stratum, of the fair' (*Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 43).

¹⁴⁵ Rene Wellek, *The Rise of English Literary History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941), p. 86.

¹⁴⁶ Joseph Spence, *Observations and Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men*, 2 vols., ed. by James M. Osborn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), #1027, pp. 396-397. Dr. Willis proposes his idea in 1664, however, his assumptions about the mysteries of the passions articulate a trail of physiognomy that leads well into the 18th century.

¹⁴⁷ Hannah Arendt, *The Life of the Mind* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978), p. 61.

¹⁴⁸ Wellek, *The Rise of English Literary History*, p. 188.

¹⁴⁹ Spence notes that in the history of Homer's life attributed to Herodotus suggests that Homer's real name is Melesigenes and that he acquires the name of Homer because in the city of Cumae (the place he ended up after he became blind) all blind men are called *Homers*. Although Pope was known to question the veracity of Homer's blindness, the 18th century fascination with light and with the absence of light provides a backdrop for the prevailing interest in the poetic secrets of a man thought to be so intimately connected to the world of sound (Joseph Spence, *Anecdotes*, #196, p. 83-84).

¹⁵⁰ This fascination with the 'world' of the blind is found in different circumstances throughout history, which testifies to the conflicting and sometimes contradictory relations of sight and sound, as well as to the sensed difference between environments perceived through the eye and those perceived through the ear. This also supports Innis's theory that the historical struggles between the oral (time-ear) and the literate (space-eye) have been pivotal territories of class power (*Empire and Communications*). The 'blind' body is immersed in sound and therefore can be seen as a kind of 'transhistorical' speaker from the acoustic world, a 'resident-reminder' of that world.

¹⁵¹ Alexander Pope (1735), in Joseph Spence's 'Anecdotes By or About Alexander Pope', *Observations, Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men: Collected from Conversation*, ed. by James Osborn, 2 vols. (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1966), I, #405, p. 177. Joseph Spence (1699-1768) was a Professor of Poetry at Oxford and a friend of Pope.

¹⁵² Spence, *Observations and Anecdotes, and Characters of Books and Men*, I, #403, p. 176.

¹⁵³ John Locke, *Essay on Human Understanding*, Book III, Ch. IV, section II, in Nicolson, *Newton Demands the Muse*, pp. 83-84.

¹⁵⁴ The oral poetics of the 'Learned Spaniel' is a typical example of the transgressionary antics of carnivalesque inversion in the hierarchical relations of high and low, learned and unlearned. The 'Learned

Spaniel' can be heard corresponding with other poetical inversions such as the balladmonger's title, 'A Proper New Ballad entitled the fairies Farewell or God a Mercy Will; to be sung or whistled to the tune of Meadow Brow by the Learned; by the Unlearned to the tune of Fortune' (de Sola Pinto and Rodway, *The Common Muse: An Anthology of Popular British Ballad Poetry XVth-XXth Century* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957, p. 22).

¹⁵⁵ *Annual Miscellany; or Rational Recreations for MDCCLXXII* (published by the Editors of the *Paisley Repository*, J. Neilson Printer, p. 5. This particular periodical is a compilation of unauthored anecdotes and stories found in the 'EX-Libris' of William Harvey, Stirling Library, Stirling, Scotland. *The Paisley Repository* was a penny periodical, which began printing in Paisley in 1769 under the combined efforts of 'Alexander Weir, bookseller, and Andrew McLean, printer. They were burgesses of Paisley, the former in 1758 and the latter in 1771. These printers and Mr. John Neilson, who commenced business shortly thereafter, printed numerous works of different authors by subscription, which, being circulated among the inhabitants of the town, increased the intelligence of the inhabitants of Paisley' (David Semple, 'Life of Tannahill', prepared for the 1875 edition of 'Poems and Songs of Robert Tannahill', online, <http://ourworld.compuserver.com/homepages/lennich/tannabio.htm>).

¹⁵⁶ There are also other examples, for instance: 'A country woman have gone to market to fell chickens, met with a cook, who bought the half of what she had, and the half of one more, without killing any of them. She then sold to a second cook the half of those remaining and half a chicken more, also without killing any, and afterwards the half of the remainder and half a chicken more to a third cook, still without killing any. By these means the country-woman sold all her chickens: How many had she? The spaniel replied that she had seven: that the first purchaser took four, that is to say three and a half plus one half, without killing any; that the second had taken two, that is to say, one and a half plus a half; and, in the last place, that the third had taken one, that is say, one half plus a half'. The anecdote goes on to explain just how the 'speech' of the spaniel works, how without any visible sign made to him by his master, he can return the right answers to questions put to him. As the story goes, letters and figures are placed on pieces of card and arranged in a circle around the animal. The dog moves around the circle as the question is proposed. 'Levers were concealed under the carpet on which he walked, and which were made to move under his feet by means of ropes, indicating to him the exact moment when he ought to stop, to place his foot on the nearest card' (*Annual Miscellany; or Rational Recreations*, p. 7).

¹⁵⁷ *Annual Miscellany* (Paisley), p. 6.

¹⁵⁸ Interestingly, the word marmoset is said to be derived from *marmouset* grotesque image, of unknown origin (*Oxford Concise Dictionary*, 1982, p. 620).

¹⁵⁹ The dog sits on the edge of passion and reason, earth and divine 'Nature', suspended between 'rabies' (madness), 'shrewdness and tenacity'. The dog is the 'investigator and thinker', yet all its wisdom is of the 'nether world [. . .] it is secured by immersion in the life of creaturely things, and it hears nothing of revelation'. Its speaks to a knowledge inextricably 'of the earth' and of the body, 'the lightening flash of intuition is unknown to him' (Benjamin, *Origins of German Tragic Drama*, p. 152).

¹⁶⁰ Hawkes, *Shakespeare's Talking Animals*, p. 162.

¹⁶¹ *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 41.

¹⁶² *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 41.

¹⁶³ Barbara Babcock, *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), p. 29. According to Babcock 'the classificatory body of a culture is always double, always structured in relation to its negation, its inverse [. . .]. All symbolic inversions define a culture's lineaments at the same time as they question the usefulness and the absoluteness of its ordering' (p. 29).

CHAPTER FIVE – ORAL RESISTANCE

The Chapbooks

Of course, there are examples of the development of a more direct oral resistance. In the popular literature of the so-called ‘chapbooks’, space becomes a combination of geographic, cosmological, and sensory experience that resists rationalization, and challenges the scientific and religious ordering of the world into a place of fixed time-space coordinates and hierarchical structures. With irreverence, earthy materialisations, and ambivalent acoustic textures, the chapbooks provide a window on oral spatiality during the circumstances of the early modern period. In these little books of the oral are to be found the lives of a population in transition from feudal to industrial society.¹

A curious mixture of stories and moral advice, the chapbooks capture the sayings and songs in oral circulation during a time of cultural upheaval and political turmoil. The forces of transition at work here serve to marginalise the vernaculars of the day and position them in the lowly orders of the unlearned. As a response to the modern ordering of the senses and its disenchantment of lived space, the chapbooks speak from the pre-rational world in ballads, jokes, sayings, tales of the supernatural, short histories, legends, criminal sagas, political satire, lampooning, and the like.² They are an underground of oral circulation full of stories of unreason, superstition, and nonsense.

The chapbooks emerge as a stubborn oral sensibility speaking out against the reduction of social space to the orders of both religion and print technology. They are enclaves of irreverence and disorder outside reason and fixed form. That they ‘speak’ from the printed page regarding matters in oral circulation is itself a challenge to the authority of the written record. The chapbooks use and extend the technology of print, but they resist the fixed boundaries of its authority. As both oral and written in form,

they connect to the sound of the street and conform to the linear grammar of the page. Against a categorisation of world that muzzles mythological cosmologies and reduces the animate universe, the chapbooks re-animate, de-categorise, and unmuzzle the sounds of unreason. They speak with an inversionary penchant from the peculiar public space of the oral-book. As much as chapbook tales and ‘misunderstandings’ are printed text, they escape the orders of that space and continue to be exchanged by word of mouth in their oral publication.

The chapbooks address a liminal and ambivalent space where the ‘passions’ attempt to speak the orders of rational language and logic. With a poetics of the visual developing within the orders of science and literacy, the poetics of the oral keeps to the streets.³ Its minstrels sing along the roads and in the village taverns of the factory towns. The streets literally become the ‘outside’, full of the din of social transformation and the confused intersections of old and new. Even into the early 19th century there are acoustic survivors from other centuries among the minstrels, bards, broadside sellers, street hawkers, chaunters, street poets, and balladeers telling stories. They sing and hawk what is written between the acoustic space of the streets and the abstract space of books.

Selling for a penny, and printed from type and wood blocks on paper folded by twelve to make twenty-four pages, these ‘books’ of the poor were carried in the packs of pedlars, or ‘Chapmen’ (men and women), to every village and home. Peddling unowned words, these itinerants lived hard lives. It is difficult to determine whether their bad reputation was well earned or the consequence of legal persecution, but they were often the subject of suspicion, and few people would offer them shelter along the road. Chapbook sellers were ‘classed in old bye-laws and proclamations as “Hawkers, Vendors, Pedlars, petty Chapman and *unruly* people”’.⁴ Of crucial importance, the

chapbooks would be read aloud by the chapmen and women as they made their rounds. As well, they were often passed from hand-to-hand among those who could read to be shared with others around the hearth or in the village square. In the cities women are frequent chapbook sellers, stocking the 'merry new ballads' in bundles in their apron pockets. Blind beggars and street poets often make their living by 'singing' the printed words contained in these little books.⁵

The chapbook 'writers' are a strange mixture: blind-fiddlers, political pamphleteers, ballad mongers, the out of work, village women, murder-story-hucksters, death-watchers, as well as some literary writers. Not surprisingly, these wretched storytellers and their publishers are the subject of much ridicule in the higher literary circles of the day.⁶ The publishers rely upon these 'Grub Street' authors who suffer being reduced to living in dingy dwellings 'in a state of poverty and degradation'. In these appalling circumstances a historian might be found among the homeless and living 'under the blind arch'.⁷ In other instances, a 'Pindaric writer in red stockings' might be tracked down at the blacksmith's shop; a writer of pastorals is to be found 'at the laundress's'; a church-historian is located 'at the Hole-in-the-wall, in Cursitor's Alley, up three pairs of stairs'.⁸ In *The Author's Farce* (1730), Fielding provides a palpable sense of the lives of these oral composers. In the bookseller's workroom, and under some considerable pressure from the publisher, the Grub Street Poets concoct tales of murder, reconstitute legends, relive local gossip, and generally carry on with moral reflections, anecdotes, superstitions, and words to the wise. Stories of ghostly apparitions are popular and in demand:

Book: Very well; then let me have a ghost finished by this day seven-night.
 Dash: What sort of a ghost would you have sir? The last was a pale one.
 Book: Then let this be a bloody one.⁹

In Ashton's chapbook collection there are extracts typical of the peculiar intersections of the rational and the pre-rational, such things as can be seen but not explained. There are stories to be found inside all kinds of physical phenomena, especially in excesses or irregularities of the body: 'A Mole on the buttock denotes honour to a man, and Riches to a woman'; 'To Dream of Vermin, and to be Troubled in Killing Them Signifies Much Riches'; a 'Famous History of Tom Thumb Wherein is Declared His Marvellous Acts of Manhood Full of Wonder and Merriment'; and riddles 'for Dull Wits'.¹⁰ There are stories of animals befriending one another and coming to the assistance of people in distress, and remnants of carnival inversions such as 'The Horse turned Groom'.¹¹ The pages of the chapbooks are often illustrated with wood engravings of figures and diagrams. These illustrations capture the struggle between reason and the passions played out in low tales that become earthy, often raunchy, mutations of the sublime poetics of the eye. In the latter, dogs might be pictured walking their men; fish might be fishing for people 'using various desirable items as bait'; the sun might be depicted as shining from the earth upon trees that grow in the sky.¹²

In gathering his collection of chapbooks in 1882, Ashton issued harsh judgement for the 'Jest-books' among his collection: 'The Jest-books, pure and simple, are, from their extremely coarse witticisms, utterly incapable of being reproduced for general reading nowadays, and the whole of them are more or less highly spiced'.¹³ One example of this would be a joke that circulated widely in the chapbooks and attempted to link the sound of language to domains of the body and against exclusionary orders of the visual:

Q. What song is it that is sung without a tongue, and yet its notes are understood by people of all nations?

A. It is a fart, which everyone knows the sound of.¹⁴

In chapbook circulation ear-omens are also popular. Itchy ears are held to be the symptom of 'being talked about behind one's back' or the wagging of lying tongues. Other itching parts have messages to impart as well, as science begins to focus the microscope on various unexplained stirrings of the body.¹⁵ The wonders of science and invention can also be heard in chapbook anecdotes articulating the amazing properties attached to the eye and the body as a system of mechanical parts:

Were it possible for the eye to view, through the skin, the mechanism of our own body, the sight would overwhelm us! Durst we make a single movement, if we saw our blood circulating, the nerves pulling, the lungs blowing, the humours filtrating, and all the incomprehensible assemblage of fibres, tubes, pumps, currents, pivots, which sustain an existence, at once so frail and so presumptuous.¹⁶

Chapbook songs, verses, and stories are more often than not fantastic tales, bawdy stories, and disorderly jest that articulate a significant realm of 'otherness'. As much as 'higher' poetics reflects the incursion of the eye, the chapbooks are full of the sound and poetics of the excluded and marginalised. Janet Clinker's 'Oration, On the Virtues of the Old Women' is a case in point:

The madness of this unmuzzled age has driven me to mountains of thoughts, and a continued meditation; it is enough to make an auld rin red-wood, and ill nature, to see what I see, and hear what I hear: therefore the hinges of my anger: re broke, and the bands of my good nature are burst in two, the door of civility is laid quite open, plan speech and mild admonition is of none effect; nothing must be used now but in a tantlizing stile, roughly redd up and manufactured thro' an auld matron's mouth, who is indeed but frail in the teeth, but will squeeze surprisingly with her auld gums until hervery chaft-blades crack in the crushing of your vice.¹⁷

For the old woman the madness of the age lies in the denial of the incongruent and unseen. It is this that is defined as irrational, yet it is this that demands a response from the 'auld matron's mouth'. She will have her say, and the passions will speak to the 'madness' of reason from the oral domain, a domain where even written words are collective and unowned.

In the chapbooks, stories of the blind are translated into the language of the eye, such as, 'A Heavenly Discourse between a Divine and a Blind Beggar'.¹⁸ Blind-beggar-poet-chapmen are not uncommon and compose and sell their own works to survive, enticing sales by composing oral choruses for potential book buyers. One such poem circulating around Glasgow in the 1600's and 1700's is called 'The Beggar'. It has been authored by the experience of the blind, but is un-named:

A Beggar I am, and of low degree
 For I'm of a begging family,
 I'm lame, but when in a fighting bout,
 I whip off my leg and I fight it out;
 In running I leave the beadle behind
 And a lass I can see, though alas! I am blind,
 Through town and village I gayly jog,
 My music, the bell of my little dog.

Chorus: I'm cloth'd in rags,
 I'm hung with bags,
 That around me wags:
 I've a bag for my salt,
 A bag for my malt,
 A bag for the leg of a goose;
 For my oats a bag,
 For my groats a bag,
 And a bottle to hold my booze.¹⁹

Here are figures literally suspended between worlds, the acoustic of the pre-rational and the excess of light of the rational. They are as yet unplaceable: seen, but unseeing; seers, but unable to see. As occupiers of the acoustic environment, the blind are excluded. In a space full of sound their occupancy is paradoxical, bordering on exclusion, but identified as an excess of light. The blind-seers are connected to an 'other' knowledge via sound. As occupiers of darkness, they are seers and the subject of mystery. As beggars and chapmen, however, they are excluded from making a normal living and must traffic the marketplace vulgarities of the low. Arguably, the compositions of the blind are about the politics of inclusion: the right and the space to be heard; the right to 'see', though blind.

Such contradictions of the oral are also found with regard to the ‘mountebanks’ and the selling of medicinal potions and faith healing powers. Supported on stage by backup musicians, jugglers, and jesters, the mountebanks were among the most skilled orators of their day. Invoking the name of nature and philosophers of classical Greece, they would seek to build up ‘learnedness’ and credibility before an assembled audience of as many as a thousand people.²⁰ Their extempore songs and speeches are fascinating mixtures of magic, folk-legends, and concoctions of scientific jargon. There is, for example, the ‘High German Doctor, Chymist, and Dentifricator’ who, as the stories go, is never at a loss for words to flaunt his innovative ideas, trinkets, and self-made cures:

Nature’s palladium [. . .] it works seven manner of ways, as Nature requires, for it scorns to be confined to any particular mode of operation; so that it effecteth the cure either hypnotically, hydrotically, cathartically, poppismatically, pneumatically, or synedochically; it mundifies the hypogastrium, extinguishes all supernatural fermentations and ebullitions, and, in fine, annihilates all nosotrophical morbivic ideas of the whole corporeal compages.²¹

In exercising acoustic powers to incite the passions, chapbook sellers and writers would bring increasing persecution upon themselves. When the political content of popular songs finds favour with the courts, all is well. However, when the songs take an opposite turn, as occurs with ‘Charles II’s flagrant violations of political liberty’, laws are quickly passed to silence the influence of the oral-book peddlars.²² Eventually, all ballad-singers, pamphleteers, and chapbook sellers are forced to acquire a license in order to sing their songs and peddle their verse. This transformation from ‘licence’ (excess) to ‘licensed’ (authorised) becomes part of a historical repression of the acoustic dimension of the passions.²³ Indeed, special care is taken to rid town and country of the hawkers of superstition and magic who are labelled as loathsome survivors of an unsavoury past:

And all persons concerned are hereby desired to take notice of, and to suppress, all mountebanks, rope-dancers, prize-players, and such as make shew of motions and strange sights, that have not a licence in red and black letter, under the hand and seal of the said Charles Killigrew, Master of Revels to his Majesty.²⁴

The legal authorities also keep an especially close eye on the political balladeers. Able to circulate songs of subversion by word of mouth, or on hidden sheets of paper no bigger than an open hand, they are able to circulate more pamphlets forbidden by the state than are all the established booksellers in London.²⁵ As documented in 'The Tatler', government authorities hound the writers of the Grub Street news-letters and resort to 'the pillory and the jail' in vain attempts to curb their prolific trade.²⁶ Some publishers and sellers actually begin to welcome such persecution as a means of fuelling sales, but the street singers are those most likely to be persecuted by the local magistrates, and many are brought to trial.

The chapbook trade was by no means confined to the stirring up of political passions, but the social implications of this 'outside' activity were of most concern to the authorities. In 1716, for example, the Middlesex grand jury denounced 'the singing of scandalous ballads about the streets as a common nuisance; tending to alienate the minds of the people'.²⁷ Undoubtedly, the oral circulation of the chapbooks by hand and word of mouth did provide a ready and stealthy vehicle for the organising of social protest movements. Later, the orality of the chapbook would become a method for the spreading of resistance to the dislocations of industrialisation. It would serve especially well as a practical technique for the announcing of political meetings:

The Scotch Convention's assembling
 In Auldreeky's ancient town,
 To right the wrangs o' the nation,
 a' things will go right very soon!
 The skaiths o' the nation's their erran',
 To right them is what they intend;
 And what will not mend will be changed,

Before this Convention do end
 For there a' the members ha'e sworn,
 And pledg'd to each other their word,
 That rather than want a reform,
 They'll try it by fire, and by sword . . .
 (Fly Let us A' To the Meetin', circa 1800:Stirling).

As the transportation of the oral from one place and medium to another follows the trail of rural depopulation, it soon leads into the factories. In such circumstances it is the 'broadside' that takes the place of the chapbook in the industrial city of the late 18th century. The broadside consists of ballads, tales, local legends, events, and romantic stories printed on a single sheet of thin paper 'in double columns, with a woodcut at the head of the story'.²⁸ There are to be found newspapers of the 'unstamped press' that contain more serious news and politics. However, the humour, romance, crime stories, and sagas of the streets to be found in the broadsides is by far more popular. Usually, these papers are hawked by someone with the gift of voice, a 'chaunter' who can sing or read parts of the broadside in the street in an attempt to entice audiences to buy the latest song or story. Notably, the chaunter would sing in 'a monotonous flat twang to conserve his voice and to be heard above the other street noises'. He would begin with 'a spoken patter including some local gossip and commentary while recommending the purchase of the new song about to be rendered'.²⁹ In this particular marketplace the broadsides and street ballads become precise orchestrations designed to reach their customers and hold their attention.

The broadsides and their chaunters are a curious mix of oral tradition and the 'seeds of a commodity-based mass entertainment'.³⁰ In their performance the hawkers come to rely on the acoustic magic of repetition, rhyming patterns, and intonations to distinguish their product. Often the lyrics and tunes of old songs still in oral circulation

would be re-worked into a new message and listeners would be encouraged to join in the singing. Hearsay, gossip, and stories about the common people and their heroes might also be integrated into the proceedings in order to fuel sales. The broadsides include political commentary, trade songs, and local events, but they focus on the violence of the streets. Although the stories are often concocted or exaggerated, they address the increasingly dangerous conditions in the slums of industrial cities and the fears of the urban poor who live there. In the larger cities broadside sellers work the street crowds more systematically by using 'running patterers' to scurry about and shout such things as 'Horrible' or 'Frightening' in a bid to attract the buyers' attention.

As Mayhew discovers, the poetics of the street corners are demandingly complex oral performances that must strike a chord in the life and circumstances of the streets. Unwittingly, he captures the paradoxes of sound in the work of street-singers that find themselves caught between the world of protest and the marketing of their tunes:

It was not the words that ever made a ballad, but the subject, and more than the subject, -- the chorus; and far more than either, -- the tune!' Indeed, many of the street-singers of ballads on a subject, have as supreme a contempt for words as can be felt for any modern composer. To select a tune for a ballad, however, is a matter of deep deliberation. To adapt the ballad to a tune too common or popular is injudicious; for, I was told, any one can sing it -- boys and all. To select a more elaborate and less-known air, however appropriate, may not be pleasing to some of the members of 'the school' of ballad-singers who may feel it beyond their vocal powers; neither may it be relished by the critical in street songs, whose approving criticism induces them to purchase as well as to admire.³¹

Mayhew further notes that 'there are not twelve patterers in London whom a critical professor of street elocution will admit to be capable of "working a catechism" or a litany'. And when the tune or the chorus would not work, it meant moving to another spot or adopting some other patter: 'when a thing's humped [. . .] you can only "call a go"'.³² The patterer who could handle the demands of political litanies was very

highly regarded and 'very particular in his choice of mate, frequently changing his ordinary partner, who may be good "at noise" or a ballad, but not have sufficient acuteness or intelligence to patter politics'.³³ The ballads are by no means exclusively devoted to worker resistance. The political patterers tend to be 'unsparing satirists, who, with rare impartiality, lash all classes and all creeds'.³⁴

The chaunter occupies a peculiar place of huckster and urban balladeer as the new working class begins to use the spatiality of the streets and street songs to build a sense of itself amidst the displacement of industrialisation. The chaunters are both part of the construction of a new class identity and exploiters of the soon to be lost intonational wealth of oral tradition. As the acoustic politics of the streets become more complex, they find themselves competing with songbook sellers, occupational bards, local singers, pub-balladeers, and others. This development encourages the emergence of an even more disreputable broadside publisher, one whose trade is built upon such sensationalism as false stories about 'non-existent murders', 'sausages [made] from human meat', and the romance stories written by priests and nuns.³⁵

Eventually, the chaunters and hawkers are edged off the urban streets by legal pressures and the impoverishing effect of the factory on the lives of the industrial poor. Long hours, low wages, the high cost of bread, disease, and accidents wear out whole families of workers. With time and space increasingly dictated by the factory pace of life, chaunters find themselves on the road back to the country in search of those who can 'still stop their work without penalty to listen to a song or tale'.³⁶

According to Ashton, the chapbook declines sharply at the end of the 18th century as type and wooden blocks simply wear out and are never replaced.³⁷ However, their disappearance might well owe more to the cultural and economic upheaval of town

and rural life that sees 'publication' via 'travelling performance' disappear. Chapmen, street-poets, ballad-sellers, and singers of tales are increasingly undermined by the technology of the printed word. Many former listeners become purchasers of texts and lose the 'incentive to stand in the square for an hour at a time, listening to an itinerant singer'.³⁸ Under some pressure singers begin to conform to the written text as opposed to engaging in non-authored improvisations.³⁹ Ultimately, with printed works available in the literary marketplace, the wild and unauthored words of the little books would come to be abandoned by virtue of market dictate.⁴⁰

In the orality of the chapbooks and broadsides still circulating into the 19th century, one can hear the intersections of a transition to industrial capitalism. During 'the war of the unstamped' the chaunters' tunes of protest in the urban streets reveal an acoustic space immersed in the contradictions of an entrenching power.⁴¹ In this period songs become forces in the making and articulation of class sensibilities, organising and producing alliances with vernacular dialects.⁴² The ballad-singers of the streets and their songs are mobile, difficult to regulate, and usually anonymous.⁴³ As a result, some of the earliest songs of resistance such as the 'Political Litanies' and 'Anti-Corn-Law Catechisms and Dialogues' are produced and sung in the street.⁴⁴ In the declining days of the chapbooks and street chaunters, one can find the consolidation of a working class:

You working men of England one moment now attend,
While I unfold the treatment of the poor upon this land,
For now-a-days the Factory Lords have brought the labour low,
And daily are contriving plans to prove our overthrow.

CHORUS

So arouse you sons of Freedom the world seems upside down,
They scorn the poor man as thief in country and town.⁴⁵

Lamenting their loss, protesting the new conditions, and looking for a place to stand and speak, the emerging industrial class reworks the chapbook songs still sung on street corners and in rural inns.⁴⁶ Green has observed that 'in this shifting ground the

'symbolic order of an older peasant culture [. . .] rubbed up against newer social tensions and dislocations'.⁴⁷ The street-ballads of the chaunters, patterers, and chapbook singers serve to maintain an oral connection between the rural and urban with songs of the traditional handloom weaver existing alongside songs of the mill worker. The labouring poor in the cities meet up with the marginalised of the rural countryside in the occupation and factory songs of the time that decry the encroachment of capitalism.

The chapbooks, broadsides, and other working class 'publications', as well as the marginalised spaces of the street, public house, and tavern, all become a politicising forum for the labouring poor, and in some respects are quite consciously used for such purposes:⁴⁸

We're low--we're low--mere rabble, we know
 But, at our plastic power,
 The mould at the lordling's feet will grow
 Into palace and church and tower.
 Then prostrate fall--in the rich man's hall,
 And cringe at the rich man's door;
 We're not too low to build the wall,
 But too low to tread the floor.⁴⁹

As the population exposed to factory conditions grows, social protest grows as well. Every union and workers' organisation has its bard, and there are widespread efforts to keep in oral circulation local songs about the common people. The mining unions are among the first to issue worker protest songs and circulars: 'On whatever side the pitman looks, he sees nothing but horror and darkness, and oppression - scripture - reason - humanity, all violated in his person'.⁵⁰ In the mining towns street-poets are often ex-coal miners maimed in pit accidents who sing protest songs in the streets to eke out a living.⁵¹ However, since the new occupations are regionally located, every occupation produces its own dialect of protest:⁵²

Why! A fact'ry's loike a prison, yo' con noather see nor yer,
 (When yo'n gotten insoide it) owt 'at's passin' eawt o' th'dur,

For they're filled wi' frosted windows, an' built insoide a yard,
 Wi' a wall yo' conno' get o'er, an' a dur 'at's allus barred.⁵³

The environment of the factory demanded a response.⁵⁴ During the 1830s, factory workers, dislocated artisans, and workhouse occupants increasingly join forces. Ironically, as one of the consequences of the taxes on working class newspapers, the oral transmission of these protest songs guaranteed that they remained inaccessible to the authorities. The acoustic space of the marginalised and labouring poor in stories, taverns, chapbooks, and street-corner ballads would carry over into a poetics of working class resistance. Largely denied access to the 'publishing' powers of the written word, 'sound' becomes a realm of resistance.⁵⁵ Street-ballads, or 'Ballads on a Subject' as they were known, carry the 'opinions and imaginative life of the common people, which was not otherwise represented in literature'.⁵⁶ This incursion of the oral world into working-class protest songs tends to transgresses poetic property, as the 'Rabble of the People' drowns out the textual representation of their speech.

Within the shifting ground of the oral world, vernacular dialects struggle for space under increasing pressure from the fixed texts of lawmakers and the educated. As Vicinus observes, workers' songs are like the onomatopoeia of contradictory worlds, 'awkward in phrasing' and somewhere between 'a stilted literary language and the vernacular'.⁵⁷ This sound is the product of a new vocabulary that merges the rhythms and intonations of street, factory, and mine with the older rural vernacular. These 'dialects' are materials of resistance that are produced in spaces 'outside' the dominant authority and as yet beyond mechanical control.⁵⁸ Often taverns become meeting places where union bards and singing societies gather to compose and circulate their songs of protest. They are the subversive enclaves outside the factory gates.⁵⁹ The streets and

pubs are spaces of possibility, outposts of opposition where the poor exchange stories of shared expatriation in the spatial liminality of old and new; in contrast, the houses and factories are places to die.⁶⁰ This sense of the new industrial space serves to locate the working class as being of a separate world of contaminated bodies and disordered, unreasonable voices.⁶¹ Cleaning up the factory city will proceed hand in hand with silencing the 'contaminated' voices of the streets and closing down potentially dangerous spaces of protest and resistance.⁶²

Over time the oral text begins to challenge oral space in the performance techniques and metered tunes of the chapbooks and broadsheets.⁶³ In the 1840s chapbooks emerge advising thrift as the sure way around poverty. As fixed texts the songs become authoritative prescriptions for correct behaviour and social order, that is to say, rules of progress for the poor whereby the poor can rise above their physical state and lowly social position by working on their souls.⁶⁴ One such edition is entitled 'The Pleasing Art of Money-Catching, and the Way to Thrive, by Turning a Penny to advantage; with a New Method of Regulating Daily Expenses'. The moral advice on its pages centres around the growing importance of money, the 'misery of wanting money', and the moral corruptions associated with not having any: 'O wretched poverty! a tool thou'rt made, / To every evil act and wicked trade'.⁶⁵ Its author confesses that in better and wiser ages 'virtue, though cloaked in rags, was more esteemed than the trappings of the gold ass'.⁶⁶ But 'money's now become the worldly man's god, and [. . .] many are so willing to purchase it though with the loss of soul and body'. The only way to stave off crookedness in the best of characters is by keeping a close count on daily expenses, 'for it is better to die than to be poor'.⁶⁷

Ultimately, the disorderly conduct of the chapbooks served to resist authority, but within a complex, contestatory, fracturing of communicative space. The chapbooks never present anything like a consistent voice of resistance. Notably, the words they produce in the context of protest disrupt the traditional literary form of the ballad.⁶⁸ Yet, as the street chaunters attest, it is the sound of words that strikes the popular imagination as much as the social issues their songs address. The street-singers articulate popular recognition of the power of sound in the political arena. That being said, the power of street-songs to protest the conditions of the industrial upheaval is compromised by the captured tune. The tune remains both a call to arms and a marketable commodity.

Ordering the written word in the manner of the spoken did have the consequence of naturalising a certain form of the spoken while reducing the oral to the 'writeable'. However, whereas the authoritative forms of the oral and written served to reduce communicative practice to a mimetics of correspondent forms, the chapbooks resisted the dominant poetic tradition of manuscript culture that mimetically associated script with the voice of God and reduced the vernacular to spoken rhythms. These little books spoke in unrhythmical dialects for the purpose of disordering the 'high' accent of God and poetic genius. In their oral-book form they emerged from this contestatory space and struggled for something of an intonational liberation. The chapbooks were complex instances of 'misbehaving' in stubborn productions of dialect.

Wordsworth's World of Grace

At least in his more militant years from 1800-30, Wordsworth finds a voice of the 'outside' among beggars, betrayed women, bankrupt farmers, cottage workers, shepherds, and the homeless. In an effort to challenge poetic authority and political representation, he chooses the 'low and rustic life' as the subject of his work, seeking to

legitimate the words of ordinary people in a language that would speak against the market of words excluding them. In this undertaking the places inhabited by the common people offer the poet both an experimental opportunity and vantage point for his work:

To chuse incidents and situations from common life, and to relate or describe them [. . .] in a language really used by men; and [. . .] to throw over them a certain colouring of imagination, whereby ordinary things should be presented to the mind in an unusual way [. . .] by tracing in them [. . .] the primary laws of our nature. ('Preface to Lyrical Ballads', p. 597).

Wordsworth finds in the rural folk a model for a language farthest removed from 'rational causes' and closest to the passions of the 'primary laws' of human nature, the laws of mutual caring. He sees a poetic potential in the language of those excluded from the language of the new order of industry and accumulation. In the encounters of the everyday are to be found the poetics of a world whose stories have been dismissed by the arrogance of the language of power:

But for one object which you might pass by,
Might see and notice not. Beside the brook
There is a straggl'g heap of unhewn stones!
And to that place a story appertains,
Which, though it be ungarnished with events,
Is not unfit, I deem, for the fireside,
Or for the summer shade ('Michael', 15).

In his concept of nature Wordsworth attempts to reveal the contradictions of mass production and industrial profit, and to reconstruct human value in a concept of ordinary language. With 'the Muse's help', nature and ordinary words are seen to form an intersection where the construction of liberated words can begin. Wordsworth's Nature is the rejection of a world transformed into the uncontrollable excesses and confusion of the market: the bodies, sounds, places, and creativity 'all jumbled up together to make up / This Parliament of Monsters' ('The Prelude', 7. 691). In contrast he envisions a Nature beyond the din as a 'music' that negates the noise.

The task is to challenge the ideological pretence of the city as the image of a new and better world of capitalism. In the noise of the industrial city is found the corruption of sound, the debased clamour of market structures: 'Living amid the same perpetual flow / Of trivial objects, melted and reduced / to one identity' ('The Prelude', 7. 702). This is the world of economic exchange, the intersection of displaced people and reified things:

Of colours, lights and forms; the Babel din
The endless stream of men, and moving things, . . .

Here, there, and everywhere, a weary throng,
The Comers and the Goers face to face
(*'The Prelude'*, 7. 156, 171).

The world that Wordsworth finds 'too much with us' is the world of 'Getting and spending', exploitation, and alienation: 'Little we see in nature that is ours; / We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!' ('The World is Too Much With Us', 3). This debased world overwhelms the urban dweller, reducing and replacing the experience of the world with the spectacle of marketplace novelty.

As signified by the 'city', the corrupted liberty of the revolution destroys Wordsworth's faith in politics and human nature, necessitating the locating of another world outside this 'field of betrayal'. In search of a poetic correspondent to political action, he sets out to liberate words from fixed texts into the oral realm 'not just as symbols of the passion, but as things, active and efficient, which are of themselves part of the passion'.⁶⁹ Among the strangers of the urban crowd Wordsworth recognises kindred spirits: 'Entering the City, here and there a face / Or person singled out among the rest' (9. 284). There are to be found hints of an essential human community that ignite and legitimate his poetic calling to locate what has been lost. However, the 'crowd' that represents the sociality of the city is the sign of a world gone mad, a world

that has abandoned the community of reciprocity for an economy of greed. Unable to speak in, or to, the crowd, Wordsworth seeks a space outside the city: 'Escaped as from an enemy' ('The Prelude', 7. 186).

To escape the noise of the city Wordsworth begins to look for signs of a continuity in things present and empirically selects the rustic-Nature model to establish a link with the traditional past. In doing this he seeks the voice of rural folk precisely for evidence of a social articulation outside the market economy and its representations of life in commodities and manufactured events. It is subsequently with the rural folk that he finds an oral interchange overcoming economic exchange through the process of telling stories. The early Wordsworth senses that 'sound' is as much a product of this interaction as the fields people plow or the houses they make. Stories and storytellers live and speak in the places where history is constructed. Wordsworth sees it as his poetic duty to speak to these intangibles, legitimating them as active social agencies: 'I have wished to keep my Reader in the company of flesh and blood' ('Preface to Lyrical Ballads', p. 600).

However, Wordsworth's project is seemingly confounded by a ghosting of the very space he wants to address. He escapes the city because the noise of capitalism and its representations hide the sounds he needs to hear, but his entry into Nature remains entirely problematic. He seeks the space and language of the people, yet seems haunted by a sense of the impossibility of finding this uncorrupted other world. Indeed, the poet is constantly reminded of such matters in the conduct of his world's inhabitants, folk who refuse to speak the language he wishes for them. His rural idyll ultimately becomes occupied by solitary emblems that address the poet's own lack of social constituency. The old man, the beggar, and the traveller, all are strangely silent and 'motionless'

(‘Resolution and Independence’, 82) as if the sound they produce might threaten the poet’s reconstruction of their story. The common people are not allowed to speak. Rather, they are absent and made ‘present’ through a metrical arrangement of their circumstances and language to mirror the ‘eye of Nature’, an inner space protected from the perversions of the outside world.

There are several poems that might serve to illustrate these matters of acoustic contradiction between the ‘world’ of the lived and the ‘words’ of the represented. ‘The Ruined Cottage’ is one of Wordsworth’s strongest articulations of class contradiction and acoustic ambivalence. The story of a woman who fights for survival amidst the trauma of poverty and dislocation, the poem reflects Wordsworth’s struggle for a language to confront the cruelties of industrial transformation. At the same time it seeks escape into the sublime sound of a world beyond the exigencies of commerce. The visceral materials of the story pull it towards the earth, yet, in Wordsworth’s effort to symbolise in Margaret the strength of the ‘human Soul’, suffering becomes a sacrifice to the poetic Spirit, a ‘faith that looks through death’ (‘There was a Time’, 188) into the state of grace.

The destruction of Margaret’s world depicted by Wordsworth is the palpable destruction of body, family, work, cottage, and sense of place. Mourning, Margaret wanders the fields to locate the materials of her own life, the things she produces out of the earth in concert with a living community. She looks not to be blessed for her suffering, but rather seeks the materials of life in the ruins that surround the space that she inhabits. Her wandering increases the distance and dislocation between cottage and self. As the process of ruin sets in, the closer she becomes to death.

The degradation of the cottage is the materiality of her circumstances. Once the sign of home and all things welcoming and nurturing, Margaret is becoming the ‘Last

human tenant of these ruined walls' (492), the inhabitant of a withering world, dislocated and alienated, a body in an abandoned place who wanders the fields looking for the means of self-fashioning. Disconcertingly, it is as if she fears the poem she has become will grant her immortality:

And so I waste my time': for I am changed; . . .

Weeping, and weeping I have waked; my tears
Have flowed as if my body were not such
As others are, and I could never die (352, 357).

Margaret's body and her story seem to cling to the earth as weights against the poetic sublime. Wordsworth's rendering of Margaret cannot contain the material intensity of her suffering or the space of its articulation.

Wordsworth seeks in Margaret a symbol of goodness worthy of poetic attention. He attempts to address the visceral weight of her circumstances, but he ultimately undermines the bodily force of Margaret's story by transporting her to a place beyond the class conditions of survival and ruin. Wordsworth seeks the other world of the poem and within it 'that secret spirit of humanity [. . .] still survived' (503, 506). In Margaret's inner strength is the hope that heaven 'Will give me patience to endure the things / Which I behold at home' (359). Wordsworth's other world of poetics is counteracted by the material force of Margaret's circumstance, which challenges the symbol she is being forced to become.

The world of Margaret's story escapes the form of Wordsworth's narrative. It overgrows the narrative form and resists Wordsworth's inversion of life to transitory Being. The movement of the world contradicts the space of the poem. In the process of ruin, weeds 'Had dragged the rose from its sustaining wall / And bent it down to earth' (314). Margaret's 'eyes were downward cast, / [. . .] Her voice was low, / Her body was

subdued'(376, 380). The earth bears the marks of their mutual ruin. The story that told of 'a farewell look / Upon those silent walls'(535) becomes 'A tale of silent suffering, hardly clothed / In bodily form'(233). It resolves itself as sublime memorial 'of the good' in human nature.⁷⁰ Transformed into symbol the Story of Margaret works against the life it chronicles: 'He had rehearsed / Her homely tale with such familiar power'(208). Margaret's life in the world is undermined by the poet's effort to locate her in a space both fixed by the story and outside the world of exploitation and loss.

In his meeting with a blind Beggar in 'The Prelude', Wordsworth's representation again relocates the story's production to an eternal place.⁷¹ The beggar's life of sound is fixed in the reduction of sound to 'the Word, that shall not pass away'('On the Power of Sound', 224). It is fixed as well in the invocation of the divine: 'To life, to life give back thine Ear'(153). In this idealised beauty Nature communes with the peaceful soul through the poetic transcendence of 'exterior forms'('The Prelude', 3. 159). However, in such politics turned mimesis, Nature turns sublime while the poor are mute. The paradox of Wordsworth's image of the blind Beggar haunts the story he wants to hear in the language of the 'ordinary man'. It addresses a story, the acoustic space of which the poet cannot find. The blind Beggar returns the poet's image of him with the silence of a sightless stare. In the poetic ideal the blind man cannot see or speak:

'twas my chance
Abruptly to be smitten with the view
Of a blind Beggar, who, with upright face,
Stood propped against a Wall, upon his Chest
Wearing a written paper, to explain
The story of the Man, and who he was.
My mind did at this spectacle turn round
As with the might of waters, and it seemed
To me that in this Label was a type,
Or emblem, of the utmost that we know,
Both of ourselves and of the universe;

And, on the shape of the unmoving man,
His fixed face and sightless eyes, I looked
As if admonished from another world
(‘The Prelude’, 7. 610).

In the scraps of a beggar’s handout Wordsworth finds a disappearing past where the members of a community still depend on one another for mutual survival.

A similar theme emerges in ‘The Old Cumberland Beggar’. In this poem Wordsworth attempts to reconstruct the Beggar as a symbol of humanity’s universal goodness, a sign of the traditional social cohesion he believes can be recaptured in his poetic treatment of Nature. In the Beggar, Wordsworth finds a ‘silent monitor’ who keeps alive ‘the kindly mood in Hearts which lapse of years’ results in ‘selfishness and cold oblivious cares’ (83, 87). However, the role the poet wants to assign the Beggar exists only so long as the Poem lives in Nature’s sympathetic embrace: ‘As in the eye of Nature he has lived, / So in the eye of Nature let him die’ (189). It would seem that Wordsworth prefers the beggar be left in the world of the poet’s divine work.

For Wordsworth, the untouched language of the folk can be found only in an ideal construction of the ordinary. In this space he finds his ‘community of recognition’ protected from the outside world. Ultimately, the only way to connect poetically to this outside world is to silence the noise of class encounter. This Wordsworth does quite explicitly in ‘Composed Upon Westminster Bridge’, a sonnet created in a quiet space before the day begins:

Earth has not any thing to shew more fair:
Dull would he be of soul who could pass by
A sight so touching in its majesty:
This City now doth like a garment wear
The beauty of the morning; silent, bare,
Ships, towers, domes, theatres, and temples lie
Open unto the fields, and to the sky;
All bright and glittering in the smokeless air.
Never did sun more beautifully steep
In his first splendor valley, rock, or hill;

Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep!
 The river glideth at this own sweet will:
 Dear God! The very houses seem to sleep;
 And all that mighty heart is lying still!

Here is the City before the city, images of commerce silenced by the poet's ability to see the world before political corruption. For Wordsworth, the potentiality of the polis is the silence of an inner calm, the recognition of some prior stasis before the flood of commercial products and the noise of economic conquest. In this beatific moment Wordsworth realises the privilege of his poetic gift, the sublime in the interiorised sound of 'poetic silence' that escapes the rage of commerce. However, only by silencing the outside – the noise and pollution of the city – can he purify language through the filter of Nature. 'Unpeopled' monuments represent the uncorrupted order of the poetic sublime in the 'silence' and purity of unobstructed vision. The absence of sound shapes his poetic vision of the community of feeling: 'Ne'er saw I, never felt, a calm so deep'. Wordsworth's sublime moment on Westminster Bridge articulates his turn inward and away from the politics of sound.⁷² He exchanges an inspired contemplation for a failed revolution.

Ultimately, behind the gaudy spectre conjured by capitalism is a world Wordsworth finds he cannot reach. His poetic construct denies poetics a social space. The mimetic bond of nature and language produces a dialect of privileged access to the state of grace, but the Poet finds he must orchestrate the language spoken by the inhabitants after the language of an idealised Nature. The community realised in Poetry betrays the poetics of a genuine social practice.⁷³ The stories Wordsworth tries to liberate become locked in a decontextualised past unable to speak in a radicalised way against the present. They can represent loss, but not fight it. As sensitive as Wordsworth is to illusion, he is drawn into a ritualised inversion. Exalting the position of the

shepherd, the negro-woman, or the leech-gatherer, he must nonetheless signpost the 'ordinariness' of their language with exclamation marks.⁷⁴ In effect, the space of acoustic representation negates the space of acoustic production. In a manner that both invokes the mimetic power of sound and denies the acoustic world, sound is reduced to the 'Organ of Vision!', an entity that opens into the labyrinth of the 'Invisible spirit' to access the 'Images of voice' ('On the Power of Sound', 224, 153).

Wordsworth's poetic voice seems to become permeated with these contradictions. He opposes the alienating urban conditions that transform the sounds of people into things for sale, but he silences the conditions of rural life by reducing its inhabitants to speakers of an oral ideal. Moreover, he senses the radical potential of sound, but misunderstands oral space by mistaking the 'textual Authority' of acoustic representation for the sound and material production of the story. Trapped in this way, Wordsworth is at war with his own words. He senses the power of sound in the stories of the people, but subsequently makes epic heroes of beggars and rural folk while denying sound, story, and nature as sites of contestation in the 'City'. In short, he celebrates a harmony in nature and humanity that does not exist. His work begins as an attack against the exploitation and oppression of the poor, but it becomes a search for the pure and uncontaminated:

How many by inhuman toil debased,
 Abject, obscure, and brute to earth incline
 Unrespited, forlorn of every spark divine
 ('Salisbury Plain', 49. 439).

Wordsworth's poetic practice becomes an escape inside the Poem, something sustained by a form that must deny the historical world in order to speak. In finding an 'other' to capitalist representation Wordsworth is forced into an abstract authentic world of his own poetic construction. His other Nature is not so much outside the city as inside

the poem. It is a space where only he can speak and where the idealism of his poetic construct defeats the materialist intent of his poetic practice. Having tried to poetically orchestrate the language of ordinary men, his words are de-spatialised and bound by the exclusive silence of his vision. Estranged in the space where he seeks community, Wordsworth ultimately finds himself through the gift of poetic genius among those who are likewise blessed. In the process he legitimates a bourgeois ideology that defines 'nature' as privileged retreat of the rich and 'poetry' as privileged language of truth. The poet's genius is that of recognising a divine Nature while igniting the divine spark in human nature through a patterning of language after the 'majesty' of God's World. By way of the 'serene and blessed mood' ('Tintern Abbey', 42) attainable in Nature, the poet is able to populate his world with idealised inhabitants who appear to speak and substantiate the divine language of the World.

Wordsworth finds poetic authority in a type of poetic empire, a territorial transformation of the material world into the soul of the Poet. Here, the world of sound becomes the place of divine inspiration that silences the politics of sound. Poetics offers a sense of acoustic interiority where irruptions from within spark sacred insight, insight which like 'an acorn from the trees / Fell audibly, and with a startling sound' ('The Prelude', 1. 93). Wordsworth, the 'chosen Son [. . .] with holy powers'(3. 82, 83), comes to apprehend a 'higher language'(107). Ordained to incarnate this real language of humanity, he abandons social space for metaphysical condition:

I looked for universal things; perused
The common countenance of earth and heaven;
And, turning the mind in upon itself,
Pored, watched, expected, listened; spread my thoughts
Incumbences more awful, visitings
Of the Upholder, of the tranquil Soul,
Which underneath all passion lives secure
A steadfast life. But peace! It is enough
To notice that I was ascending now

To such community with highest truth
(‘The Prelude’, 3. 110).

For Wordsworth, only a space and language removed from the noise of all contamination could produce ‘a class of Poetry’ capable of transgressing class politics. Rather than confront the contestations of the oral world, however, he internalises sound and idealises world, transforming the space of lived experience into ‘The Soul of Beauty and enduring life / [. . .] and ennobling harmony’ (‘The Prelude’, 7. 737, 742). His poetic calling comes to reveal the divine in humanity, the transitory Being that emerges as he blends ‘more lowly matter’ with that of Nature.⁷⁵ Finally, Wordsworth finds his Poet-self in a Poet created world. The blessed moments he experiences in this world further create energised patterns recognised as the forms of an innate poetic gift. Wordsworth’s fantasy community invokes from within a pleasure that the political world denies. Nature invokes and memorialises the original bond of mother to child: ‘Revived the feelings of my earlier life / [. . .] Which through the steps of our degeneracy, / [. . .] Upheld me, and upholds me at this day’ (‘The Prelude’, 10. 924, 929).

Blake’s Hauntology

In a different sort of oral resistance, Blake works with the ‘anti-Word’ outside ghostly form.⁷⁶ Although he cannot bring himself to speak from the place of Nature, taken over as it is by the lexicon of power, he struggles to speak from the earth. He seeks to re-build the earth out of appropriated and ruined materials. His voice speaks from the obscurity, the ruins, of the ‘un-authored’ world of acoustic space. He struggles to be heard by inventing and speaking a language buried under the words and symbols of authority. He is driven to break the spell of power and convention. For speaking this other language that transgresses the prevailing ideas of reason, he is called mad.⁷⁷

Blake's vision is not of a metaphysical origin, but rather of a physical becoming inside the 'bounds of circumstance'. It is of the word, of the 'other', finding its seat of power in 'the Parent Sense, the Tongue', and the 'labyrinthine Ear' ('Jerusalem', 4. 98: 16, 17).⁷⁸ Blake's poetics lives in the body and its interaction with an outside world of margins underneath the earth of science and industry. It is fundamentally of the senses and carries the energy of the body communicating life itself.

Blake's character Tharmas, one of the Four Zoas, speaks for the elements, the senses, and the directions.⁷⁹ He is the articulation of the body, the materialisation of the fourfold unity of body, reason, emotion, and imagination. Tharmas is also the disappeared sensibility of the people that must be revealed to challenge the idol of the fixed image:

I heard astonish'd at the Vision & my heart trembled within me
I heard the voice of the Slumberous Man & thus he spoke
Idolatrous to his own Shadow words of Eternity uttering'
(*'The Four Zoas: Night the Third'*, 40. 10).

For Blake, the Fall of the body out of nature and the Fall of the word out of the body are parallel social alienations, not religious symbols of original sin. These alienations intersect in the dominance of reason and the mutation of nature into a construct of mechanistic authority. The colonisation of nature and language by church, science, and industry serves to trap words, hence the poet's sense of being unable to speak:

The stern Bard ceas'd asham'd of his own song; enrag'd he swung
His harp aloft sound, then dash'd its shining frame
A ruin'd pillar in glittering fragments; silent he turn'd away,
And wander'd down the vales of Kent in sick & drear lamentings.
(*'Preludium'*, 2.18).

Whereas Christianity transforms nature into the Body of God, science turns it into a machine as capitalism turns it into a place of exploitation.⁸⁰ These appropriations are

seen to be social mutations that name Nature 'authority' and thus deny it space in a language of protest:

Fixing their Systems, permanent: by mathematic power
 Giving a body to Falshood that it may be cast off for ever.
 With Demonstrative Science piercing Apollyon with his own bow!
 God is within, & without! he is even in the depths of Hell!
 Such were the lamentations of the Labourers in the Furnaces!
 ('Jerusalem', I. 12: 11).

This colonisation provokes Blake's ambivalence toward nature. He realises that the material connection to nature is re-constructed and reduced by the paradigm of industrial order. Since Newton's mechanics serves to appropriate and re-define the 'natural' and 'nature', Blake finds himself imprisoned by the very vehicles he needs to speak.⁸¹ For every word 'nature' he utters, he feels a traitor to his own cause, reliant upon a language that further entrenches the 'visions' of authority in the act of being spoken.

In response Blake seeks to counter the one-sidedness of this rationalism with the acoustics and symbols of the mythological.⁸² His goal is to find an auricular nerve of human hope to conjure, re-animate, and politicise the world of experience. Everywhere the forms of human speech echo from the prison of authority.⁸³ Blake's struggle will eventually lead him so far 'outside' dominant words and symbols of authority that he ends up 'inside' the earth, searching for an idiom free of the prevailing systems underneath the 'enormous blast' ('Europe a Prophecy', 13. 5) of Newton's 'Nature'.

Blake seeks a language in the qualitative correspondences between earth and becoming. This he finds in a strange mixture of Christianity, Saxon mythology, and the Celtic myth of Ossian.⁸⁴ He breaks into 'English' with myth much as a John Clare might speak the 'broken English' of dialect. In this way he seeks to undermine the authority of language in uncontrollable tales that grow out of earth and body, tales that would remain in circulation and resist a univocal representation.

Blake also sees the prevailing interest in the epic forms of ancient Greece and the Bible as residing in the authoritarian tradition of the spoken Word, a tradition responsible for muting the complexity and vitality of the acoustic world. In the furnaces of his poetic underground he seeks to forge the words of an anti-epic to reclaim the stories that articulate nature and sociality as inter-related processes. Indeed, it is precisely because he seeks the anti-epic that his acoustic world provides such a powerful challenge to the hierarchy of language in his day. Blake articulates the ambivalence of the world against the mimetic mechanics of authoritative form. In the sound of 'made' words he demands the material space of acoustic potentiality:

Into your place the place of seed not in the brain or heart
 If Gods combine against Man Setting their Dominion above
 The Human form Divine. Thrown down from their high Station
 In the Eternal heavens of Human Imagination: buried beneath
 In dark oblivion with incessant pangs ages on ages
 In Enmity & war first weakened then in stern repentance
 They must renew their brightness & disorganizd functions
 Again reorganize till they resume the image of the human
 Cooperating in the bliss of Man obeying his Will
 Servants to the infinite & Eternal of the Human form
 ('The Four Zoas: Night the Ninth', 126. 8)

Blake uncovers his language inside the forgotten stories of pantheistic gods and goddesses, the old living words told in an old living world. He interrupts official verifications of authentic Text to re-animate the Ossian myths as growing tales. Using the pantheistic world to transgress classical tradition and its legacy of reason, and borrowing the acoustic voice of storytelling, Blake seeks to reveal and unfix the process of language. He seeks to do so by articulating those estranged rhythms of sociality that are irreducibly connected to the elements and forces of the external world. He looks for words that address an acoustic world in which culture and nature stand on the same ground. It is here amidst alien sounds and symbols that he finds the critical space of the

'outside', a space where it is possible to set in motion the forces of life beyond the impoverishment of a world defined by reason and industry.

Through his language Blake attempts to humanise and reclaim nature as the sound of unfallen humanity screaming to give birth to its body. The resulting sound of 'words gone mad' is the negation of vision in an acoustic affirmation of uncontrollable bodily circumstances, circumstances that rage against fixed 'truth' through a catalogue of the suffering caused by ghosts.⁸⁵ It is Fallen Nature that bars the reconstruction of life, producing a howling and raging against reason's murderous legacy. In response Blake fights to free the language of the unfallen and enlist its fury against Newton's optical authority. His call to arms warns humanity to 'Listen!' ('Jerusalem', 1. 8: 8) to the ghosts of the repressed world for the sound of reconstructive possibility: 'Lo the Furnaces are ready to receive thee' (9).

In order to conjure the repressed world from Urizen's veil of systematic delusion, Blake needs a destabilising acoustic vision.⁸⁶ He must find 'raging furnaces of affliction' that will rail against the human sacrifices to industrial progress and destroy the natural religion of transcendental harmony. The power of industrial rationalism has produced a world of poverty, alienation, dislocation, and despair that threatens to turn 'the anvil cold' and silence the raging sound of reconstruction. In such a world the labours of madness are denied: 'Shrunk into fixed space' where 'all the furnaces were out & the bellows had ceast to blow' ('The Four Zoas: Night the Fifth', 57.12, 16). For Blake, the course of action is clear: 'I must Create a System, or be enslav'd by another Mans' ('Jerusalem', 1.10: 20).

The poet attempts to assimilate nature into the space of an unfallen Albion. Putting the mind to work, he inverts reason and the world of Church, State, and Industry.

He seeks to reclaim the earth underground as a building material for the reconstruction of an unfallen reality, a space for human potentiality. Out of the earth, and from under the 'fallen life' of religious and industrial authority, the language of becoming sounds the process of rebuilding. Plowing under the epic Myths of Church and Progress, the resulting commotion attacks the power of 'natural religion':

The noise of rural work resounded thro the heavens of the heavens
 The horse[s] neigh from the battle the wild bulls from the sultry waste
 The tygers from the forests & the lions from the sandy desarts
 They Sing they sieze the instruments of harmony they throw away
 The spear the bow the gun the mortar they level the fortifications
 They beat the iron engines into wedges
 They give them to Urthonas Sons ringing the hammers sound
 In dens of death to forge the spad the mattock & the ax
 The heavy roller to break the clods to pass over the nations
 ('The Four Zoas: Night the Ninth', 124. 14).

Human experience must be recovered and rebuilt from the 'Bowlahoola' (the bowels) of the earth where 'the Fires of Los, rage / In the remotest bottoms of the Caves' ('Milton: Book the Second', 37. 55). Here, against the forces of Eternal Life, in the noise and caverns beyond the 'ruind building of God', a deformed humanity animates all the disorders and mutations of Golgonooza, the city of the dead. It is here that Los, the worker-poet, constructs a new world and language worthy of articulating this alternative. The furnaces of Los are the fires of creative energy, the forged sounds that have the power to overwhelm the eternal harmony of religion and industry:

And Los's Furnaces howl loud; living: self-moving: lamenting
 With fury & despair, & they stretch from South to North
 Thro all the Four Points: Lo! the Labourers at the Furnaces
 Rintrah & Palamabron, Theotormon & Bromion, loud labring
 With the innumerable multitudes of Golgonooza, round the Anvils
 Of Death ('Jerusalem', 3. 73: 2, 6).

In this way, 'in Golgonoozas Furnaces among the Anvils of time & Space' ('The Four Zoas: Night the Eighth', 103. 36), humanity rebuilds out of the earth the language of 'salvation' and world of Jerusalem.

The rebuilding also takes place from the bodily emanations of Albion, 'from the Spectres of the dead' (103. 38, 39) that break through the transcendental veils of religion and reason. It is only among the 'dead', the living ghosts of the underworld, that Blake can find the materials for his reconstruction. The labours of the dead are loud and disorderly acts coming from a world where a voice and the space to speak are denied:

From every-one of the Four Regions of Human Majesty,
 There is an Outside spread Without, & an Outside spread Within
 Beyond the Outline of Identity both ways, which meet in One:
 An orb'd Void of doubt, despair, hunger, & thirst & sorrow,
 Here the Twelve Sons of Albion, join'd in dark Assembly,
 Jealous of Jerusalems children, asham-d of her little-ones
 (For Vala produc'd the Bodies. Jerusalem gave the Souls)
 Became as Three Immense Wheels, turning upon one-another
 Into Non-Entity, and their thunders hoarse appall the Dead
 To murder their own Souls, to build a Kingdom among the Dead
 ('Jerusalem', 2.18: 1).

In the world of the dead, Blake finds a life of 'becoming'. The dead live and experience the world that capitalism must ghost in order to sustain itself. Indeed, Blake's revolution is very much a war of ghosts. Those he calls upon to fight for the material world are asleep in the shadow world of a powerful ideology. He must invoke the language of the 'dead' to haunt the world of progress, but he also fears that the sound may be too weak to break free: 'Like iron scourges over Albion, Reasonings like vast Serpents / Infold around my limbs, bruising my minute articulations' ('Jerusalem', 1.15: 12).

As he fights the death around him by articulating a richness under the grave, Blake's sense of unity is pagan and earthy, a sense in which life becomes a complex interaction and multiple transformation in the manner of the intersecting worlds of the mythological.⁸⁷ He seeks to reconstruct a language from the ground up and from a world beyond imitation and colonisation. The 'eternal now' is the time and space of bodily powers embedded in the language of the earth.⁸⁸ By using an acoustic ground to

transgress the contexts of scientific and visual authority, he tries to reveal the complex interlocution of poetics and world, the richness and potential of which are reduced and delegitimised by traditional authority, class privilege, and industrial order.⁸⁹ In this effort the spoken word forces the eye to hear and the ear to see: 'listen to my Vision' ('The Four Zoas: Night the Third', 41.18).

Blake's 'myth of decline' is a mytho-poetic revolt against the eternal myth of progress sustained by an ideology of loss:⁹⁰

And all that has existed in the space of six thousand years:
 Permanent, & not lost not lost nor vanishd, & every little act,
 Word, work, & wish, that has existed, all remaining still
 In those Churches ever consuming & ever building by the Spectres
 Of all the inhabitants of Earth wailing to be Created:
 Shadowy to those who dwell not in them, meer possibilities:
 But to those who enter into them they seem the only substances
 For every thing exists & not one sigh nor smile nor tear,
 One hair nor particle of dust, not one can pass away
 (Jerusalem, 1. 13: 59).

This counter-myth is a construction of speech forged by history against the power of incontrovertible, naturalised authority. It is an attempted revolution of language, the construction of a monstrosity of words powerful enough to conjure, expose, exorcise, and finally efface the Myth of Capitalism. Its stories and sounds are those of the earth interrupting Epic Progress and the ceaseless machines of power; its dissonant wailing breaks the ceaseless rhythms of mechanical progress in a poetics of place outside the rules of order. Imagination and word, myth and earth, these are the materials out of which sounds take shape and form a challenge to Epic, Myth, and Nature.

In this challenge the Myth of Capitalism is itself appropriated to tell the story of capitalism. Howling, thundering, weeping, and suffering against the harmony of Authority, the material of Christian redemption and industrial progress is transformed into the unfixed world of Ossian myth and story. To be sure, Blake's 'world' is in the

world, not above it. He uses sound as a means to speak of the poetics of earth. His new creatures of sound are entities that produce a new language in contexts outside the dominant order of words. In this, sound is 'the becoming-body' of the phenomenal world, the material of experience, not understanding.⁹¹ Such an acoustic underground stands as an early challenge to the falsely naturalised world of a unified word and technology.⁹² The centrality of Blake's struggle to bring nature down to earth foreshadows the later acoustic struggles surrounding 'the general enslavement of Nature'.⁹³

As part of his poetic practice, Blake also seeks to re-make time and space in order to question the power these co-ordinates wield in the Myth of Progress. He places time-in-space, humans-in-earth, and story-in-nature as a matter of developing the 'more complex spatial mode of apprehension' materialised in the oral realm.⁹⁴ Comparatively, Blake's myth stands against Wordsworth's Myth of the universal human condition. Whereas Wordsworth seeks the space to celebrate being, Blake wants to forge the political space to act. By digging underneath the ground to address the imagination of the earthly body, he challenges the separation between time and space that underpins Wordsworth's transcendental form.

For Blake, a decontextualised Nature denies the animation of history and is the impoverishment of the world. Los's furnace is fired by a nature transformed into history. The noisy renovation articulates the complexity of human acts against the quiet simplicity of eternal essences. Nature 'naturalised' is the work of authority silencing the historical production of the world. Blake opposes this Epic-absolutism of power, speaking to expose its falsehoods in the rhythm and intonation of earthly human practice:

But how they came forth from the Furnaces & how long
Vast & severe the anguish eer they knew their Father; were

Long to tell & of the iron rollers, golden axle-trees & yokes . . .

The terrible ball: the wedge: the loud sounding hammer of destruction
The sounding flail to thresh ('Jerusalem', 3. 73. 1, 13).

As Los labours 'at the roarings of his forge re-building the world out of 'iron and brass' ('Jerusalem', 1. 10: 63, 64), he makes words to tell his story.⁹⁵ Through him, Blake digs language up from the bottom of the earth to serve as the mud for the builder of a human story: 'Beneath the bottoms of the Graves, which is Earths central joint, / There is a place where Contrarities are equally true' (Jerusalem, 2. 48. 13).⁹⁶ Here is the place of story.

Blake's ground of language speaks against Nature, against the spell of 'Newton's sleep' and the distorted monster-creation of science and industry. It materialises a richly layered human habitat, multi-temporal and spatial, full of noise and contradiction. Blake tries to confound the forces that appropriate words and meanings by building an impenetrable language beyond mechanical translation. Calling upon unfixd acoustic rhythms, he seeks to tap into the unclaimed places of stories and words to free them to do the telling. He excavates the social potential of language to articulate and oppose the realities of authority, power, and class inequality. In the intersection between words and world that remains outside private property, there are to be found spaces attached to bodies and as yet beyond the textualisation of history and technification of commodity. In the context of the Industrial Revolution Blake addresses the stories and labours that construct the world: 'arise Spectre arise!' ('Jerusalem', 1. 9. 31). Through the telling of stories human beings articulate potentiality; by re-constructing the story they construct the earth. The cries of the 'sorrowful drudgery' and cruelty imposed by the 'wheel' are the stories of slavery and dislocation against the Epic of progress.

Clare and the Heteroglossia of World

In the poetry of Clare sound, word, gesture and image all speak to the world and against the fence.⁹⁷ For Clare, sound is 'a breathing, a naming, an intense physical presence'.⁹⁸ In his work can be found a world of unenclosed nature involving the shared places of acoustic encounter. Indeed, the body is enveloped in the experience of the physical world and the occupation of acoustic space. Clare moves, rests, and speaks in this a space, as it comes to life along dusty byways, among the gypsies, and in family folktales told by candlelight.⁹⁹ The uncontainable sounds in these places serve to challenge the circumstances of his world.

For Clare, words speak of margins and senses, not of order and reason. Words and the places from which they speak are places of conflict. Acting as a constant reminder of the process of ruin around him, 'No Trespass' signs scar the land. As contradictory as its remaining voice might be however, 'nature' is the only dialect the poet can speak, making his search for a place to speak more urgent. For Clare, the new mode of production is a betrayal, a construction of fences sectioning off the world and its inhabitants. In order to stand against this degradation, he seeks to examine and celebrate the complexity of unenclosed life. The unenclosed places are seen to offer a ground of critique, an outside that teems with detail and life.¹⁰⁰ In turn, such detail is akin to the dialects and idioms of speech themselves in the process of being imprisoned by the conventions of grammar and market place. In these circumstances sound itself becomes the mark and articulation of class division. In effect, the accent of spoken-words contains the spatial borders of class.

Clare's enclosure elegies testify to the complex contradictions of an emerging capitalist order in which the conditions of private acquisition render every corner of

experience into property or dispossession.¹⁰¹ The new mode of production is seen to be the stuff of social, environmental, and cultural ruin, creating displaced people and voices inside displaced spaces. The poorhouse echoes the reality of a system that attempts to hide the signs of poverty and protect the myths of progress. In the voiceless inhabitants of the poorhouse, Clare finds evidence of a ruined humanity. These are people who are 'reduced by want to skeletons in life', despised and scoffed at by those 'Who laugh at misery by misfortune bred / For pity lives not as a listner there' ('The Workhouse', 1809, 1818).

In response the poet's struggle to articulate the world resounds in words made from the experience of exploitation and ruins:

Accursed wealth o'er bounding human laws . . .

Thou art the bar that keeps from being fed
And thine our loss of labour and of bread
Thou art the cause that levels every tree
And woods bow down to clear a way for thee
(*'Helpstone'*, 126,134).

As a matter of resistance, the acoustic world offers the possibility of a complex interplay of social relations and sensual oral properties, a means of physical contact with the social body. Clare has an acute understanding of the radical potential in making explicit the connections between social life and nature. Conscious of the complexities of class, he sees all places and sounds as themselves sites of contestation vulnerable to ideological manipulation and colonisation. In the connections made between the degradation of nature and human livelihood, Clare uses the sound of world against muted representations of the dominant social order. The acoustic space of marginality is a site of resistance and demystification.

In this relationship, 'unused' space is seen as a refuge from the destructiveness of utilitarian value. Clare's poetics resounds with wandering along paths of entry,

encountering marginal creatures and marginal places that speak and stand against the forces of their disappearance. For example, the gypsy camp and 'The World's End' tavern are clearings on the edge of settlement, places of contact just on the outskirts where dialects abound. Clare's contact with the gypsies speaks to his sense of the complexities and acoustic richness of the concrete world. He notes that he 'lovd the gypseys for the beautys which they added to the landscape'.¹⁰² Clare also frequents 'The Hole in the Wall', a public house 'famous for strong ale and midnight merriment'.¹⁰³ Everywhere nests and walking paths converse with the tempting songs of the alehouse. The pathways and alehouses beckon transgressing borders and the signs denying entry to the land. Here is the possibility of access to an out of the way place beyond orders of authority.

In the sounds of the unenclosed land, Clare finds a centre for the urgency of his protest, a living ground of criticism. His answer to enclosure connects the degradation of nature and society. His radical poetics as a response to industrial degradation develops an opposing concept of value wherein sound addresses potentiality.¹⁰⁴ He seeks his language in nature, in the cottages of the poor, in village taverns, and in the accidental encounters of travels along the road. In these overlapping spaces, and against the context of an economic system that impoverishes, he senses the historical mutability and possibility of language. His struggle for social survival is also a struggle to defend the language and space of nature. He seeks to invoke the complexity of the world against the authority of established power. In this the politics of an unenclosed nature becomes one with the politics of an unenclosed human voice.¹⁰⁵ Bound by circumstances of poverty and marginalisation, Clare's poetics is also very much a product of his fight to fashion an identity outside his literary positioning as the 'peasant poet'.

Clare connects to the land in a way that brings out the ironies of human habitation. He speaks of his experience as lived poetics, a song, and not as fixed words.¹⁰⁶ In the rhythms of life and sound, and in the places of singing, humans find their place:

Natures universal tongue
 Singeth here
 Songs Ive heard and felt and seen
 The eternity of song
 Liveth here
 Everywhere
 Songs like the grass are evergreen
 The giver
 Said live and be and they have been
 For ever ('Songs Eternity', 51).

Songs very much transgress the boundaries of authority and suffering. Like 'The Tramp', 'No matter where they go or where they dwell, / They dally with the winds and laugh at hell' (12).

Clare constructs a language of the 'outside' by using the diversity of nature to articulate and defend the richness of social experience.¹⁰⁷ In 'The Lament of Swordy Well' Clare locates animals, nature, and human beings in a shared space of exploitation. He compares the exploitation of the ancient stone quarry of Swordy Well to the circumstances of the labouring poor who are used up and forced into the workhouse.¹⁰⁸ Among the ruins only names with no voice to speak remain:

Im swordy well a piece of land
 Thats fell upon the town
 Who worked me till I couldn't stand
 And crush me now Im down . . .

Of all the fields I am the last
 That my own face can tell
 Yet what with stone pits delving holes
 And strife to buy and sell
 My name will quickly be the whole
 Thats left of swordy well (21, 208).

Clare's poetics is aligned, and sometimes juxtaposed, with the other creatures that inhabit the world. There are spatial echoes between 'The Yellow Wagtail's Nest' and 'A broken plough' come to rest: 'It nestled like a thought, forgot by toil' ('Yellow Wagtail's Nest', 10). In 'The Progress of Rhyme', his efforts to speak 'birdsong' strive to keep song between sky and earth, away from the permanence of punctuated words on paper. The peculiar sounds the birds make are discordant notes issuing against the musical harmonics of the nature-idyll:

'Tweet tweet jug jug jug' [. . .] & then a round
Of stranger witching notes was heard
As if it was a stranger bird
'Wew-wew wew-wew chur-chur chur-chur
'Woo-it woo-it' . . .

Tee-rew tee-rew tee-rew tee rew
'Chew-rit chew-rit' - & ever new
Will-will will-will grig-grig grig-grig'.¹⁰⁹

Making more noise than song, the birds are dissonant occupiers of the margins, commoners who cannot carry a tune, but who nevertheless speak from the sidelines.¹¹⁰

In poems such as 'Noon' Clare seeks a place to stand with the birds that seek escape the heat of the sun. He addresses place and occupant alike: 'There your little feet may stand, / Safely printing on the sand' (59). With the birds, he seeks the shade of the woods:

There, aside some mossy bank,
Where the grass in bunches rank
Lift it's down on spindles high
Shall be where I'll choose to lie;
Fearless of the things that creep,
There I'll think and there I'll sleep (71).

Here is a sensed place of life stilled by the noonday heat: 'All how silent and how still, Nothing heard but yonder mill' ('Noon', 1). In the quiet of space at noon, the noise of the factory disturbs and sounds the difference.

In 'To a Fallen Elm' Clare addresses the issue of the destruction of creativity and experience in the new industrial order. In such a world the comfort of the cottage 'was thrust aside' and a workhouse prison 'raised upon the scite' ('To A Fallen Elm', 57, 58). There is no retreat to nature in Clare's response, but rather trauma and a call for protest in dialects and space. In his search for a place to both speak and efface the signs of ownership, Clare's protest joins sound, voice, and nature against the encroaching power. He seeks not language or words, but the sensed world beyond private ownership:

Friend not inanimate - tho stocks and stones
 There are and many cloathed in flesh and bones
 Thou owned a language by which hearts are stirred
 Deeper than by the attribute of words
 Thine spoke a feeling known in every tongue
 Language of pity and the force of wrong
 What cant assumes what hypocrites may dare
 Speaks home to truth and shows it what they are
 ('To a Fallen Elm', 29).

The cry of the fallen elm is also the cry of the poor: 'Beneath every fallen tree in enclosure elegies lies the body of an exploited field-hand and in every bird's throat the cry of a dispossessed cottager'.¹¹¹ These sounds that echo through the land are the forces against which Clare struggles to find a language. The elm tree has a physicality of body and sound that allows him to speak of the 'outside'. The murmurs of the tree in the chimney top become the sounds of his own body in acoustic space. This poetic crossing of borders through sound makes the physicality of the murmur an act of communication, an act affording him the potential to speak on behalf of other endangered species.

In Clare's poetry, habitation transgresses ownership and speaks to the process of shared space: species speak and produce the space they inhabit. The place of trees and birds, as well as the sensory connection of human beings, is found in the song and the capacity to sing. The poet can see the shared fate of land and song displayed in the

'fallen elm'. In contrast, the 'economics of freedom' is a language against the 'tongue of nature'. It is a matter of words destroying the world:

And learn a lesson from thy destiny
 Self interest saw thee stand in freedoms way
 So thy old shadow must a tyrant be
 Thoust heard the knave abusing those in power
 Bawl freedom loud and then oppress the free
 ('To a Fallen Elm', 37).

It is the ownership of words and land that oppresses the free. It forces those who once told their stories in the 'seasoned comfort' of the Old Elm's 'kind protection' to destroy their common place of stories. For Clare, land and social life thus become co-respondents in a radical poetics that speaks against the reductionist technologies of acquisition. He finds vitality in a mutual survival of land and poetics in which acoustic space produces stories and stories produce the places of their telling.

In particular, Clare's world mourns the loss of these nesting-places where stories grow. Long-flourishing willows, 'Whole Woods', and 'flowrey pastures' are ploughed under. 'They no compassion show / [. . .] The greens gone too [. . .]' ('Helpston Green', 14, 42). In the poem, 'The Lamentations of Round-Oak Waters', is heard the sound of lost places of stories and a lament for disappearing poetic riches. The 'shepherd with his sheep'(61), the 'lovely maid' (62), the 'Cowboy' (65), the ploughman and his horses, all rest in the meadow and among the trees along the stream's banks, 'In fancied tale or song' (88), watching insects and flowers, chasing minnows, and playing sports. Round-Oak Waters is the place of those pleasures, and it shares in the joy. When the meadow is ploughed under and the trees uprooted, the 'injur'd brook'(125) shares the pain. It is both a casualty and a witness to the deed, and so laments on behalf of everything:

The Cowboy with his Green is gone
 And every Bush and tree
 Dire nakedness oer all prevails
 Yon fallows bare and brown . . .

The greens the Meadows and the moors
Are all cut up and done (95, 120).

However, the witness does not blame the impoverished labourers: 't'was not them that own'd the field / Nor plan'd its overthrow' (171). Round-Oak Waters 'knows and feels' the truth. The guilty are the 'cruel foes with plenty blest / So ankering after more' (189).

The acoustic diversity and mundane detail in this poetics of marginalisation speaks against mere utility and to the qualitative possibilities of life. A keen sense of diversity and dialogue in nature gives Clare a base from which to defend the same richness in human possibility. For every tree around Helpstone, he recognises equally distinct human inhabitants occupying a shared world. Clare's poetics defends the voices of all 'those who had been ill-used-paupers, unmarried mothers, hunted birds and animals'.¹¹² As well the dialects of the experiential world address the voices of the marginalised. In Clare's experience, the degradation of the land drains and levels poetic material in resonating acts of impoverishment. It reduces life to survival and limits the potential riches of stories:

Old senseless gossips, and blackguarding boys,
Ploughmen and threshers, whose discourses led
To nothing more than labour's rude employs,
'Bout work being slack, and rise and fall of bread
(*'The Village Minstrel'*, 256).

As the new order takes hold, talk becomes as vacant as the land. The ruin of the land is the very impoverishment of the people. 'As are the changes of the green / So is the life of man' (*'Helpston Green'*, 63). For every tree cut down, a gathering place and a story are destroyed.

In the villages where stories are produced and exchanged, the alehouse and its 'tempting-sign' are soon closed to the living who gather there to speak. The social world is ghosted by the mute sign of progress.¹¹³ Clare addresses and lives the loss in an appeal to other ways of knowing, ways not so much lost as killed by cruelty. There is a

shared place and a shared pain. Landless labourers, sparrows, trees, streams, and commons all feel the blows of the axe, the killing of birds for money, and the 'vanish'd green' ('Helpstone', 73). The 'Tyrant boys' paid to kill sparrows or raid song-birds' nests are but echoes of tyrant landowners stealing the life out of land and labour alike. It is the 'sound' of profit that is killing the world: 'With axe at root he felled thee to the ground / And barked of freedom – O I hate that sound' ('To A Fallen Elm', 49).

Clare addresses the moor, the sparrow, the winter evening, and the crow because they have escaped the claims of profit. In his struggle, poetics becomes an acoustic challenge to the noise and image of waste. It is both lamentation against the cruelties of acquisition and celebration of the unowned riches of nature and experience. However, the struggle is a drain on poetic resources: 'I mourn like withered grass in dew' ('Lord Hear My Prayer', 30). Indeed, the forces at work take their toll on the poet:

I am--yet what I am, none cares or knows;
My friends foresake me like a memory lost: - . . .

And yet I am, and live--like vapours tost
Into the nothingness of scorn and noise
(*'I Am'*, 1, 7).

Clare soon comes to find himself in the company and places of the marginalised: among the snakes, sparrows, wild bees, and mice; in the mist, at the gypsy camp, or with the tramp or the poacher. He finds himself among all those cast outside the realm of value and decorum, his survival as tentative as land and song.¹¹⁴

Clare's poetry is inextricably bound to an experience of acoustic marginality where a shared space and shared song stand against both fenced territory and harnessed words. The correspondence between the ruin of the land and the 'fragment of the human dead' is the subversive politics of his poetics. However, in the ruins of capitalist incursion are the ruins of language that dislocate poetics from language itself, a

dislocation creating the difficulties Clare faces in producing the words he requires to speak. As a result, his voice is sometimes confounded by his own fractured efforts to speak 'in world' rather than 'in words'. To enter the world and speak its language, he must challenge the boundaries of exclusion between space and sound. He wants to transgress the boundaries that subordinate and exclude him, but he cannot deny his marginality. He wants to escape 'the dull and obstinate class' from whence he 'struggled into light'.¹¹⁵ In the places he calls home, however, his poetic labour is strange and suspect. In the world of the literary market he remains an unrecognised 'author', the 'peasant-poet', forced to struggle as the places of speech yield to literary convention.

Clare very much feels out of place in the world that markets his words. When invited to visit a wealthy aristocrat and promised '15 guineas a year for life', he finds the distance between Lord and landless labourer in the great house.¹¹⁶ Against the silence of wealth, he feels bound to the noises of poverty. His boots echo his displacement, and he is haunted by the sound they make against the fixed authority of a marble floor.¹¹⁷

Clare's story of visiting 'his Lordship' is full of embarrassments, not to mention fears he might 'lose [his] dinner in the servants hall'. Among the black-coats of London's 'orders of words', he is conscious that his body in its 'country green coat and yellow vest', 'shabby and dirty', offends against the places and harmony of power. This is indeed not the alehouse, 'each hamlet's boast', nor 'The Gypsy Camp', where 'stinking mutton roasts upon the coals'(8). When he dines with the 'respectable' people of London, he wishes he were somewhere else. When the toasts go around, he keeps his silence.

Ultimately, Clare's is an indefatigable work of transforming nature into history. His language speaks directly of, and to, the world. His work denies a spatial interiorisation and acoustic representation by articulating and contextualising the

endangered abundance and ambivalence of experience. Clare insists upon the words of place and circumstance. Precisely because of this connection to the complexity of nature, he resists confusing represented and representation. His world may be ghosted, but it is always there shaking the immutable present with a complex evidence of experience. In spite of this, his sense of space is an inclusive and co-productive one in which Nature is not seen as detached from such things as toil, story, and village tavern. Indeed, it is a place caught up in dialogue with those workings that gives rise to song. It is this acoustic practice that both questions the reduction of experience to marketable words and seeks to make audible the class production of language.

Clare finds the material of language in the acoustic practice of language, a practice with a transgressionary potential in external encounters, not internal forms. The sound he hears and makes addresses the impermanence of language and is inseparable from living struggle.¹¹⁸ He struggles to articulate a space using acoustic sensibilities existing outside the techniques of systematised text. While the visibility of sign-systems may claim space and demand an adherence to the orders of poetic genius, in Clare's world the poetic value of sound is lived, not fixed or inscribed. Interestingly, this acoustic engagement with the external world suggests a radical spatial practice required to challenge a totalising second nature. Clare reclaims sound-in-world against its entrapment in the myths of language or the mute interiority of transcendental absolutes. He offers up acts of acoustic subversion that provide insight into the interiorisation of sound and space grounding the myths of an a-historical Nature.

Clare's poetry defends his dialect as he works with sound and experience outside the history of reason. Neither the sublime of Wordsworth's Nature nor the imagination of Blake's mythology addresses the life Clare lives. The latter's words are made along the

roads in circumstances of subsistence. He has no need for a poetic construct that would bring life down to earth. His words are part of a struggle to survive in a world where fences block his way and hunger forces him to eat the grass along the roadside. His poetics struggles to break the silence of writing with a sound that escapes the order of words, a sound outside the history of the sayable. Clare wants to connect with another time and space outside the assumed continuity of historical record. The sound of the axe cutting into Clare's elm tree is the cry of unreason breaking into history.

Notes to Chapter Five

¹ Given the reconfigured hierarchy of the visual, stories of the people speak from the realm of the passions that corresponds to the low-ground of nature, the invisible beyond the eye. Although science and industry are working in the lofty spheres of light and mechanics, stories still work along the roads and in the streets where the acoustic works alongside labour, closest to the ground.

² The chapbooks are in correspondence with carnival and the grotesque body. Underneath the Enlightenment and its orders of the eye are the suppressed social body and its suppressed voice: 'the grotesque physical body [. . .] existed as a 'determining absent presence' in the classical body of Enlightenment poetic and critical discourse, a raging set of phantoms' (Stallybrass and White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 105).

³ Stallybrass and White also point out that the 'ranking of literary genres or authors in a hierarchy analogous to social classes [. . . is an] example of a wider cultural process whereby the human body, psychic forms, geographical space and social formation are all constructed within interrelation and dependent hierarchies of high and low'. Their project is 'to map out interlinked hierarchies on the terrain of literary and cultural history' (*The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 2). In this project we are attempting to map interlinked hierarchies of nature, radical poetics, acoustic spatiality, and cultural history.

⁴ John Ashton, *Chap-Books of the Eighteenth Century*, vii-viii.

⁵ These chapbooks are still accessible in the mouldy-brown pages of library basements. In the basement of the public library in Stirling, Scotland copies of chapbooks have been preserved in small, hard-cover books with paisley covers. The volumes (each containing eight to ten renderings) were willed to the library from the estate of one William Harvey.

⁶ Chambers draws attention to the following example from Pope: 'Not with less glory might Dulness crown'd, / Shall take through Grub Street her triumphant round: / And, her Parnassus glancing o'er at once, / Behold a hundred sons, and each a dunce' (Pope, *The Dunciad*, quoted in Chambers, *The Book of Days*, II, p. 223).

⁷ Chambers, *Book of Days*, II, p. 223.

⁸ Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad*, in Chambers, *The Book of Days*, II, p. 223. The chapmen and women travelled the streets hawking their stories, and transgressing the visual in the liminal spaces between orality and written form throughout the Renaissance and Enlightenment, and even into the early 19th century.

⁹ *Book of Days*, II, p. 223.

¹⁰ *Book of Days*, II, p. 200. Topographical irregularities of the body correspond with topographical irregularities of nature, irregularities that challenge the 'clarifying' powers of the eye and the science of reason (See Stallybrass and White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 25).

¹¹ See assorted examples in Ashton's *Chap-Books of the Eighteenth Century*, 1882.

¹² See Susan Buck-Morss, *The Dialectics of Seeing*, pp. 152-56. See also wood-cut illustrations in the Stirling Library's Chapbook collection, Stirling, Scotland.

¹³ Ashton's Chapbook Collection, XI.

¹⁴ John Falkirk's *Cariches*; and Janet Clinker's Oration, On the Virtues of the Old Women and The Pride of the Young (Printed for the Booksellers: William Harvey Collection, Stirling Central Library, Stirling, Scotland).

¹⁵ Chambers records the following example: 'If their ears tingle, they say it is a signe they have some enemies abroad, that doe or about to speake evill of them; so, if their right eye itcheth then it betokens joyfull laughter: and so, from the itching of the and elbow, and severall affectings of severall parts, they make serverall nose, predictions too silly to be mentioned, though regarded by them' (*Book of Days*, Vol. II, p. 200).

¹⁶ Chambers, *Book of Days*, I, p. 15.

¹⁷ Printed for the Booksellers nd: William Harvey Collection, Stirling Library, Stirling, Scotland, pp 18-19.

¹⁸ Ashton, *Chap-Books of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 459.

¹⁹ 'Emperor done over. A new Song, To which are added, THE BEGGAR. Description of a Fair. Queen Mary's Lamentation' (Stirling: Printed by C. Randall, nd., p. 4). The lame-blind-seer has one good leg in the world of the visible. He uses his wooden leg, the invisible or missing leg, as a club to beat or transgress all that is seen with all that is unseen. The wooden leg interrogates the presumption of absence and the politics of exclusion. As a weapon of strength, it destabilises the sign of 'Lame-Blind-Beggar'. Inexplicably, the wooden leg, the visible evidence of his 'low degree', the sign of his lameness, and the 'reason' for his exclusion, is also the mode of transportation into the acoustic space of ambivalence. The wooden leg exposes the artificial construct of exclusion. The sign of the lame beggar, the wooden leg, allows the beggar to defend himself and to run away. The sign of his blindness, the bell around his little dog's neck, allows the blind man to see by physically negotiating the acoustic spatiality of town and village. What is missing or repressed speaks to the ambivalence of an acoustic world outside the sighted world of reason. Acoustic space is where lived space questions absolutes, where the blind can see and the lame run down the street. The blind beggar does not need to 'see' to know world. The blind-seer transgresses false borders between the inside/outside. He has been deemed the possessor of 'inner' vision, yet his physical survival in the 'outer' world depends upon what he can hear and what he can carry on his back. Blindness 'places' him outside enlightenment, yet 'seer' denies him his 'outsidedness'. Positioned on the outside along the border zones of reason the blind-man resists 'blindness' and questions the absolute knowledge afforded to sight. He is on the outside listening to what he 'sees'. The physical self-sufficiency of carrying the weight (the knowledge) of the body leaves the official, beadle version of the 'incident' -- the 'authority' of knowledge and exclusion -- behind. The palpable weight of the lived experience of the body transgresses the ideologically imposed limits of his blindness. His body 'sees' what his eyes cannot. He is a blind-seer in the optical age of repressed and undermined invisibility.

²⁰ Chambers, *The Book of Days*, I, p. 513.

²¹ *Book of Days*, I, p. 513.

²² *Book of Days*, II, p. 222.

²³ *Book of Days*, I, p. 34. Inserts added. Chambers finds evidence of such persecution as early as 1682.

²⁴ *Book of Days*, II, p. 222.

²⁵ *Book of Days*, II, p. 221.

²⁶ Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, et al (London: Printed for the Author, 1709-1711), no. 41.

²⁷ *Book of Days*, II, p. 224. It is common in the 1700s for newspaper, tavern, and coffee-house talk to turn to the latest story of persecution. One day in July 1763, the talk is of 'yesterday evening [when] two women were sent to Bridewell, by Lord Bute's order, for singing political ballads before his lordship's door in South Audley Street' (p. 172). In 1775, the government tries to shut down and suppress all coffee-houses and meeting-places. So powerful have these places become that they are political institutions in their own right and foreshadow the political meetings, resolutions, and other machinery of agitation soon to become common. At the same time, coffee-merchants keep their establishments open by agreeing to ban from their premises debates of most concern to state authorities. The ban covers 'all scandalous

papers, books, and libels' to discourage people 'from declaring, uttering, or divulging all manner of false and scandalous reports against government, or the ministers thereof'(p. 173).

²⁸ *Book of Days*, II, p. 221.

²⁹ Martha Vicinus, *The Industrial Muse*, p. 9.

³⁰ *Industrial Muse*, p. 21.

³¹ *London Labour and the London Poor: a cyclopaedia of the condition and earnings of those that will work, those that cannot work, and those that will not work* (New York, A. M. Kelley, 1967), in Charles Hindley, *Curiosities of Street Literature*, p. 117.

³² Hindley, *Curiosities*, p. 51.

³³ Williams, *Culture and Society: 1780-1950* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1958), p. 51.

³⁴ Henry Mayhew, in Hindley, *Curiosities*, p. 117.

³⁵ Vicinus, *Industrial Muse*, p. 21.

³⁶ *Industrial Muse*, p. 22. Church reformers repeatedly attack the sound of the taverns or 'houses of iniquity' seeking to root out superstitions of the magical world once and for all. Protestant reformers travel to wakes, alehouses, and fairs condemning fiddlers, storytellers, and folk-healers encountered along the way and seriously undermining these spaces of acoustic resistance (Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, p. 239). In the hands of the simple folk who are considered far removed from the light of the sublime, even 'images' are considered dangerous residuals of the pagan. At the Catholic Synod (1786), the church 'criticised the cult of images, in particular the practice of giving different images of the same person different names, as if there were more than one Virgin Mary' (*Popular Culture*, p. 238).

³⁷ Ashton, *Chap-Books of the Eighteenth Century*, vii.

³⁸ Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, p. 255.

³⁹ Just as the 18th century sees a fascination with blindness among the elite poets of the time who are struggling with the impact of the enlightenment on words and imagination, blind ballad-singers and poets manage to escape the alienation of orality in the increasingly more print-based culture of Europe. The importance of the blind during this period of 'excess of sight' suggests that there is a felt sense 'that their immunity from print preserved their creative powers' (Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, p. 255). The oral performers tend to become 'mouthers' of texts given to them by publishers who seek their help in the 'publication' of the now written words, which were once exclusively word of mouth.

⁴⁰ *John Clare: Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. by Merryn and Raymond Williams, p. 8.

⁴¹ In 'Six Acts of 1819, 'it is stipulated that 'any periodical that appeared more often than once every twenty-six days, sold for less than six pence and contained any Public News, Intelligence, or Occurrences or an Remakes or Observations thereon, or upon any Matter in Church or State' is a crime 'punishable by imprisonment and high fines' (Murphy, *Toward a Working Class Canon: Literary Criticism in British Working-Class Periodicals 1816-1858*, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1994, p. 46). As part of the 'the War of the Unstamped' (1830-36), working-class publications used the 'sound' of the chapbook and broadside singers to develop a workers' language in their periodicals and to 'promote the idea of a separate class with a distinct and valuable consciousness' (p. 47). In 1836, the stamp duty was removed but a paper duty was brought in at the same time. Until the mid 1850s these taxes on working-class 'texts' 'maintained newspapers as the preserve of the wealth, except, significantly, certain sensational Sundays which in style and content imitated the broadsides'. When the taxes were removed in 1855, newspapers 'were able to challenge broadsides for their traditional markets' (Michael Hughes, 'Introduction' in Charles Hindley, *Curiosities of*

Street Literature, p. 10). *Curiosities of Street Literature* (originally edited anonymously in 1871 and re-edited by Charles Hindley in 1970) offers a collection of broadside ballads and prose broadsides which are sold, sung and recited in the streets of England between 1800 and 1870. The ballads and broadsides represent a contradictory force; at once a marketplace for small books sold via the sound of voice (and a forerunner to newspapers), and a vocal base for the intersections of radical poetics and political protest.

⁴² Paul Thomas Murphy, *Toward a Working Class Canon*, p. 122. Murphy tells us that the *Northern Tribune* was a late Chartist periodical and that it regularly versified political issues in its 'Songs for the People', much as working-class poets had been doing for years: 'What an invaluable auxiliary in the work of Popular Regeneration song might become, were sentiments of freedom, heroism, fraternity, and love allied to 'sweet sounds'! By attaching fitting words to some of our Popular Melodies, we shall strive to inspire higher and healthier social feelings: and 'destroy custom by custom' (*The Northern Tribune* 1854-55).

⁴³ *The Common Muse: An Anthology of Popular British Ballad Poetry XVth-XXth Century*, ed. by de Sola Pinto and Rodway (London: Chat & Windus, 1957), p. 4, 13.

⁴⁴ Hindley, *Curiosities of Street Literature*, p. 51.

⁴⁵ Taken from a broadside song, 'New Dialogue and SONG ON THE TIMES' Division II. 'Broadside on the Royal Familie, Political Litanies, &c' (Hindley's collection of acoustic *Curiosities of Street Literature*, p. 71).

⁴⁶ Matched to familiar tunes, the protest songs reveal historical contradictions between the 'actuality of rhythm' in the oral world and the 'abstraction of meter' in the represented word' (Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik, New York and London: Seminar Press, 1973, p. 125). Rhythm confronts meter in concrete social situations in 'a mutual exchange of intonations, 'a sort of reciprocal infectiousness between context and speech' (*Philosophy of Language*, p. 133). Intonation and rhythm are shaped by the conditions of historical circumstance, 'the vicissitudes of the word are the vicissitudes of the society of word-users' (*Philosophy of Language*, p. 157). In the struggle between the interiorisation and exteriorisation of communicative space is the politics of power to repress the outside of the other by transforming living word into linguistic thing (*Philosophy of Language*, p. 159). The sound of spatial acoustic practice locates the poetics of resistance in the exterior world.

⁴⁷ Nicholas Green, *The Spectacle of Nature, Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-century France* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 76-80.

⁴⁸ *The Common Muse*, pp. 9-28.

⁴⁹ *The Song of the Lower Classes*, Ernest Jones c. 1848, in *The Common Muse*, pp. 125-126. Music for the song is composed by John Lowry, but it could also be sung to 'the air of 'The Monks of Old' (p. 125).

⁵⁰ 'A Voice from the Coal Mine' (1825), in Vicinus, *Industrial Muse*, p. 63.

⁵¹ *Industrial Muse*, p. 63.

⁵² In his examination of the ballad tradition in north-eastern Scotland, David Buchan points to the role specifically Scottish ballads played in maintaining 'a sense of native identity against the pervasive threat of alien anglicization' (*The Ballad and the Folk*, p. 69). Buchan points to the Scottish struggle against the encroachment of English colonisation. The struggle resulted in a 'peculiarly Scottish dissociation of sensibility' where Scotsmen spoke, felt and experienced in Scots and thought and read in English (p. 68).

⁵³ 'Joseph Burgess' (1874), in Vicinus, *Industrial Muse*, p. 219.

⁵⁴ Craftsmen circulated protest songs encouraging violent actions against the factory owners. Displaced and poverty stricken labourers formed themselves into secret groups bound together by the sound of illegal

oaths that authorised their late night attacks on the signs of industrial enslavement (Chambers, *The Book of Days*, I, p. 357). Chambers notes that from March 11, 1811 to October 1816 when the machine-burning and wrecking ceased that 'upwards of a thousand stocking frames and a number of lace machines are destroyed by it in the county of Nottingham alone' (*Book of Days*, I, p. 358): 'Come all ye croppers stout and bold, / Let your faith grow stronger still, [. . .] / Around and around we all will stand, / and sternly swear we will, / We'll break the shears and windows too, / And set fire to the Tazzling mill / *Cropper Lad*, unauthored, c 1811-1812). This is an example of many such songs in oral and broadside circulation (John Miller, 'Songs of the Labour Movement', in *The Luddites and Other Essays*, ed. by Lionel M. Munby, p. 123).

⁵⁶ Michael Hughes, 'Introduction', in Hindley, *Curiosities of Street Literature*, 6.

⁵⁷ Vicinus, *Industrial Muse*, p. 51.

⁵⁸ Word of mouth is especially important, given the Combination Acts in the early 1800s that made trade union activity illegal, and given the 'highly developed system of spies and secret information which the authorities' had in place to infiltrate the working classes (Frank Darvall, *Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969, p. 90). Working class movements operated 'underground' (Darvall, p. 179).

⁵⁹ Innkeepers were central figures in the popular dissemination of chapbooks (they are often named in the wills of the chaunters). Public inns and alehouses acted as centres where ballads and chapbooks were read aloud and where the chorus became a vehicle for oral participation (Margaret Spufford, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England*, Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1981, p. 66). These same places of oral circulation also formed the meeting places for workers' organisations seeking to build a class voice.

⁶⁰ Under the circumstances of factory production, long working hours, low wages, industrial accidents, poor housing and high density, the industrial cities of Europe fell victim to cholera epidemics throughout the 1830s and 40s sending those who could afford it out to seek their own piece of nature as refuge from the environmental horrors of the cities. This created a hierarchy in the living spaces of human habitation.

⁶¹ Perhaps this is why Blake brought together the 'emanations' of humanity and the emanations of nature in a 'city' as opposed to a landscaped Eden. The city is the real world of the industrial muse, the place where the contradictions of capitalism are most cruelly experienced; where the aural juxtaposition of private garden and sweatshop articulates the strongest testimony against bourgeois ideology. As a radical alternative to capitalist city, Blake's *Jerusalem* is not a return to the pastoral aesthetic, but rather a material reconstruction of humanity as social beings in socially realised human habitat that removes artificial boundaries between rural and urban, and challenges bourgeois possession of nature as owned resources and as private aesthetic domain. The name of their stories (emanations) is the conjoined social life of all species-being -- nature, carnival, radical poetics, Jerusalem.

⁶² Darvall discusses in detail the spy networks organised to infiltrate working class organisations and movements. In addition to organised strikes and working-class publications, it was the 'wild talk, as reported by the spies [which] so alarmed the authorities' (*Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England* *Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England*, p. 184).

⁶³ Spufford notes in *Small Books and Pleasant Histories* that the circulation of the chapbooks themselves (although still vitally connected to orality) had 'already made an indelible mark on oral tradition' by the early 18th century. However, as she notes, literacy rates of the poor and emergent working class must be understood as variously indicating the capacity to read but not write, or vice versa (pp. 1-15). Murphy says working-class literacy in the first half of the 19th century was high, 'somewhere between two-thirds to three-quarters of the labouring population of Great Britain during this period' (*Toward a Working Class Canon*, p. 7). But he is also quick to point out the difficulties in using this data to make 'sense of the quality of working-class literacy', especially given the varied means by which literacy was defined (p. 8). Literacy itself was a site of class struggle as the working class fought for rights to education throughout

most of the 19th century.

⁶⁴ Nicholas Green, *Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-century France* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990), p. 166.

⁶⁵ 'Pleasing Art', Harvey Collection, Stirling Library (Falkirk: Printed for the Bookseller, 1840), p. 11.

⁶⁶ 'Pleasing Art', p. 10.

⁶⁷ 'Pleasing Art', p. 11.

⁶⁸ Buchan notes the differences between traditional ballads of the rural and the street-ballads of industrial towns: 'The traditional ballad maker enjoyed depicting the well-born or wealthy heroes [. . .] and the luxurious magnificence of the aristocratic life' (*The Ballad and the Folk*, p. 76). Traditional ballads speak of time and space as 'far away' and the 'stylized landscape' that represents both the imagined aristocratic world, and the wide world of adventure outwith the ploughman's experience' (*Ballad and the Folk*, p. 77); an unknown 'out there': 'Side by side with the distancing is another, complimentary process, that of localising, whereby the distanced world is seen in terms of the folk's own life' (*Ballad and the Folk*, p. 79). The street-ballads of the 19th century dealt with everyday life. 'Instead of escaping from the hard realities of everyday life by singing about another life, the ballad singer relieved his feelings by commenting directly and sardonically on the life he led, day in, day out' (*Ballad and the Folk*, p. 268).

⁶⁹ Wordsworth, 'Note to The Thorn', in *William Wordsworth*, ed. by Stephen Gill (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 594. Unless otherwise indicated all references to Wordsworth's poetry and prose are found herein.

⁷⁰ Wordsworth thinks he has found the best in humanity, community, and language in the rural folk uncorrupted by class. His poems attempt to build a new sense of the social by copying the Nature (and authentic language) outside the City. He explicitly suggests that: 'The poems are faithful copies from nature [. . .] and may in some small degree enlarge our feelings of reverence for our species, and our knowledge of human nature, by shewing that our best qualities are possessed by men whom we are too apt to consider, not with reference to the points in which they resemble us, but to those in which they manifestly differ from us' (*The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: The Early Years 1787-1805*, ed. by Ernest De Selincourt, 2 vols. vol. 1, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1967, p. 315).

⁷¹ Wordsworth transforms the blind beggar into a metaphysical 'type, / Or emblem, of the utmost that we know, / Both of ourselves and of the universe' ('The Prelude', 7.615, 620). Here is the eternal Presence of 'the unmoving man { . . . } from another world' (621, 623).

⁷² Inside the silenced images of the City Wordsworth recognises the energy patterns of an idealised Nature. For Wordsworth, the artist's vision is the gift of speaking the language of an uncorrupted humanity. He finds 'The mind of Man is framed even like the breath / And harmony of music' ('The Prelude', 1. 351). The patterning of Wordsworth's poetically constructed second nature reaches the interior 'core' of absolute calm beyond the violence of the periphery. Wordsworth's role as pattern recogniser foreshadows the role McLuhan casts for himself as the translator of the electronic 'revolution' in language. In both cases, the poet's gift is to energise an interior language of social cohesion 'by establishing such intellectually purified images of the entelechy of nature' (McLuhan, 'Wyndham Lewis: The Theory of Art and Communication', in *The Interior Landscape*, ed. by Eugene McNamara, p. 94). Wordsworth fits to 'metrical arrangement' what McLuhan fits to electronic juxtaposition – 'the real language of men' – seeking to orchestrate the pleasure of interior communion with second nature and thereby to compose 'a class of Poetry [. . .] well adapted to interest mankind permanently, and not unimportant in the multiplicity, and in the quality of its moral relations' ('Preface to Lyrical Ballads', p. 595).

⁷³ In Wordsworth history is reduced to matching natural patterns and individual emanations: 'How exquisitely the individual Mind / (And the progressive powers perhaps no less / Of the whole species) to the external world / Is fitted; and how exquisitely too – [. . .]. The external world is fitted to the mind' ('Home at Grasmere', 1004, 1111).

⁷⁴ See Merryn and Raymond Williams's comparison between Wordsworth's poem, 'Gypsies' and Clare's 'The gipsy camp', in *John Clare: Selected Poetry and Prose*, p. 202.

⁷⁵ 'Home at Grasmere' captures Wordsworth's ultimate calling: 'Come, thou prophetic Spirit, Soul of Man, / [. . .] unto me vouchsafe / Thy guidance, teach me to discern and part / Inherent things from casual, what is fixed / From fleeting, that my verse may live, and be / Even as a light hung up in heaven to cheer / Mankind in times to come' (1026).

⁷⁶ Here we borrow Derrida's notion of 'hauntology' by which he means 'a novel form of war' -- ghosts against the ideological apparitions of capitalism which in turn make 'ghosts' out of sociality and world (*Specters of Marx*, p. 50). Such ghostings require a strategic practice of conjuring the voices of subversion and exorcising the spirits of absolute truth and authority (*Specters*, pp. 30-75).

⁷⁷ *William Blake: His Life and His Work*, ed. by Jack Lindsay, p. 230. Blake dregs up an 'excess of naming' from his underworld of language using new words against words in the mouths of the Church and in emergent capitalism. This can be heard, for example, in 'Jerusalem' where he renames by placing the familiar in unfamiliar and primordial places: 'And these names of the Twenty-seven Heavens & their Churchs / Adam, Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, / Noah, Shem, Arphaxad, Cainan The Second, Salah, Heber, / Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terha: these are the Female Males' (3. 75: 10-14). Unless otherwise indicated, all references to the poetry of Blake are taken from *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. by David Erdman (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1965).

⁷⁸ This sense of the tongue as the seat of human energies (together with the loins) locates Blake in acoustic space where the myths he seeks to counter reason and class-ideology reside in 'Golgonooza', in stories that depart from the language paths of authority, and which therefore stand in the anti-authoritarian public square, protected by the senses and the four directions.

⁷⁹ The Four Zoas represent the alienated being of humanity seeking reunification. Tharmas, Urizen, Luvah, Urthona are the four 'elements' of 'human being': the body, reason, emotion and imagination. These are also the four symbolic domains that Stallybrass and White discuss: 'psychic forms, the human body, geographical space, and the social order' and which they emphasise that 'transgressing the rules of hierarchy and order in any one of these domains may have major consequences in others'. They say that if 'we can grasp the system of extremes which encode the body, the social order, psychic form and spatial location, we thereby lay bare a major framework of discourse within which any further 'redress of balance' or judicious qualification must take place' (*The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*, p. 3). It is this deconstruction of vertical hierarchy of the modern body that William Blake seeks in his efforts to construct a sound of otherness.

⁸⁰ In what could be seen as an attack on Wordsworth's idealisation of nature, Blake rages against these reductive constructs that use nature to consolidate authority: 'Plotting to devour Albion & Loss the friend of Albion / Denying in private: mocking God & Eternal Life: & in Public / Collusion, calling themselves Deists, Worshipping the Maternal / Humanity; calling it Nature, and Natural Religion' ('Jerusalem', 4. 90: 63, 66).

⁸¹ Blake is known to have accused Wordsworth 'of loving Nature, the Devil's work' (*William Blake: His Life and his Work*, ed. by Jack Lindsay, p. 256).

⁸² By 'mythological' we mean the world of stories, stories underneath officially defined Stories or Traditions; stories that are told but never fixed.

⁸³ Such is the take-over of language that Blake heard:

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear ('London', 5-10).

⁸⁴ Ossian, or Oisean MacFinn, is a Gaelic bard (3rd century) whose works were 'translated' by the Scottish poet James Macpherson in the 1760s. As part of the 'aesthetic of the wild', the Ossianic poems were extremely popular in the late 18th and early 19th centuries throughout Europe. Ossian was seen to be the Celtic Homer, the personification of the poetical spirit of cultural primitivism (Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, p. 10, 17). Burke notes the questionable authenticity of the Macpherson translations citing evidence gathered by a committee of the Highland Society of Scotland (1797) that was appointed to investigate the poems. By asking old men in remote parts of Scotland about the poems the committee finds that no one has heard the exact songs of the Macpherson translation, but that many of the songs they do know resemble passages from Macpherson quite closely. The quest for the authentic Ossian betrays the fissures of orality. The committee sought the Tradition, the Text of Ossian rather than the stories, oral authority against oral practice.

⁸⁵ The acoustic dissonance of the ghosted world is loudly articulated in Blake (see especially, 'Jerusalem', 1. 13: 1-66).

⁸⁶ 'Urizen' is Blake's mythological name for 'reason'.

⁸⁷ McLuhan finds in Blake's poetics a model for the acoustic reawakening of the tribal, a means to transcend the earth via a fusion of the heretofore fragmented sense world (*The Gutenberg Galaxy*, pp. 265-266). For his part, Blake would recoil at the thought of technology assuming the role of the distinctly human language he is after.

⁸⁸ We sense in the 'noise' of Blake's reconstruction something that would later come to influence McLuhan. In McLuhan's translation, eternal now is the 'simultaneity of the senses' achieved in the transcendental Word. Electronic time and space reconstruct the Web of religion. In Blake, the body of Christ is ultimately the body of man. McLuhan's electronic global village is ultimately the body of Christ resurrected in the technology of man.

⁹⁰ Harold Bloom, 'Commentary', in *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. by David Erdman, p. 819.

⁹¹ Here we borrow Derrida's phrase (*Specters of Marx*, p. 6).

⁹² Blake predates Barthes's call for a radical acoustic practice 'to constantly scour nature, its 'laws' and its 'limits' in order to discover History there and at last to establish Nature itself as historical' (Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 108).

⁹³ Here we borrow Barthes's phrase (*Mythologies*, p. 73).

⁹⁴ David Buchan, *The Ballad and the Folk*, p. 55.

⁹⁵ William Blake, 'Jerusalem', 1. 10: 63-64.

⁹⁶ 'Bottom' is here used in the revealing and multiple sense of low-lying land, 'part on which thing rests', 'proven worthless', 'person occupying less honourable end of the table, class, etc.' (*The Concise Oxford*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962, pp. 106).

⁹⁷ For Clare the fences are marks of acquisition that imprison nature and humanity: 'Fence now meets fence in owners little bounds / Of field and meadow large as garden grounds / In little parcels little minds to please / With men and flocks imprisoned ill at ease ('The Mores', 47-50).

⁹⁸ *John Clare: Selected Poetry and Prose*, p. 18.

⁹⁹ Clare's father was a well-known entertainer at village festivals and was known to boast 'over his horn of ale [. . .] that he could sing or recite above a hundred' tales by heart (*I Was Born at Helptone*).

¹⁰⁰ Clare recognises what Benjamin later notes, that 'in the last analysis structure and detail are always historically charged', that is, inscribed with the complexities of the lived (*The Origins of German Tragic Drama*, p. 182). The detail in Clare bespeaks the world as charged by the richness of history: 'The old dame sees her cat wi fears alarm / Play hurly burly races wi its tale / And while she stops her whell her hands to warm / She rubs her shooting corns and prophecys a storm' (*November*, 879). 'Where the wood minstrels sweetly join'd among / And cheer'd my needy toilings with a song' (*Helpstone*, 143), 'She furious stamp't her shoeless foot aground / Wiped by her sut black hair wi clenching fist' (*The Gypseys Camp*, 25). 'Such rural sounds the morning tongue renews / And rural sights swarm on the rustics eye / The billy goat shakes from his beard the dew's' (*November*, 162).

¹⁰¹ As Johanna Clare points out: 'Blind to the immense variety of interactions in which man with his capacity for aesthetic and spiritual experience could be involved, incapable of seeing the natural landscape as more than an economic resource to be possessed and exploited, the encloser had declared himself the enemy of everything in the realm of nature and society – ancient trees and ancient customs - which couldn't turn a profit' (*Bounds of Circumstance*, p. 38).

¹⁰² *John Clare's Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Eric Robinson (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 31.

¹⁰³ *Clare's Autobiographical Writings*, p. 62.

¹⁰⁴ Here acoustic practice speaks 'against the forcing of all experience into instrumental (utility), and all things into commodities' (Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature*, p. 151).

¹⁰⁵ In Clare this shared degradation is nature turned political. Johanne Clare addresses John Clare's effort to find a language of resistance in a world of hypocrisy: 'This new-world is so filled with the ugly, self-proclaiming cant of the enclosing class that no other forms of speech can be heard [. . .] his only recourse is to put aside the gentle language of evocation and enter, with corrosive intent, into the loud and empty rhetoric of his enemies. He must listen attentively to the enclosures and their political lackeys as they speak a language less human than the language of his beloved elm-tree' (*Bounds of Circumstance*, p. 51).

¹⁰⁶ The birds and the people speak and sing in dialects that work upon world and are worked upon by world. Clare's acoustic practice disturbs the existing stability by re-orienting words to acoustic space. The lack of punctuation, use of dialect, and the 'misspelling' are all signs of the peasant poet, yet they are also a means to address the circumstances of his world. For Clare, sound is the intrigue, the disrupter of form, which intervenes and repositions words to respond to and act upon the diversity of the world. His poetics exposes the system, the form, and importantly, the other possibilities of the political outside. The figure of the 'peasant poet' allows him to speak but serves to silence the space from which he speaks.

¹⁰⁷ Clare's ultimate language of the outside (the world of heteroglossia) speaks against the oratory of power (the excess of the language) of acquisition: 'Thoust heard the knave abusing those in power / Bawl freedom loud and then oppress the free / Thoust sheltered hypocrites in many a shower / That when in power would never shelter thee / Thoust heard the knave supply his canting powers / With wrongs illusions when he wanted friends / That bawled for shelter when he lived in showers / And when clouds vanished made thy shade amends/ With axe at root he felled thee to the ground/ And barked of freedom - O I hate that sound' (John Clare, 'To a Fallen Elm', 45).

¹⁰⁸ Unless otherwise indicated, the poetry of Clare is taken from *John Clare: Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. by Merryn and Raymond Williams (London: Methuen, 1986).

¹⁰⁹ Clare, 'The Progress of Rhyme', in Tim Chilcott, 'A Real World & Doubting Mind': *A Critical Study of the Poetry of John Clare* (Hull: Hull University Press, 1985), p. 39.

¹¹⁰ Clare's project is one of acoustic connection to the world through the intonations and rhythms that world contains. Circumstances shape rhythm, dialect, and accent. Bird noises communicate with other

dialects: edding, drowking, mortis, jocolat, moilers, and the like. The onomatopoeic exchange speaks to the complexity of intonations and rhythms. The heard world is a lived world struggling to be heard amidst the reductive forces of mechanisation. Clare's poetics of acoustic space stands against the authority and mimetics of form. Space is nursery to his rhymes (Clare's *Autobiographical Writings*, p. 55).

¹¹¹ Johanne Clare, *John Clare and the Bounds of Circumstance*, p. 43.

¹¹² *John Clare: Selected Poetry and Prose*, p. 213.

¹¹³ In 'Elegy on the Ruins of Pickworth' Clare writes of working in the lime-kilns nearby. The conditions of the poem are set in the shared decay of land and labourers amidst the ruins of Pickworth: 'It appears to be the ruins of a large town or city the place where we dug the kiln was full of foundations and human bones' (*John Clare's Autobiographical Writings*, p. 77). The fragments of death reach into 'prosing thoughts [. . .] of my parents distresses at home and of my laboring so hard and so vainly to get out of debt' (*Autobiographical Writings*, p. 19). In the poem he writes: 'There's not a foot of ground we daily tread, / But gains increase from time's devouring spoil, / But holds some fragment of the human dead' ('Elegy on the Ruins of Pickworth', in *The Poems of John Clare*, ed. by J. Tibble, p. 54).

¹¹⁴ He writes on scraps of things because he does not have the pennies to buy paper. He uses bits of blue paper, bills and brown wrapping paper from the grocer, and often hides his poems in a hole in the wall. Thinking he was just practising his handwriting, his mother often used them as 'kettle holders and fire lighters'; poetic fragments on bits of paper disappearing with the sound (*Autobiographical Writings*, p. 82).

¹¹⁵ See Clare's 'Critical Essays', in *The Prose of John Clare*, ed. by J.W. and Anne Tibble, pp. 206-219.

¹¹⁶ *Clare's Autobiographical Writings*, p. 117.

¹¹⁷ Clare addresses the palpable contradictions of sound in the following story: 'His Lordship sent for me / I went upstairs and thro winding passages after the footman as fast as I could hobble almost fit to quarrel with my hard-nailed shoes at the nose they made on the marble and boarded floors and cursing them to myself as I set my feet down in the lightest steps I was able to utter' (John Clare, *Autobiographical Writings*, pp. 116-117).

¹¹⁸ Clare's approach to sound is suggestive of Lefebvre's notion of the bodily production of space, that is, there is an immediate material connection between the body and its space, and between, in this case, acoustic gestures in space and the body's occupation of space (*The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith, Oxford, UK & Cambridge USA: Blackwell, 1991, p. 170). The incessant diversity of acoustic gesture interrupts the spatial absolute of enclosed or fixed form. Bodily acts produce space and are produced by the space in which they act – history is the poetics of space in the material process of marking the earth. It is 'the loci of passion, of action, and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time [. . .] it may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic' (Lefebvre, p. 42). The sound of orality in the exterior world reveals the temporal production of transgressive space. Sound reveals the critical other to a world reduced to property and orders of accumulation.

CHAPTER SIX – THE QUEST FOR THE SPACE OF ACOUSTIC SUBVERSION

Seeking the Body of the Oral Other

The poetry of Wordsworth, Blake, and Clare does offer a different reading of 'sound', a reading that questions the reduction of acoustic space to an interior presence. In their poetics, oral space remains a contested world that exposes the ways of establishing power. It is the site of sound revealed, the place where the experience of sound transgresses the semantics of words that reduce the world to rational form. These poets offer an historical understanding of the contestations of 'sound' in a world reduced to the rational representations of a visual order. They also offer a promise to conjure this world from its ghosted state. While the later Wordsworth succumbs to an idealisation of this orality, Blake and Clare continue to pursue an earthly production of acoustic space, making their work ideologically relevant up to the present day.¹ It is arguable that the understanding of sound they articulate is unsurpassed by contemporary theories of acoustic subversion that embrace various forms of interiorisation.

McLuhan and the orality theorists are not alone in raising the implications and issues of sound and lost oral powers in the contemporary period. The works of Bakhtin, Volosinov, and Kristeva also offer a perspective on the potentials of a 'revolution in language', one deserving of theoretical consideration with respect to matters of orality and spatial acoustics. In their works is found a discourse of the 'oral other', a seeking of the ambivalent body of language. Positing the subversive potential of sound in the ambivalent and transgressionary life of language, they seek to locate a repressed acoustic 'other', a radical 'elsewhere' to the rational order of language and authority.

Interestingly, these theories of language share a common ground in their rejection of

Romanticism, that is, the Romantics represent a failed revolution in language, an idealist abandoning of the folk culture being addressed. As much as they dismiss Romanticism, however, Bakhtin, Volosinov, and Kristeva do embrace the possibilities of a marginal vernacular against the reductionary force of language proper.

Bakhtin's Heteroglossia

Bakhtin locates his interest in the oral life of language as a critical outgrowth of 'what the idealist-Romantics meant by "spirit" in contrast to soul'.² Accordingly, he intends to turn away from the 'spirit within' and approach the 'spirit of man', the life of the oral, from the outside.³ In Bakhtin's view, the Romantic retreat into idealism is a product of the industrial world itself. The 'monsters' of industrialism are able to defeat the monster-creating excesses of folk culture by virtue of transforming the world into an alien form 'overcome' by terror. In such a place reconciliation can only come about 'in a subjective, lyric, or even mystic sphere'.⁴

While Bakhtin does not develop the possibilities of the Romantic grotesque, he does, in contrast to McLuhan, credit the Romantics for opening up the transgressive possibilities of an interior infinite:

Romanticism made its own important discovery – that of the interior subjective man with his depth, complexity and inexhaustible resources. This *interior infinite* of the individual was unknown to the medieval and the Renaissance grotesque; the discovery made by the Romantics was made possible by their use of the grotesque method and of its power to liberate from dogmatism, completeness, and limitation.⁵

Bakhtin notes that with the decline of Romanticism in the second half of the 19th century interest in the grotesque is considerably reduced in language as well as literary theory.⁶ In this process the life of the grotesque is denied and obscured, even as carnival themes and symbols become formalised icons of a lost and inaccessible past.⁷

Bakhtin's own notion of 'grotesque realism' is central to his theory of vernacular subversion. In its connection to the earthly processes of mutability and decomposition, acoustic degradation is seen to exaggerate the productions of the grotesque body. The lower extremities of defecation and impolite noises disrupt the stable Body of authority. In effect, the living sound of the vernacular lowers 'all that is high, spiritual idea, abstract; it is a transfer to the material level, to the sphere of earth and body in their indissoluble unity'.⁸ Bringing the body down to earth locates the world in the reproductive zone of life and death:

It was important to demonstrate the whole remarkable complexity and depth of the human body and its life, to uncover a new meaning, a new place for human corporeality in the real spatial-temporal world. In the process of accommodating this concrete human corporeality, the entire remaining world also takes on new meaning and concrete reality, a new materiality.⁹

The grotesque is all that which 'protrudes from the body, all that seeks to go out beyond the body's confines'.¹⁰ Extending out into space, the grotesque body attempts to 'break through toward the horizontal of real space and historic time [. . .] outside all hierarchical norms and values'.¹¹ This exaggeration of the body is seen to be a low language defying the high language of Church and Spirit.

For Bakhtin, the social-physical world is the 'living agency' without which speech becomes the interior dialogue of the soul. In acoustic terms, a grotesque realism articulates the potentiality of the people in their associations with the external world. The sound of the grotesque body opens onto the outside world. It is 'a body in the act of becoming':

It is never finished, never completed; it is continually built, created, and builds and creates another body. Moreover, the body swallows the world and is itself swallowed by the world [. . .]. This is why the essential role belongs to those parts of the grotesque body in which it outgrows its own self, transgressing its own body, in which it conceives a new, second body.¹²

Through the openness of the mouth, the sound of the grotesque body enters the world, just as the world enters the body. In this second life 'the confines between bodies and between the body and the world are overcome: there is an interchange and an interorientation'.¹³

In the work of Rabelais, Bakhtin finds 'the most remarkable experiment to re-establish the fully exteriorized individual' by reconnecting speech and body in lived experience and world.¹⁴ This fascination with Rabelais' world focuses on the familiar speech of the fairs in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, places which resonate with curses, profanities, and the cries of hawkers, barkers and vendors advertising the marketplace as a 'world in itself'.¹⁵ It is a world loudly 'performed' into existence and thus imbued with a freedom and frankness denied by the repressive atmosphere of official order.¹⁶ For Bakhtin, the sounds of the marketplace fair articulate the ambivalence in the real life of language. In the grotesque hyperbole of familiar speech, 'particularly in its oldest form', he finds an acoustic orientation toward 'all the world's phenomena in their condition of unfinished metamorphosis'.¹⁷

Transgressing the absolute past, the human body 'becomes a concrete measuring rod for the world, the measurer of the world's weight and of its value for the individual'.¹⁸ Indeed, it is the grotesque body that transforms the mystical Body into an image capable of change.¹⁹ The cries of quacks and druggists at the fairs eulogise the folk body revealing the unofficial aspect of the world: 'They too exercise the debasing function, they materialize the world, lending it a bodily substance'.²⁰ The cries of hawkers offer such bodily 'cures' as audibly question the singular 'salutory truth' of medieval tradition. The sound of this marketplace advertising 'debases the "hidden meaning", the "secret", the "terrifying mysteries of religion, politics, and economics"'.²¹

In the medieval fair everything is embodied through 'extraordinarily concrete, obvious, and vivid traits of the material world', in 'exaggerated forms of valuable matter', and in the hyperbole of earthly diversity.²² This excess fertilises the renewal of living language with an unofficial sound in speech that subverts containment .

This shared acoustic space of body and world articulates the unfixed 'spheres of unpublicized speech'.²³ Here is found the 'wealth of the vernacular [. . .] unpolished by the literary context [. . . and] not as yet processed with an abstract, systematic process'.²⁴ For Bakhtin, the always becoming oral space of acoustic transgression is the 'true ambivalence' of vernacular practice situated in the 'depths of the people's elemental life'.²⁵ Of importance, the vernacular cannot be reduced to text without robbing speech acts of the acoustic nuance of their contextual production. By focusing on the potential of vernacular insurgency, Bakhtin challenges transcendental ideologies as well as the means by which idealism is able to hide in the bodily language of materialism.

Bakhtin's approach to language is distinctly physical, spatial, and oral. The life of language cannot be separated from a situated saying 'charged with particular overtones'. In the social practice of speech can be heard the stratification of dialects, the complex and contradictory articulations produced in relations of power. Holquist and Emerson find implicit in Bakhtin the notion that living language cannot be reduced to a fixed form: 'all systems of transcription – including the speaking voice in a living utterance – are inadequate to the multiplicity of the meanings they seek to convey'.²⁶ In turn, Bakhtin seeks a radical 'otherness' in living speech, that is, in a second life of the people outside officialdom.²⁷ He emphasises that 'in the development of class society such a conception of the world can only be expressed in unofficial culture'. Indeed, it is to be seen that 'there is no place for it in the culture of the ruling classes [. . .] for official

culture is founded on the principle of an immovable and unchanging hierarchy in which the higher and the lower never merge'.²⁸

Bakhtin's emphasis on utterance clearly points away from any essentialism of acoustic origin and toward an outside world in which political power is deployed, reinforced, and resisted through the symbolic processes of social life. In his view, 'languages are philosophies – not abstract but concrete, social philosophies, penetrated by a system of values inseparable from living practice and class struggle'.²⁹ In constructed dialects and the space co-existing in concrete situations are revealed the allogical diversity of language. Bakhtin attempts to reveal the 'nonofficial, extraecclesiastical and extrapolitical aspect of the world, of man, and of human relations' by conjuring this space of life beneath the hierarchies of power.³⁰ In effect 'the crowd' in the public square is the noisy body of the external world silenced by authority. Inside the public square the life of the body irrupts, protrudes, and disfigures the image of an official power that attempts to establish order. In the protected space of the square, the rude antics of the body foreground the Spirit's repressive hold. The square becomes a second world inside, and outside, the space of power. It reveals the subversive potential of a space sanctioned by authority, but outside the logic of eternal order.

Bakhtin finds evidence of this second life in the inversionary antics of the medieval carnival. During 'carnival' the public square is temporarily transposed into a space of free association that transgresses the hierarchical ordering of language and world. Against the language of authority housed in the upper realm of the epic absolute, Bakhtin addresses the low language of the people, the discordant bodies, gestures, speech, and sounds that escape compositional orders of harmony. In the excess of the

milling carnival crowd, Bakhtin locates a non-hierarchical social possibility in the real language of the people.

This shared acoustic space of situated encounter becomes the public square of the anti-canonical. In the time and space of the carnival, Bakhtin finds a grotesque language of excess able to purge the body of religious repression. In disorderly conduct that embraces the forbidden, the earthly body rails against the terror of disobedience, allowing the festive body to degrade the dominant conventions of 'fear and suffering' and temporarily escape their wrath.³¹ In carnival's 'grotesque body' an unbridled sociality is momentarily freed to mock authority and speak the language of an unfinished world.³² Bakhtin suggests that this second life of the people is 'outside of and contrary to all existing forms of the coercive socioeconomic and political organization'.³³ Through the physical concreteness of the crowd experience, the people become aware of their sensual and material bodily unity, the force of 'sociality' against 'spirituality'. Official time is suspended according to the sanctioned zones of festival celebration.

In Bakhtin's view, the carnival 'spirit' is the language of the ancestral social body noisily claiming its place in the world. As carnival brings out the unspeakable, mixing up and interanimating the high and the low, body and world become shared topographies of renewal. In its throes, for example, priests curse, paupers offer benediction, dogs speak, people make animal noises, and fools utter Latin. Through such acts the ancestral body brings the production of power down to earth where it can be touched and challenged. Against heavenly authority carnival releases the debased language of the obscenity-wielding and over-indulgent earthly body, unseating the mystical vision of authority sustained by fear. Through this the real life of language is displaced and necessarily reconstructed in a space outside hierarchical structures.³⁴ The bodily contact of the crowd

in the space of the public square kindles a sense of 'elsewhere' hidden by the official world.

Carnival may be understood as the life of language temporarily transported inside the public square and freed from the structures of power. It releases acoustic experience from epic order through happenstance, impossible combinations, and nonsensical occurrences. The noises of the physical body insult the music of the heavens interrupting God's message from a time and place too vulgar and rude to be of God's design. In the public square the dialect of nature speaks to the body of culture. Carnival purges the temporal and spatial world of a transcendental worldview through acts of the body that refuse to deny the noise of the world. The temporality of carnival challenges the eternal transcendence of official authority. The repressed oral spirit of the people is momentarily released 'for a new, whole and harmonious man, and for new forms of communication'.³⁵ Bakhtin explains the matter in the following way:

People were, so to speak, reborn for new, purely human relations. These truly human relations were not only a fruit of imagination or abstract thought; they were experienced. The utopian ideal and the realistic merged in this carnival experience. [. . .] This temporary suspension, both ideal and real, of hierarchical rank created during carnival time a special type of communication impossible in everyday life.³⁶

Carnival becomes a world where 'people who in life are separated by impenetrable hierarchical barriers enter into free familiar contact'. It is a speaking and writing with the body, a place to work out 'in a concretely sensuous, half-real and half-play-acted form, a new mode of interrelationship between individuals, counterpoised to the all-powerful socio-hierarchical relationships of noncarnival life'.³⁷ In Bakhtin's view, the ordinary world is shaped into the words of power, and there is no direct way to express and address 'an authentic human being'.³⁸ Carnival inversion becomes the means to unleash the subversive force of this internal man to reconstitute the external

world and 'reveal a coherent external man'.³⁹ In this process language is brought down to earth, but it is abstracted from any relations of power into a second world where disorder and 'joyful relativity' prevail.⁴⁰ This language of the body turned inside out is seen to be the only means available to communicate the 'outside' in a world otherwise canonised by state and church authority.

For Bakhtin, 'speech' is embodied in acts of encounter and grounded in a social materiality. Social surroundings enter a body that speaks with the accents of world. In these circumstances, 'sound' is the product of bodily contact and the 'free familiarization of man and the world'.⁴¹ As an inhabited space this sound of the 'outside' resists immutable form as 'its participants live in it'.⁴² In this way language is decomposed in articulations of spatial practice and, thus spatialised, draws life from the undecidable future. It is embodied in acts of acoustic connection and the 'eventness' of ambivalent situated encounters.

Looking to articulate the acoustic ambivalence of the oral world against the language of authority, Bakhtin develops the concept of 'intonation', the sound of situated speech. Intonation is seen as a product of spatial context that locates speech in 'the real world, not the word as it is thought but the world as it is experienced'.⁴³ As it is experienced, the world is communicated in the process of producing the complex rhythms and intonations of the speech act. In the concrete space of its production, the 'sound' of language articulates the places of social encounter. However, as 'thought', the word slips away from the conditions of its production toward the interior semiotic rhythms of pre-textual sound and metaphysical presence. The latter is seen as a denial of space that open up a politics seeking to 'remove the dialogue from the dialogue'.⁴⁴

Bakhtin repeatedly warns of the trickery and disguises of idealist inversion in language. As opposed to this, he seeks to break the 'bonding of ideological meaning to language' because such language generates 'a mythological reality that has its own linguistic connections and interrelationships'. Indeed, it further 'substitutes itself for the connections and interrelationships of reality itself'.⁴⁵ In effect, idealism is seen to construct a mythological reality for the incarnation of an essentially inner expression. As a result, any effort to articulate the world is suppressed by a hegemonic mastering of material and its reduction 'into a compliant medium of expression'.⁴⁶ Notably, in Bakhtin's estimation, all systems of knowledge are patterns of repetition that undermine the lived 'eventness' and unrepeatable contexts of language production.⁴⁷ He sees such systems as 'acts of abstraction' that dissect life into empirical categories and silence the dialects of lived situations. He warns against substituting the transcribed for the lived and technology for culture.⁴⁸

In seeking an antisystem in which to locate the life of language in the concrete world, Bakhtin develops the notion of 'chronotope', time in space:

This time is *profoundly spatial and concrete*. It is not separated from the earth or from nature. [. . .] Time in its course binds together the earth and the laboring hand of man; man creates this course, perceives it, smells it (the changing odors of growth and ripening), sees it. Such time is fleshed-out, irreversible (without the limits of the cycle), realistic.⁴⁹

Bakhtin sees the chronotope as locating the production of signs in the external world such that 'time becomes, in effect, palpable and visible'. In turn, the chronotope 'emerges as a centre for concretizing representation' serving to make 'narrative events concrete'. It is to this centre that abstractions, generalisations, and ideas gravitate to 'take on flesh and blood'.⁵⁰

Bakhtin suggests that the unfinished world is always under construction and cannot be reduced to representation. Indeed, it is 'out of the actual chronotopes of our world (which serve as the source of representation) emerge the reflected and created chronotopes of the world represented in the work (in the text)'. Bakhtin calls this world 'the world that creates the text', and he is adamant that there must never be a confusion of the 'represented world with the world outside the text'.⁵¹ For the chronotope locates word in world against word in text: 'Every entry into the sphere of meanings is accomplished only through the gates of the chronotope'.⁵²

For Bakhtin, the primacy of context over text in the process of sign production is a matter of the 'heteroglossia' of world.⁵³ This condition is dialogically produced in the world, not text, and it ensures the materiality of the 'real world' as the basis for a poetics of language: 'The authentic environment of an utterance, the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance'. In Bakhtin's view, every utterance is a 'contradiction-ridden, tension-filled unity of two embattled tendencies in the life of language', that is, the monologic forces of oral authority and the dialogic forces of oral resistance.⁵⁴ In this contestatory relationship, centripetal forces seek to mimetically centre languages in the interiorised True Word; conversely, centrifugal forces push the centre outward into the world of accented live encounter. In is this latter motion, heteroglossia moves language toward a contestatory multiplicity not existing in word or text, but rather in the refractions of the environment in which this articulation takes shape. Penetrated by the complex articulations and value judgements of class conditions, such a language reveals these relations in concrete social encounters.

Heteroglossia might be viewed as the present oral world, time in space, denied by language and reduced to an authoritative form. As a matter of underwriting the authority of representation, it is this world that those seeking Truth must deny, silence, and ‘spectralise’.⁵⁵ Rather than ‘before’, ‘after’, or ‘in’, the position of Bakhtin’s heteroglossia is always in all directions and thus suggests a means to expose the monologic language of idealism. More specifically, as resistance to a systemised language, it points outside to the noisy, non-harmonic sounds of unofficial space. As intonation, in turn, it is the sound of the world that must be ‘ghosted’ in any hegemonic struggle for control of the signifying economy. In effect, heteroglossia contains the sound of class struggle refracted through the ‘occupied territory’ of the material world and revealed in the act of social encounter.

In Bakhtin’s view, all languages and utterances carry ‘specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualising the world in words’.⁵⁶ At first glance there is apparently ‘no single plane on which all these “languages” might be juxtaposed to one another’. Quite simply, the heteroglossia of the world creates a problem for artistic representation. In Bakhtin’s view, however, this common plane might be located in the realm of consciousness and the intricate workings of ideological becoming. He notes that languages ‘encounter one another and co-exist in the consciousness of real people – first and foremost, in the creative consciousness of people who write novels’. Moreover, ‘these languages live a real life [. . .] and evolve in an environment of social heteroglossia’. Arguably, ‘they are all able to enter into the unitary plane of the novel’.⁵⁷

In the novel Bakhtin finds a ‘living form’ of verbal art that exudes a noisy materiality. In its pages the life of language is free to speak through an artistic agency capable of representing the language of the people in unfettered complexity. This is made

possible through an explicitly acoustic sociality of speech that disrupts strictures of traditional grammars and pushes to get outside formal patterns of 'correct language'.⁵⁸ The novelist's role is to reveal 'alongside the centripetal forces, the centrifugal forces of language [that] carry on their uninterrupted work' within the embattled life of discourse.⁵⁹ The style of novelistic prose methodically and intentionally orchestrates the complex overtones and contradictoriness of speech as living discourse.

For Bakhtin, 'the fundamental condition' that makes a novel a novel is 'the speaking person'.⁶⁰ If the novel 'is defined as a speaking person and his discourse [. . .] then the central problem for a stylistics of the novel may be formulated as the problem of artistically representing language, [. . .] the image of a language'.⁶¹ In Bakhtin's view, aligning the 'value' of verbal art to conventional standards of stylistic formulation disconnects words from the totality of circumstances refracted in the diversity of speech tones and genres. However, since the disorderly excess of prose stylistics itself represents heteroglossia and participates as a 'distinctive language in a heteroglot world', he subsequently suggests the novel is that historically emergent form in which 'context as image of language' articulates and sustains a primacy over 'text as utterance'.⁶²

In the capacity of the novel to represent the sound of living discourse, Bakhtin locates an oral-literary form grounded in the social life of 'discourse in open spaces of public squares, streets, cities and villages, of social groups, generations and epochs'.⁶³ In effect, it would seem that Bakhtin visits the 'orality problem' in terms of the novel. As the prosaic representation of orality disrupts the authoritative word of a poetic literary tradition, literature is carnivalised in the excess of intonation representing the life of language beyond authority. The novelistic world thus represents the distributed consciousness of a heteroglossia that is 'the process of selectively assimilating the words

of others' denied in the realm of authoritative discourse.⁶⁴ In this sense the novel is orality reborn, an artistic form capable of representing the transitoriness of living discourse.

For Bakhtin, the novel is marked by the acoustic life of orality disrupting the ordered overtones of literary authority.⁶⁵ In the speech genres of novelistic prose, the multi-voiced, multi-spatial, and multi-temporal life of language reveals the 'social life of discourse' outside the single-voiced authority of a poetic tradition fixed in time and space by rhythmic regimentation. Indeed, these multi-accented and multi-situated speech genres of novelistic prose are the means by which the stylistics of living speech invert the hierarchy of literary tradition and thereby bring literature down to earth. 'Concrete socio-ideological language consciousness [. . .] as it becomes active as literature – discovers itself already surrounded by heteroglossia'.⁶⁶ Through its capacity to incorporate the living stylistics of heteroglossia, the novel embodies the world of oral ambivalence. The novelistic form represents sound and simultaneously proclaims its participation 'in the universum of mutually illuminating languages'.⁶⁷

Bakhtin specifically distinguishes between 'the naïve mixing in everyday speech' and the hybridisation of the novel.⁶⁸ In other words, there is a distinction to be made between the 'living hermeneutics' of the speaking person in everyday life and the representation of this in the novel.⁶⁹ In the manner of Havelock, Bakhtin goes on to suggest a bifurcation of language into transmission (transitory conversation) and representation (verbal art). It is the intentional construction of the hybrid by way of employing prosaic device that realises 'verbal art'. Through artistic device the art of dialogue realises a kind of unofficial authority in representing the speaking person. In this situation the representation of the life of language appears to supersede its everyday

transmission. Notably, however, everyday conversation does not 'go beyond the boundaries of the superficial aspects of discourse, the weight it carries in a specific situation; the deeper semantic and emotionally expressive levels of discourse do not enter the game'.⁷⁰

For Bakhtin, the novel is thus 'verbal art', the means by which the stylistics of heteroglossia transgress the linear technologies of dominant literary convention.⁷¹ Interestingly, what he finds so alive in the novel, representation of the 'great dialogue', is what McLuhan thought he had found in a second world of electronic representation that is considered very much 'verbal art' in carnivalised form.⁷² The mixing of different types of linguistic consciousnesses widely separated in time and space that Bakhtin finds in the novel is something McLuhan also finds revolutionary in the electronic challenge to literary authority. As with electronic form, the 'novel taken as the totality of all languages and consciousnesses of language embodied in it, is a hybrid'. In particular, it is 'not an opaque mechanistic mixture of languages', but rather an 'the artistic image of a language'. The novel is the means to solve the problem of representing the complex dialogism of the speaking person.⁷³

Although he embraces the transitoriness of sound and struggles to artistically represent its heteroglossia, it is hard not to draw comparisons between Bakhtin and the more technologically minded orality theorists, as the common problem they share is how to represent the sound of living language.⁷⁴ For his part, Bakhtin seeks to reveal the oral radicality of the vernacular margins in much the way that Innis attempts to revive the spirit of dialogue. Like Innis, Bakhtin invokes the pre-class 'utter exteriority' of an idealised ancient Greek public sphere. He argues that 'this exteriority of the individual did not exist in empty space [. . .] but rather in an organic human collective, "in the

folk”’. Also like Innis, Bakhtin seeks to revitalise dialogue as the always-external speech of the social body. Classical form had separated speech from the space of its utterance, reducing the sound accents of social encounter to the rhythms of abstract control. For Bakhtin, such epic monologism further separated history from the collective body, distorting and reducing communication to ‘participation in the mute and invisible spheres of existence’.⁷⁵ The epic tradition disconnected the acoustic life of the individual from its public origin, and ‘once having lost the popular chronotope of the public square, his self-consciousness could not find an equally real, unified and whole chronotope, it therefore broke down and lost its integrity, it became abstract and idealistic’.⁷⁶

In Bakhtin’s view, ‘the unity of a man’s externalized wholeness was of a public nature’.⁷⁷ This is reasserted in the carnival of the public square, ‘the fantastic combination of heterogeneous elements of reality that break up the established world order, in the free fancy of its images and in the “alternate succession of enthusiasm and irony”’.⁷⁸ For Bakhtin, the carnival incarnates the ‘freedom’ of pre-class language in the time and space of the public square and outside the official history and mimetic rhythms of the unitary language posited by classical poetic genres.⁷⁹ In turn, in the transition from feudal hierarchy to capitalism, the subversive space of carnival inversion relocates itself in a novelistic literature where the world as we experience it permeates dialogue and evades fixed transcription.⁸⁰ If the unofficial life of language is to find social expression, it demands a form that is an adequate record of its ‘life’. Although disconnected from the visceral bodily contact of the festive square, the novel becomes that place where the complexity of prosaic speech genres is capable of representing the stratified dialects of the world.⁸¹

In the novel 'language renews itself by incorporating extraliterary heteroglossia' by way of 'living contact with unfinished, still-evolving contemporary reality'.⁸² For Bakhtin, the dialogic life of the novel overlays the physical world by making symbolic use of its objects, thus sustaining the transgressive power of representational potential against the reductive absolute of fixed representation. The carnivalised topographies of the body, the public square, and the novel destabilise the space of power by questioning its representation of space. In the reclaimed space of the people, all things forbidden, silenced, and enclosed break into the open, stealing the world for unlicensed use. This space of representational potential thus overrides the space of represented authority. In this 'outside' sphere of the novel is found a form to 'portray the mode of existence of man who is in life, but not of it', as well as to 'reflect private life and make it public'.⁸³

Arguably, Bakhtin's fundamental effort to get 'outside' the language of repression and alienation is confounded by the language of carnival he foregrounds to articulate this liberation. As carnival, the public square suspends the time and space of authority, upends institutionalised meaning with renegade acts of imagination, and momentarily externalises the interior infinite. In such circumstances the 'social inside' becomes the 'outside', giving Bakhtin the opportunity to approach 'internal man from without'.⁸⁴ Like Innis, Bakhtin does seek the life of language in the exteriority of the social body. However, given his approach, the space of dialogic imagination reduces to the space of 'internal man' struggling to reclaim the external world from repressive hierarchy. In this, Bakhtin re-articulates the paradox in Innis that opens into McLuhan. Specifically, the quest to undermine monologic authority is itself undermined by an interiorised and authorised form. While Bakhtin locates the life of speech in the diversity

of world, the lost chronotope of the public square still indicates the form of its retrieval. In the perceived need to embody the oral in this carnivalised form, the unfinalisability of acoustic practice is paradoxically undermined.

In Bakhtin's case, it is the implication of his work that is of major concern. The officially sanctioned public square that becomes the sanctioned place of the novel later becomes, in different hands, the hegemonic and more permanent form of licensed temporality found in the electronic media. It is Bakhtin's emphasis on the radicality of the 'internal space' of the public square that opens into McLuhan's electronic embodiment of dialogic imagination. The resulting 'electronic space' appears to break away from all symbols of linearity and fixity. However, when the world itself is subject to technological replication nothing seems to be forbidden. Indeed, the full exteriorisation of internal man seems possible. In the novel, representation is inextricably connected, but not reducible, to world. With electronic replication the distinction is moot, as an abstract production of space usurps production in space.⁸⁵

In the second world of the novel, Bakhtin appears to resolve the problem of how to represent living discourse without privileging the text. In effect, he proposes the novel as a realm akin to the public square that carnivalises inner and outer speech, making this unity the real life-world of language. In this way the ambivalence embodied in the unofficial forces of heteroglossia is able to deny monologic versions of the world. As hybridised excess the novel is seen to sustain possibility over truth. As 'ideological becoming' it allows consciousness to produce meaning out of the materials of everyday transmission that attains larger social significance as the externalised forms of an interior possibility. In short, the novel suggests a world of hybrid possibility by forever appearing to escape the fixed authoritative convention, as the 'sharp line of division

between familiar speech and “correct” language’ seems to disappear and open into a new world where the life of language knows no centres or margins.⁸⁶

Bakhtin does bring to the study of language the sound paradoxically silenced by the orality theorists. However, in the need to construct a second world that is a specific chronotope, and in further representing the ‘creating time’ of a world hidden from authority, Bakhtin becomes entangled in the paradox that ensnares the orality theorists. More specifically, he is led to give form to a ‘life of language exceeding formulation’. In his search for a verbal art form appropriate to the social content of language, he fixes the oral by representing its transitoriness in a manner that denies its ambivalence.⁸⁷ In Bakhtin’s view, the prose artist, as distinguished from the epic poet, ‘elevates the social heteroglossia surrounding objects into an image that has finished contours, an image completely shot through with dialogized overtones’.⁸⁸ Nonetheless, as the novel distances itself from the world by creating its own enclosed space of representation, it presumably must subordinate the capacity to enter dialogic relationships.

When the poetics of language is found in the life of speech itself rather than the ‘authenticity’ of its representation in verbal art, the potential of oral resistance remains located in the material place of its production. This is suggested in the theory of carnival, wherein society produces the noise of a disorderly heteroglossia ‘always rooted in history, in the specificity of time and place’.⁸⁹ However, in elevating a temporary and authorised transgression, the theory serves to undermine worldly contestation, allowing heteroglossia to be subsumed by representation and reduced to a play of forms. In this development ‘heteroglossia’ is unavoidably reduced to ‘intertextuality’, to a dialogisation inside and between texts privileged with respect to the life of utterance in social encounter. In his privileging of the novel, Bakhtin’s theory of language serves

later theories that locate the life of language in the multiaccentuality of the electronic public square.⁹⁰ A matter of some importance, it is this reading of 'heteroglossia as intertextuality' that has become influential.⁹¹

Volosinov's Behavioural Ideology

Volosinov dismisses Romanticism on the grounds that its looking to the inner space of spiritual otherness for radical material negates the external world as a site of historical transformation.⁹² In his view, the radical outside is undermined by a poetic betrayal that treats 'everything outer as passive material for manipulation by the inner element'.⁹³ In general, Volosinov's philosophy of language sets out to challenge idealism and its common tendency '*to remove all sense, all meaning from the material world and to locate it in a-temporal, a-spatial Spirit*'.⁹⁴ More particularly, he suggests that the interiorisation of meaning construction is a political act silencing the accents of class contestation. The act of abstracting language from intonation is seen to deprive 'meaning of its place in the living social process', creating an 'ideal Being divorced from the historical process of Becoming'.⁹⁵ Instead of seeing words as fixed receptacles from which 'hidden' truths must be inferred, Volosinov studies language as the production of meaning among speakers in the world. This multi-accentuality locates the social strata and production of language in time and space.

In Volosinov's view, the acoustic life of language reveals the social production of meaning. Signs 'occur in outer experience'.⁹⁶ Further, signs and ideologies are never 'absent', but rather spectrally dispersed in contestations of the outside. Given such conditions, 'meaning does not reside in the word or in the soul of the speaker or in the soul of the listener'; rather, it is a matter of 'interaction between speaker and listener produced via the material of a particular sound complex'.⁹⁷ Conversely, it is seen to be

the case that the politics of language involves strategies of denying the social space of sign production in order to entrench the territory of authoritative absolutes. In these strategies language becomes an authority by way of obscuring the material relations of its production. In acoustic terms, the metaphysics of sound is used to rationalise an inner spirit and deny the social.⁹⁸

Central to Volosinov's argument against idealism is an insistence that the politics of language is foremost a struggle over locating the space of speech production. Idealism provides for 'the radical negation of expression as something that deforms the purity of the inner element', with the result that 'all the creative and organizing forces of expression are within'. Opposed to this metaphysics of sound, Volosinov insists that 'inner' and 'outer' speech is created 'out of one and the same material'. In his view, both types of speech are bound together in the acoustic accents of a conjoined social production such that there is no qualitative difference between the inner and outer element of language. The acoustic accents of expression embody the social outside, as 'afterall, there is no such thing as [inner] experience outside of embodiment in signs'.⁹⁹ Further defining inner speech as 'experience' and outer speech as 'expression', Volosinov argues that 'it is not experience that organizes expression, but the other way around – *expression organizes experience*'.¹⁰⁰ In short, acoustic expression gives social form to inner experience; the sound of speech is the social material of language that denies any essential inner spirit.

With this in mind, Volosinov sets out to undo any binary opposition between inner and outer speech. Insisting upon the social environment of language, he argues that the sound in speech reveals material forms of language such that a sociological analysis of the supposedly asocial and atemporal idealist domain of inner speech is

possible. In the 'intonation' of language he finds evidence of a sociological poetics, an audible social penetration of both inner and outer speech. This intonation is seen to further reveal the social 'soul' of language, 'the unified sphere of organized social intercourse' that inextricably joins inner and outer speech.¹⁰¹ Notably, acoustic accents articulate this 'living body of an utterance and [. . .] powerfully resist relegation to the abstract system of language'.¹⁰²

In the manner of Bakhtin, Volosinov views the speech act as a product of situated encounter. The significance of the utterance is historically situated and 'unreproducible', serving to reveal 'the expression of the concrete, historical situation that engendered the utterance'.¹⁰³ It is here that 'language acquires life and historically evolves [. . .] not in the abstract linguistic systems of language forms, nor in the individual psyche of speakers'.¹⁰⁴ Indeed, 'it is precisely a word's multiaccentuality that makes it a living thing'.¹⁰⁵ In the accents of speech, 'evaluative orientation' articulates social contradiction. In the absence of an external social world, the utterance remains an unknown reduced to isolated phonetic patterns.¹⁰⁶

It is acoustic accent that grounds speech in the social space of the outside world. Volosinov notes that when sound is abstracted from living speech matters are quickly reduced to 'a system of normatively identical forms' and 'the study of defunct, alien languages preserved in written documents'.¹⁰⁷ The consequence of removing language from the concrete zone of contact is to sever it from 'its place in the living social process' and silence the acoustic trace of social encounter.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, when language is removed from the routine of life, it becomes an alien power 'pre-eminently oriented toward the alien word'. Such power coalesces 'in the depths of the historical

consciousness of nations with the idea of authority, the idea of power, the idea of holiness, the idea of truth'.¹⁰⁹

Volosinov's sociology of language thus insists on analytical access to the acoustic forms of living speech. Acoustic accent reveals the inherently social world of meaning construction and carries the 'scenario' of language.¹¹⁰ This intonation also 'pumps energy from life situation into the verbal discourse, it endows everything linguistically stable with living historical momentum and uniqueness'.¹¹¹ In turn, sign production is seen as a collective undertaking that occurs in occupied territories or 'speech zones'. Speech acts produce, and are produced, in this zone as the 'locus for hearing a voice; it is brought about by the voice'.¹¹² In this process 'the structure of the utterance and of the very experience being expressed is a social structure'.¹¹³ The sound of living speech is the spatial practice of language.

In the sound of living speech 'contexts do not stand side by side in a row, as if unaware of one another, but are in a state of constant tension, or incessant interaction and conflict'.¹¹⁴ Accordingly, power struggles are refracted in the 'sound complex' of class collision. On this point, Volosinov insists that transgressionary practice cannot retreat into suspended allegorical states, but rather it must confront power in the contestatory space of its making. Since sound articulates social conflict, the locating or denying of these spatial dynamics involves an important struggle in the politics of language. Whereas idealist forces actively repress acoustic practice in order to consolidate an abstract poetic authority, Volosinov's emphasis on evaluative orientation attempts to locate a radical potential in the acoustic relations of the socio-physical world.¹¹⁵ Such intonation '*is least amenable to reification, yet it is precisely a word's multiaccentuality that makes it a living thing*'.¹¹⁶ It is a powerful force to possess or deny.

In Volosinov's view, the ultimate scientific proof of language's essentially social character lies in the discovery of a formulised access to the inherent sociality of 'inner speech'. It is through this inner speech that the sociality of language enters thought, and it is this fundamental sociality that represents the ultimate challenge to the idealist interior of metaphysical abstraction. In particular, Volosinov rejects the idealist claim that such inner speech possesses 'its own special, not sociological but specifically artistic, nature and system of governance'.¹¹⁷ The assumption that sociology cannot understand or explain the immanent structure of a work of art is seen to result in the artistic form of poetics being left entirely to the study of aesthetics or psychological interiors.¹¹⁸

In his analysis, Volosinov challenges the bourgeois philosophy of the abstract biological organism, a philosophy he finds to be influencing the study of linguistics, psychology, and aesthetics.¹¹⁹ He suggests that in each of these areas assumptions of an autonomous evolutionary life force have crept in, as well as scholarly ambitions '*to locate a world beyond the social and the historical [. . .] in the depths of the organic*'.¹²⁰ Volosinov finds this entirely wrongheaded and has no doubt that '*only as part of a social whole, only in and through a social class, does the human person become historically real and culturally productive*'.¹²¹ Indeed, in the absence of such a social context, human behaviour loses its ideological agency and degenerates into an aboriginal, animalian state 'bereft of accent' and without 'the germ of sign formation'.¹²² If consciousness is approached 'as organized, material expression (in the ideological material of a word, a sign, drawing, colours, musical sounds, etc.) – consciousness, so conceived is an objective fact and a tremendous social force'.¹²³ However, isolated from

the concrete circumstances of social expression, there is no such thing as consciousness.¹²⁴

In Volosinov's view, inner speech is made socially present in the process of sign production. In this connection the poetic work is seen as 'a powerful condenser of unarticulated social evaluations', as it is 'through the agency of artistic form the creator *takes up an active position with respect to content*', demanding that the intonational form 'be a *convincing evaluation* of the content'.¹²⁵ While form expresses sociality, content is embodied in word, which is 'the purest and most sensitive medium of social intercourse'. The 'word' is the sociality by which '*the semiotic material of inner life – of consciousness* (inner speech)' becomes expressible by 'bodily means'.¹²⁶ It is this sociality that eludes official authority and goes on to become a potentially radicalising force.

For Volosinov, the radical possibilities of inner speech call for a form of expression 'appropriate to the social content'. Inner speech should thus be studied 'with respect to content, as its ideological evaluation, and with respect to the material, as the technical realization of that evaluation'.¹²⁷ Because of its capacity to achieve convincing representations of the social, 'it is these social evaluations that organize form as their direct expression'.¹²⁸ It is subsequently through the agency of artistic form that inner speech becomes a special form of the 'unofficial' within the life of language. In Volosinov's view, this is only the case, however, with 'more vital, more serious' speech that is able to 'pass the test of expression' through achieving an outward form on an 'ample social scale'.¹²⁹ Subversive potential is thus located in the serious, usually written, speech of the upper strata of linguistic behavioural life, not in the lower strata of 'undeveloped experience'.¹³⁰

Notably, only speech that has achieved a socially significant outside form can 'succeed in dominating the arena of some organized, official ideology'.¹³¹ The subversive possibility in the contestations between 'unofficial' and 'official' is thus a matter of producing a radical form from the inner semiotic material of consciousness capable of representing, and hence ideologically sustaining, social resistance. In Volosinov's view, transgression lies in the realisation of this radical form, and resistance must subsequently evolve into a formulated ideology.¹³² Once social transgression realises immanent form, the revolution is official.

Further elaborating the importance of intonation in language, Volosinov adopts the notion of 'behavioral ideology'. This explicitly spatial notion is similar to Bakhtin's 'heteroglossia' and Innis's 'vernacular'. In contrast to established systems of 'official ideology', it refers to the extraordinarily rich conversational language that includes 'the whole aggregate of life experiences and the outward expressions directly connected with it'. In Volosinov's view, this behavioral life of language is that space 'of unsystematized inner and outer speech which endows our every instance of behavior and action and our every "conscious" state with meaning'.¹³³ Behavioural ideology is thus the material form by which inner and outer speech expresses the social construction of language. Volosinov concludes that 'new currents in behavioral ideology, no matter how revolutionary they may be undergo the influence of the established ideological systems and to some extent, incorporate forms, ideological practices and approaches already in stock'.¹³⁴ However, it is this overarching social sphere outside official authority that continues to hold the radical potential of language. In the depths of 'behavioral ideology' accumulate those contradictions, which, upon reaching a threshold, burst asunder a society's 'official ideology'.¹³⁵

In general terms, Volosinov seeks to locate the external context of poetics against interior metaphysical form. Arguably, however, in the process he manages to reduce poetic context to sociological form as a matter of rationalising a materialist access to aesthetics.¹³⁶ Ultimately, Volosinov's concept of intonation as social form de-legitimises the destabilising potential of acoustic space, a potential that is inextricably bound by the circumstances of both words and world. More particularly, 'intonation' is significantly social, but the 'social' is by definition distinct from the 'animalian'. This differentiation drawn between language and the 'purely natural phenomenon' of the animal assumes a hierarchy at odds with a materialist intent. In effect, the diversity of the physical world and the transgressive potential of its engagement with the social are overlooked by the exclusivity of the construct. In the alternative, it is possible to accept the sociality of language, but reject a circumscribed materialism that privileges the 'linguistic' with respect to the 'non-linguistic'.

Volosinov's treatment of inner and outer speech as the conjoined and irreducibly social process of language also seems to lead to a privileged interior life. He suggests that 'the structure of experience is just as social as is the structure of its *outward objectification*'.¹³⁷ However, in positing inner speech as the 'experience' of the essentially social nature of language, he aligns poetic experience with a mimetic form that unifies inner experience with outer expression. In effect, the realisation of an inner world remains a powerful logic. Poetic experience is valued as an interior social immanence and only then placed as the 'other side', as external social expression. For Volosinov, the unity or reconciliation of 'inner' and 'outer' is undoubtedly achieved by way of an essentialised social form that emphasises the external socio-linguistic world as the organising centre of both experience and expression. However, and although the

conditions of meaning are present in the external world, it is the outward movement of an inner confirmation of meaning that remains privileged.

Inner and outer speech is thus reconciled in the experience of the text as inherently social. The alternative to this would be to treat experience and expression as situated, interanimating articulations of the world. In this latter approach, the notion of 'interiority' is irrelevant, as the spatial-acoustic context reveals not only the sociality of sign production, but also the physicality of world. Interestingly, the way Volosinov assigns importance to acoustic accent in the social life of speech directly connects with the intricate way in which McLuhan's secondary orality represents the reification of sound. McLuhan's electronic language offers the technological means to embody the expression of the inner spirit and thereby materialise the mimetic pattern of the conscious to the unconscious realm. This implicates experience as inner speech in search of 'outward objectification', and it is exactly what McLuhan uses to entrench the 'oral logic' that claims electronic technology as the embodied social form of inner acoustic experience. In the orchestrated intonations of an electronic world, sociality itself is 're-embodied' in a form that denies its material production.

Volosinov's sociological poetics emphasises that language cannot be separated from social context without losing the materiality of sign production. Signs are produced 'only on interindividual territory' that is 'organized socially'.¹³⁸ However, when experience is construed as inner speech looking for outer expression, the sound of language is reduced to the practice of producing poetic form. In other words, when poetics becomes the realisation of an aesthetic form appropriate to its social content, poetic practice is reduced to a technological mimetic. Despite Volosinov's clarity on the irreducibly social force of living speech, his approach leaves him open to a theory of

language that finds sociality realised in technology. Although the social form of unofficial inner speech resists outside control, it is this inner speech realised in external form that ultimately speaks the language of radical poetics. As Volosinov notes, 'technical analysis will then amount to the question as to which linguistic means are used for the realization of the socioartistic purpose of the form'.¹³⁹

Kristeva's Semiotic Chora

Kristeva seeks an oral world existing prior to the interior-exterior binary, a matter she perceives to be at the heart of the problem with Romanticism. Her goal in this case is to locate an acoustic resistance in poetic form capable of rupturing and accessing the repressed passions. This quest begins with a rejection of the corrupt outer world and subsequently pursues a poetic practice aimed inward at the interior infinite inside language and before meaning.¹⁴⁰ Her notion of acoustic subversiveness very much involves a contestatory relationship between the 'signifying process' and 'symbolic form' inside language.

In Kristeva's view, the societal repression of biology produces a sense of acoustic excess, a radical material repressed inside language by the structures of power. The result of this is a radical 'outside' residing within the semiotic foundation of language. This semiotic material resists 'a reductive identification with outer (discursive, ideological, economic) islands of the social aggregate'.¹⁴¹ It is also this 'outside' as heterogeneous material within language that defies reduction to form while remaining crucial to the formation of meaning. The experience of this inner 'other' is realised in the mimetic process of linking the unsymbolised sound in words to the unformed oral base of language. In this mimesis Kristeva notes that the 'experience-in-practice articulates an excess, simultaneously "outside" and "inside" the subject'.¹⁴² Subsequently, textual

practice is 'determined by the pulverization of the unity of consciousness by a nonsymbolized outside, on the basis of objective contradictions and, as such, it is the place where the signifying process is carried out'.¹⁴³

Kristeva suggests that the unconscious is the seat of unreason, the semiotic material before meaning. When semiotic excess confronts meaning through the 'text', and takes us beyond the realm of discourse and art, the radical potential of poetic language irrupts into social communication with political force. The socialisation of the unconscious thus becomes the political 'other' required to transform art into a revolutionary agency. In spatial-acoustic terms, the semiotic transgression of the symbolic reveals the subversiveness of sound inside language activated through the material of the unconscious psyche anterior to meaning. The resulting 'revolution in poetic language' is the unconscious transgressing of the text via the irruption of the semiotic material that escapes meaning.

Kristeva locates the subversiveness of sound in what she terms the 'semiotic chora'.¹⁴⁴ This notion may be described as the acoustic gestation of the repressed unconscious in the unformed language of the 'mother before the father' in which Nature is internalised, gendered, and reconstituted as semiotic 'other' outside Culture. Undoubtedly, the material of the semiotic chora is a part of the making of symbolic language, but it remains an irreducible and foundational process of signifiante always exceeding symbolisation.¹⁴⁵ It is this rupture of the interior, this semiotic 'outside' within language, that serves to destabilise the external social order.

The semiotic chora may be accessed through a mimetic-semiosis of avant-garde poetic device that transgresses linguistic and social form within the signifying process of language. The revolution in poetic language may thus also be viewed as the achievement

of form required to activate the repressed chora and deconstruct the patriarchal outside. In Kristeva's view, such language is a celebration of semiotic essence as maternal 'other' within the body. She notes that science and theology are the only discourses that account for this gestational process, 'this becoming-a-mother'. Although she rejects Christian maternity 'as an impossible elsewhere, a sacred beyond, a vessel of divinity', Kristeva does find remnants of an instinctive practice in religion that reveal the interior continuity of a naturally heterogeneous semiotic economy.¹⁴⁶

The semiotic chora is seen as key to the language of the mother. As a preverbal, rhythmic, and nourishing maternal space formed by the instinctual drives, the chora posits a repressed bio-psychological other to patriarchal culture. Because these drives are always already simultaneously assimilating and fragmenting, the chora cannot be thought of as ordinary unity. In Kristeva's view, the acquisition of language involves a detachment from the pre-symbolic state of the chora, thus forming the break or rupture upon which society is founded. However, the chora re-emerges whenever its drives de-centre the positioning of the transcendental subject and thereby open language to unconscious heterogeneity. These irruptions of the chora suggest a radical potentiality in the 'outring' of the repressed interior. The chora is 'a place where the subject is both generated and negated, the place where his unity succumbs before the processes of changes and stases that produce him'.¹⁴⁷

In these circumstances, the interior infinite of this gestational process holds the potential of *language abstracted from power*, and the maternal body guarantees an original biological harmony from a place beyond spatial acoustic practice. However, in an effort to oppose transcendental form, Kristeva finds an anterior harmony in the semiotic chora that irrupts into the symbolic world and becomes a mode of radical

transformation.¹⁴⁸ More specifically, the presence of the chora transgresses authority by revealing the 'other', the 'before-authority', that produces an endless juxtaposition of the semiotic and the Symbolic.¹⁴⁹ The semiotic realm of the maternal body is revealed in the sensuous rhythm and musicality of language; the symbolic realm of the law of the Father is revealed in the meaning of language. It is the interaction between the semiotic and symbolic that opens into intersubjectivity and intertextuality.

In this, the maternal body remains the ordering principle of the chora, the semiotic 'oral logic' that invokes acoustic Myth against the Story of Patriarchy:

The maternal body is the place of a splitting. Through a body destined to insure reproduction of the species, the woman-subject [. . . is] more of a filter than anyone else – a thoroughfare, a threshold where 'nature' confronts 'culture'.¹⁵⁰

Since this body is before and outside the system of signifying differences, the maternal pre-object/subject is unnameable and present only as an image.

The maternal body is also 'master of a process that is prior to the social-symbolic-linguistic contract' and therefore exceeds the sayable. For Kristeva, this biopsychic place of the mother articulates the ambivalence of language:

Biology jolts us by means of unsymbolized instinctual drives [. . . and] eludes social intercourse, the representation of preexisting objects, and the contract of desire. On the other hand, we immediately deny it; we say there can be no escape, for mamma is there, she embodies this phenomenon; she warrants that everything is, and that it is representable'.¹⁵¹

The mother is birthplace and agent of dislocation that dislodges the child from the interior semiotic receptacle and into the external relations of speech. The mother's voice thus becomes the umbilical echo of the organic connection between the origin and the social. The oral order substitutes for 'the bond of umbilical blood' that links languaged subjects to each other by directing them back to womb.¹⁵²

The revolution in poetic language suggests reconciliation with the Platonic chora that gives form to 'heterogeneous Truth'. In its Platonic context, the chora is the place where the first things come to be; in its physiological context, it is a bodily, distinctively female, space within which language and subject come to be. Kristeva finds that the poetic patterning of instinctual energies recalls the time before the oedipal rupture. This oralisation reconnects language in a reunion with the maternal body:

Melody, harmony, rhythm, the 'sweet', 'pleasant' sounds and poetic musicality found in 'symbolist' poetry and in Mallarme, for example, may be interpreted as oralization. This oralization restrains the aggressivity of rejection through an attempted fusion with the mother's body, a devouring fusion [. . .]. A return to oral and glottal pleasure combats the superego and its linear language [introducing] into the linguistic order of an excess of pleasure marked by a redistribution of the phonematic order, morphological structure, and even syntax.¹⁵³

The chora may thus also be considered the biological rhythm of nature before culture, a 'rhythmic but nonexpressive totality'.¹⁵⁴ It opens the symbolic to inner motions 'where all meaning is erased'.¹⁵⁵ It escapes signification, yet is at the same time 'the precondition of the symbolic'.¹⁵⁶ As 'the outer limit founding the human and the social', it is the preconditional space that unleashes semiotic violence to break through the boundaries of logical order.¹⁵⁷ Arts, such as poetry, music, dance, and theatre, enter its ritual space to reveal what theology hides, that is, 'the irruption of the motility threatening the unity of the social realm and the subject'.¹⁵⁸ This 'eternal function' of poetic language is able 'to introduce through the symbolic that which works on, moves through, and threatens it'.¹⁵⁹ By engineering a patterned access to choratic space it is able to destabilise the symbolic. A poetic practice that reaches into the semiotic chora can access the 'infinity of the process' and transgress static social and linguistic orders.¹⁶⁰

In poetic language Kristeva's choric irruptions seek the acoustic means to challenge rational authority through a death of the symbolic and return to the semiotic.

The word animated by the choric energies locates the space of poetic practice in what is called '*an intersection of textual surfaces*'.¹⁶¹ Here, through 'the irruption of the drives in the universal signifying order', literary dialogue eludes fixed meaning.¹⁶² The practice of poetic language 'means giving up the lexical, syntactic, and semantic operation of deciphering, and instead retracing the path of their production'.¹⁶³ This leads back into 'the dangerous and violent crucible of which these texts are only the evidence'.¹⁶⁴ In this way 'intertextuality' is seen as the poetic patterning that escapes the law of the Father and summons the transgressive acoustic rhythms. The lost presence of choric rhythms is re-incarnated in a revolution in poetic language that occurs through the materialising collision between chora and language.¹⁶⁵

Kristeva's poetic language is a mimesis of sound and origin. She argues that language has a relationship to heterogeneity wherein culture is worked upon by what it has repressed.¹⁶⁶ More specifically, poetic language is seen to occupy a 'heteronomous space' of mimetic possibility that 'leaves the homogeneous space of meaning' and moves 'toward the biological-societal base, that is its excess'.¹⁶⁷ In developing the notion of biological-psychic break from maternal oral logic, Kristeva creates a theory similar to the theology of the rupture of the originary communion with the Word. In effect, the corruption of the outside necessitates the reincarnation, from the time before the Fall, of the inside as radical other. The irruption of the semiotic chora is similar to the 'outring' of the Spirit in that the innate motions of a heteronomous oral form disturb the authority of narrative form. Speaking as the 'other', this form is connected to the 'evocative magic' of an innate subversiveness.

In Kristeva, the acoustic dimension is a privileged feminine interior, a place of rhythmic beginning that transgresses the space of univocal meanings. The artistic practice in poetic language involves 'listening' to the rhythmic patterns of the chora and summoning its transgressive powers. 'Sound' transgresses 'meaning' in a mimetic process by which patterns of linguistic excess access and release the chora, the fluidity that 'precedes and underlies figuration and thus specularization, and is analogous only to vocal or kinetic rhythm'.¹⁶⁸ The radicality of sound is revealed by way of poetic technique modelled to the sensed rhythm of the instinctual drives. Access to the 'other' of the drives requires a juxtaposition of linguistic forms, a kind of acoustic 'non-sense' that calls up the energies hidden by meaning. The releasing of drive energies through 'the accumulation and repetition of phonemes and melodic devices (such as intonation or rhythm)' dissolves all unity of meaning within the text by providing a concrete manifestation of the engendering process.¹⁶⁹ The poetic engineering of certain sounds, or combinations of sounds, can rupture the chora and signal the existence of an acoustic subversiveness.

Kristeva's semiotic chora reveals sound as the metaphysic of a female absence opposing a male presence. Sound becomes bio-original maternal time repressed by a Cultural patriarchal space. The feminisation of the origin is found in a rediscovered presence of the absent biological mother. In effect, sound is gendered female and rendered the oralised reunion with the mother's body. So engendered, it becomes the pre-verbal and silenced rhythms of the mother as regenerative receptacle of the species. What had been the lost in oral theory becomes a gendered absence in Kristeva's thinking. In the latter, woman becomes the excluded world, the maternal sound repressed by the domination of visual representation in History. She is the process of unreason made

unsayable by the structures of patriarchy and Church. Excluded from the male realm, she represents the negation of power, the uncorrupted threshold to the repressed and unsayable that grounds sociality.¹⁷⁰

For Kristeva, avant-garde poetry taps into a new signifying practice that signals a break in the social structure and ideology of modernity. The technique of the avant-garde poet is seen to allow an access to semiotic material outside meaning by way of a sublexical process transgressing fixed forms of economy and language. This new poetic language suggests an 'other' to social discourse that marks a new stage in capitalism, a stage that not only 'produces and marginalises, but simultaneously exploits for its own regeneration, one of the most spectacular shatterings of discourse'.¹⁷¹ Suggestive of what McLuhan recognised in the alignment between the anti-linear techniques of this poetry and the transgressionary force of electronic orality, this shattering of discourse offers entrance into an ambivalent and infinite interior beyond rational authority and linear form. Kristeva notes that if there is 'a model for poetic language, it no longer involves lines or surfaces, but rather, space and infinity'.¹⁷² Importantly, this new poetic language 'does not strive towards transcendence but rather toward harmony, all the while implying an idea of rupture (of opposition and analogy) as a modality of transformation'.¹⁷³

Kristeva finds both a crisis in bourgeois representation and a revolution in poetic language reflected in the early poetics of the avant-garde. Rejecting the uniformity and predictability of traditional literary form, the symbolists sought to release a foundational semiotic motility and free the subject from an individualist function within the capitalist order.¹⁷⁴ In their effort to create a form that eludes form, Kristeva suggests the linearity of modern authority is exposed, as is the possibility of its undoing. Indeed, modern literary texts that explode the phonetic, lexical, and syntactic formalism of linguistic

authority are seen to articulate a fragmentary ‘other’ revealing the ‘subject and his ideological limits’ under capitalist relations of production.¹⁷⁵ In addition, these modern texts reveal the signifying process that occurs within the subjective unconscious, further indicating that ‘text’ is to be distinguished from ‘discourse’ and ‘art’. Kristeva attaches importance to the symbolists as poets who engage the body in a search for the transgressive power of instinctual drives awakened by rhythm and sound. In particular, she feels the efforts of Lautremont, Mallarme, and (later) Joyce to invoke the repressed ‘other’ of the unspoken serve to reveal the force of an infinite becoming inside language.¹⁷⁶

For Kristeva, the life of language is rooted in the repressed space controlled by the conjoined authorities of language, patriarchy, and class. As the poetic shattering of discourse is able to reach, access, and socialise the repressed unconscious, there are some obvious political implications. In this repressed unconscious, ‘magic, shamanism, esoterism, the carnival, and “incomprehensible” poetry all underscore the limits of socially useful discourse and attest to what it represses: the process that exceeds the subject and his communicative structures’. Kristeva then wishes to know ‘under what conditions does this “esoterism”, in displacing the boundaries of socially established signifying practices, correspond to socioeconomic change, and, ultimately, even to revolution’?¹⁷⁷

The answer would seem to be under those conditions where ‘poetic style’ accesses the ‘process of signifiante’ and exceeds the reduction of experience to the structures of discourse. Importantly, accessing this destabilising force of excess becomes a ‘practice – a transformation of natural and social resistances, limitations, and stagnations – if and only if it enters the code of linguistic and social communication’.¹⁷⁸

In short, Kristeva looks for a signifying process as it is practised within the text.

Subsequently, the revolution in poetic language is conceived as a poetic practice that refuses meaning within a contradictory linguistic process that itself is within language, yet beyond words. Kristeva notes that ‘one must still posit an “outside” that is in fact internal to each closed [semiotic and symbolic] set since otherwise the set would remain enclosed, even if internal differentiation could be extended indefinitely’.¹⁷⁹

This radical ‘outside’ cannot be defined as strictly social, however, as the signifying process that subverts unitary power would then be contained symbolically. With this in mind, Kristeva looks to the heterogeneous energies of anterior biological drives for a foundational ‘outside’ that animates from beyond capitalist control of the symbolic realm. In this connection ‘the text is seen as a practice that can be compared to political revolution: the one brings about in the subject what the other introduces into society’. Importantly, it becomes so only by accessing the biological urges that exceed social control. Only by way of irrupting ‘the deconstructing and a-signifying machine of the unconscious’ can the text unleash the productive violence of the semiotic ‘other’ in and through a language underneath discourse and art.¹⁸⁰ It is the tapping into, and expenditure of, this instinctual material that forms the basis of a revolutionary poetic practice.

Kristeva adds a cautionary note, however. She suggests that in their attempt to acoustically formulate semiotic fluidity the avant-garde poets ultimately undermine their own project of ‘rejection’ by confining ‘their field of practice to the experience of heterogeneous contradiction’.¹⁸¹ Although such an experience suggests the signifying process, it tends toward inertia and ‘shows that the signifying process cannot be objectified by society and history’. In other words, in the effort to syntactically represent

the semiotic rhythms of language, the process itself becomes immobilised. Kristeva finds such a position untenable, as 'to keep heterogeneous contradiction within a simply subjective representation is to make it inaudible or complicitous with bourgeois ideology'. Ultimately this situation points to the need for a revolution in poetic language that would transform the experience of semiotic rupture into practice.¹⁸²

The challenge, then, is one of combining the semiotic energies, 'whose mechanism the text possesses, with revolutionary critique of the established social order'. In Kristeva's view, textual practice only becomes revolutionary practice by way of a representational narrative that 'attests to the historical process underway in revolutionary class struggles' and ensures 'the struggle will last on both the instinctual and signifying levels because it ensures that their inseparability will have a historical impact'. The foundational heterogeneity of the semiotic chora must thus irrupt into a 'critical discourse' that is 'representative of a revolutionary social practice', as otherwise 'social practice itself has a tendency to repress these mainsprings under unitary and technocratic visions of the subject'.¹⁸³ In instances of the repression of semiotic rupture, the unitary language of power denies the unfinalisability of the subject-in-process and inscribes the authority of social structure in the fixity of the bourgeois subject. In this separation of subjective and objective conditions, the logic of capitalism becomes the experience of the subject that denies the practice of the 'other'.

In general terms, Kristeva's work suggests a morphological reconstruction of Innis's oral tradition and Ong's acoustic spirit through an adaptation of Bakhtin. It would seem Kristeva transposes Bakhtin's concept of the chronotope (time in space) into a theory of transgression based upon the irruption of repressed kinetic energies that destabilise a univocal patriarchal authority. In effect, the 'time' of the mother dislodges

the 'space' of the father. Kristeva subsequently argues that the poetic formula achieved by a developed acoustic sensibility is able to discover an anterior oral logic sufficient to challenge literary authority. Not unlike Ong's acoustic theory of the interior imagination as the repressed space of the inner Word, the notion of the semiotic chora addresses the perception of 'sound before meaning' in a pre-symbolic state of language. In Kristeva's theory, however, language becomes the struggle between interior and exterior space within the text.

Kristeva carries on the work of the orality theorists by encouraging a search for the feminine material of a permanent oral form. With the orality theorists, she finds a radicality in the practice of juxtaposing forms until 'they rhyme' with the repressed voice of the origin. Such a gendering of acoustic rhythms does lend support to the radical difference of the oral. In this case, however, it must be said the assumption of an innate oral radicality does pre-condition the theory.¹⁸⁴ By offering an essentialised radical acoustic, and by subsequently gendering the opposition between sound and image, Kristeva's theory can be made to reinforce the idea that a secondary orality is the realisation of a subversive acoustic form. The return of a lost oral access to inner truth thus entrenches the Truth rather than interrogating its ideological production. Most importantly, it precludes the consideration of 'sound as contestatory' as well as the possibility of 'radical orality as ideology'.

Kristeva's feminisation of the 'oral semiotic' in opposition to the 'patriarchal symbolic' further corresponds with McLuhan's secondary orality and its attempted biosocial reconciliation of poetic language within technology. In both theories the oral communes with the origin in the founding inner space of the Mother/Father. Also, in both theories, the oral echo interrupts the written image by way of the return of an

unseen elsewhere inside the symbol. In effect, there is a deconstruction of visual metaphor through the privileging of idealised auditory forms. Interestingly, Kristeva does go on to raise the concern that explicitly aligns her theory of acoustic subversiveness with the radical orality of the bio-technological text. She notes that 'the problem is thus one of introducing the struggle of significance [. . .] into the objective process of contemporary science, technology and social relations'.¹⁸⁵ McLuhan would answer that such 'experience-in-practice' is realised in the textual ambivalence of electronic language. He might go on to suggest that the poetic acoustic shattering of a unitary metaphysic finds revolutionary agency in a technology that realises semiotic rupture.

Kristeva is clearly attempting to map a theory of the subversiveness of sound. Arguably, however, she is confounded by the essentialism implied in the gendering of sound. A strategy that seeks radicality in poetic access to the acoustic origin leaves itself open to confusing the acoustic interiorisation of mimetic pattern recognition with the politics of acoustic practice. All efforts to shape the rhythms of pre-language to reveal a musicated and meaningful plurality no doubt serve to obscure this confusion. In any event, however, once interiorised radical sound loses its 'otherness' as the space of the chora silences the outside. Ultimately, theories of oralisation that posit the inherent radicality of sound deny the 'situatedness' of heteroglossia. As opposed to this, it can be argued that the semiotic substratum is not an abstract space within language, but rather that it is an externally produced material space.

Notes to Chapter Six

¹ Raymond Williams argues that although the Romantics sought to use poetry as the language or ‘voice of humanity against oppression’ they were unable ‘to give material meaning to their social conceptions’ because they failed ‘to find any adequate social force by means of which the ‘superior reality’ of Art and Culture might be established and maintained’ (*Culture and Society*, p. 272). This position assumes that poetics itself is not a material social force capable of interacting with social agencies at other levels of society. It also overlooks the role poetics played in articulating the parallel degradation of dialect, place, and labour, and the role this played in the development of the working class’s identity as a class.

² Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, p. 277.

³ *Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, pp. 277-278.

⁴ Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, p. 39.

⁵ *Rabelais*, p. 44.

⁶ *Rabelais*, p. 45.

⁷ *Rabelais*, pp. 47-49

⁸ *Rabelais*, p. 19-20.

⁹ *Rabelais*, p. 170.

¹⁰ *Rabelais*, p. 316.

¹¹ *Rabelais*, p. 403.

¹² *Rabelais*, p. 317.

¹³ *Rabelais*, p. 317.

¹⁴ Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 136.

¹⁵ *Rabelais*, p. 153.

¹⁶ *Rabelais*, p. 154. The market square was ‘a peculiar second world within the official medieval order [. . .]. Officially the places, churches, institutions and private homes were dominated by hierarchy and etiquette, but in the marketplace a special kind of speech was heard, almost a language of its own, quite unlike the language of Church, place, courts, and institutions. It was also unlike the tongue of official literature or of the ruling classes, the aristocracy, the nobles, the high-ranking clergy and the top burghers – though the elemental force of the folk idiom penetrated even these circles’ (p. 154).

¹⁷ *Rabelais*, p. 165.

¹⁸ *Rabelais*, pp. 170-171. Bakhtin maps radical poetics in Rabelais’ efforts to unearth ‘a new place for human corporeality in the real spatial-temporal world to stand against the abstract immutability and authority of the spiritual domain.

¹⁹ *Rabelais*, p. 173.

²⁰ *Rabelais*, p. 187.

-
- ²¹ *Rabelais*, p. 174.
- ²² *Rabelais*, p. 184-185.
- ²³ *Rabelais*, p. 421.
- ²⁴ *Rabelais*, p. 457.
- ²⁵ *Rabelais*, p. 456.
- ²⁶ Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist, 'Introduction', in Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination*, xx.
- ²⁷ Bakhtin, *Rabelais* p. 6.
- ²⁸ *Rabelais*, p. 166.
- ²⁹ *Rabelais*, p. 471.
- ³⁰ *Rabelais*, p. 6.
- ³¹ *Rabelais*, p. 155
- ³² *Rabelais*, p. 27. The unfinished and open body (dying, bringing forth and being born) is not separated from the world by clearly defined boundaries; it is blended with the world, with animals, with objects. It is cosmic. It represents the entire material bodily world in all its elements. It is an incarnation of this world at the absolute lower stratum, as the swallowing up and generating principle, as the bodily grave and bosom, as a field which has been sown and in which new shoots are preparing to sprout.
- ³³ *Rabelais*, p. 255.
- ³⁴ *Rabelais*, p. 410.
- ³⁵ Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 168.
- ³⁶ *Rabelais*, p. 10.
- ³⁷ *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 123.
- ³⁸ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 163.
- ³⁹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 164.
- ⁴⁰ *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, pp. 122-124.
- ⁴¹ *Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 124.
- ⁴² *Dostoevsky's Poetics* p. 122.
- ⁴³ Bakhtin, 'Toward a Philosophy of the Act' (p. 122) in *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges*, ed. by Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1989), p. 21.
- ⁴⁴ Morson and Emerson, 'Introduction', *Rethinking Bakhtin*, pp. 46-49.
- ⁴⁵ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 369.

⁴⁶ V. N. Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, p. 84.

⁴⁷ Morson and Emerson, 'Introduction', *Rethinking Bakhtin*, pp. 5-31. This sense of contestatory relationship between system and human action correlates with Innis's notion of monopolies of communication creating monopolies of knowledge that undermine creative thought and lived 'oral tradition (*Bias of Communication*, pp. 61-92, 190-192).

⁴⁸ Morson and Emerson, 'Introduction', *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 9.

⁴⁹ Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 208.

⁵⁰ *Dialogic Imagination* p. 250.

⁵¹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 253.

⁵² *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 258. Bakhtin's 'architectonics of the act' attempts to address the contestatory conditions of speech production against the inscribed or transcribed synthesis of meaning. Morson and Emerson note that 'chronotope and the dialogic situation' came to replace architectonics when Bakhtin's 'thinking on these issues became more complex and precise' ('Introduction', *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 23). Bakhtin's 'architectonics of the act' appears to inform Lefebvre's 'architectonics of space' (*The Production of Space*, pp. 169-228). Both suggest the importance of 'space' to the social production of signs. Both suggest the rhythm of world dialogised in the poetics of language (*Production of Space*, p. 139, 235, Lefebvre, 'Elements of Rhythmanalysis' in *Writings on Cities*, pp. 219-228; Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 20, 253; also Morson & Emerson, 'Introduction', *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 24, pp. 27-28). Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis locates the rhythm of life in the experience of world as a complex interlocation of nature, culture and power against constructs of social or natural worlds in isolation from one another. This notion of 'architectonics' is also suggestive of the association we are here theorising between radical poetics, sound and the production of acoustic space. Bakhtin's concept of 'polyphony' is an attempt to articulate the architectonics of speech in a complex poetic production, something found to be wanting in Marxist dialectics. This emphasis on plurality over dialectics makes the theory vulnerable to idealist reconstruction and appropriation, particularly in the contemporary circumstances of the electronic multivoiced novel. It is perhaps here, in the ease with which it has been applied to media theory, that Bakhtin's polyphony and dialogical plurality become most problematic.

⁵³ Emerson and Holquist define 'heteroglossia' as 'the base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance. It is that which insures the primacy of context over text. At any given time, in any given place, there will be a set of conditions—social, historical, meteorological, physiological—that will ensure that a word uttered in that place and at that time will have a meaning different that it would have under any other conditions' ('Glossary', in Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 428). Heteroglossia is the complex articulation of the chronotope.

⁵⁴ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 272. Bakhtin attacks what he calls monologic language, which is akin to Derrida's critique of the phonocentric metaphysics of presence which posits a unitary speaker, a speaker who has an unmediated relation to 'his unitary and singular 'own' language' (p. 296). Bakhtin says this way of thinking identifies language in terms of two static poles: language as immutable given and the individual who speaks it. Bakhtin calls this 'monologic' language, language that is assumed to come from a single, unified source.

⁵⁵ *Dialogic Imagination*, pp. 272-273.

⁵⁶ *Dialogic Imagination*, pp. 291-292. In Bakhtin's notion of utterances as dialogic forms that speak the heteroglossia of world, one is here reminded of what Katherine Hayles has called 'cognitive distribution' (*How We Became Posthuman*, pp. 154-158) – forms that represent the ideological workings of our consciousness and that therefore distribute 'the ideological becoming of a human being' in words that represent possibility in hybridized form (Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p 341).

⁵⁷ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 292.

⁵⁸ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 270.

⁵⁹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 272.

⁶⁰ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 332.

⁶¹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 336.

⁶² Holquist and Emerson identify the 'image of a language' as a central concept in Bakhtin's methodology. 'Difficult to conceptualize', they suggest that these images 'are what literature – preeminently the novel – uses; in selecting what is to be said, the overriding concern should be to highlight the ideological impulses behind an utterance rather than any local meaning an utterance might have when conceived as a mere linguistic expression' ('Glossary', *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 429). For Bakhtin, it seems, the biggest challenge for the verbal artist is to represent the 'life of language' in the speaking person on a written page – all the while maintaining living context over text.

⁶³ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 259.

⁶⁴ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 341.

⁶⁵ Bakhtin defines the novel 'as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized'. It is the work of intentionally representing 'the internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups [. . .] languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even the hour [. . .]. The novel orchestrates all its themes, the totality of the world of objects and ideas depicted and expressed in it, by means of the social diversity of speech types'. The novelist makes use of the diversity of speech genres 'with whose help heteroglossia can enter the novel' (*Dialogic Imagination*, p. 263).

⁶⁶ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 295. See also p. 311.

⁶⁷ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 367.

⁶⁸ Holquist and Emerson, 'Glossary' of terms – 'hybridization', in Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 429. See also pp. 358-359.

⁶⁹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 338.

⁷⁰ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 341.

⁷¹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 274.

⁷² In this conjoined vision, novelistic and electronic carnivalisation suggest 'the creation of the open structure of the great dialogue, and permitted social interaction between people to be carried over into the higher sphere of the spirit and the intellect, which earlier had always been primarily the sphere of a single and unified monologic consciousness, a unified and indivisible spirit unfolding within itself (as, for example, in Romanticism)' (*Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 177).

⁷³ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 366. Bakhtin sees brute matter as something 'given', 'ready-made, self-identical, and indifferent'. It is what requires the act of cognition to create a relationship that speaks to the co-involvement (the 'answerability') of its participation in the 'becoming-event' of human being ((Mathew Roberts, 'Poetics Hermeneutics Dialogics: Bakhtin and Paul de Man', in *Rethinking Bakhtin*, ed. by Morson and Emerson, p. 121).

⁷⁴ Bakhtin argues that ‘at any given moment of its historical existence, language [. . .] represents the co-existence of socio-ideological contradictions between the present and the past, between differing epochs of the past, between different socio-ideological groups in the present, between tendencies, schools, circles and so forth, all given a bodily form. These “languages” of heteroglossia intersect each other in a variety of ways, forming new socially typifying “languages”’ (*Dialogic Imagination*, p. 291). The challenge for ‘verbal artist’ is to create speech forms that represent the ‘image’ of language as heteroglot – that is to represent and give primacy to ‘context’ (heteroglossia) over ‘text’ (fixed form).

⁷⁵ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 135. In this, Bakhtin joins Havelock in pinpointing the political authority embedded in the rhythmic formula and performance of oral tradition -- in effect, questioning Innis’s equation of ‘living tradition’ with the structural elasticity of the epic.

⁷⁶ *Dialogic Imagination* p. 135-36.

⁷⁷ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 135.

⁷⁸ *Rabelais*, p. 41.

⁷⁹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 298.

⁸⁰ With the disappearance of medieval street life, Bakhtin argues that carnival moves out of the public square and is ‘reincarnated in literature’ in the form of the novel (*Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, p. 157). In this incarnated outside sphere was found a form ‘to portray the mode of existence of man who is in life, but not of it [. . .] at last specific forms had been found to reflect private life and make it public’ (*Dialogic Imagination*, p. 161). And in the new electronic public square, the existence of man is fully exteriorised by way of bodily extensions that are the new language of the technological grotesque.

⁸¹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 263.

⁸² *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 7.

⁸³ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 161.

⁸⁴ *Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, p. 177. As opposed to the Romantics, who are criticised for approaching the ‘internal man from within’.

⁸⁵ *The Production of Space*, p. 62. Lefebvre asks: ‘what is an ideology without a space to which it refers? [. . .] What we call an ideology only achieves consistency by intervening in social space and its production, and by thus taking on body therein’ (Lefebvre, p. 44).

⁸⁶ For a discussion of the borders between official (finished, canon) and unofficial (attributes of the unfinished world) in the medieval contestations of language, see Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, p. 320.

⁸⁷ Bakhtin’s second life of the ‘other’ is then profoundly material. But his concept of polyphonics and orchestration is at odds with the centrifugal – centripetal and class tensions of heteroglossia. His effort to address the historical ‘presence’ of a pre-class other is vulnerable to ideologies, which deny class contestation. Excess materiality becomes the medium of transcendental materialism. Derrida suggests that the material other is ghosted by replicated form such that the text is mistaken for the world. When this occurs, dialogue itself is idealised and reduced to harmonised plurality because the sound of difference is in the world that has been suppressed.

⁸⁸ Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, pp. 278-79.

⁸⁹ Linda Hutcheon, ‘Modern Parody and Bakhtin’, in Morson and Emerson, *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 99.

⁹⁰ This, Hutcheon cautions 'should act as a warning to us in our attempts to apply Bakhtin's theories to contemporary culture' ('Modern Parody and Bakhtin', p. 99).

⁹¹ In his essay, 'The Poetics of Ressentiment', Bernstein has recently articulated not only the precise dangers of these oral idealisations but suggests the means by which an undifferentiated orality achieves the semblance of radical other. He suggests another side to dialogue that reinforces Fogel's concerns about forced speech and enforced silence. Bernstein suggests that 'dialogism itself is not always just clement or life enhancing, and that the resonance of multiple voices may be a catastrophic threat as much as a sustaining chorale' (Michael Andre Bernstein, 'The Poetics of Ressentiment', in Morson and Emerson, *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 199). 'Ideological reflection (the word, the symbolization) acquires the force of magic' (Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 212). The outside is interiorised by 'exterior' form. Ideologically, in electronic orality, time appears to return to historical time of the 'pre-class' world: 'There is no landscape, no immobile dead background; everything acts, everything takes part in the unified life of the whole' (*Dialogic Imagination* p. 218). A bio-evolutionary form of words defeats the life of words. The externality of culture is subsumed by the mimetic meeting of internal dialogue with the transcendental orality of electronic form.

⁹² Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, p. 83.

⁹³ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 85.

⁹⁴ *Philosophy of Language*, pp. 27-28.

⁹⁵ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 105.

⁹⁶ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 11.

⁹⁷ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 103.

⁹⁸ This 'making alien of sound' is the power of acoustic authority silencing the other of acoustic life.

⁹⁹ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 85. Insert added for clarification.

¹⁰⁰ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 85.

¹⁰¹ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 46.

¹⁰² *Philosophy of Language*, p. 110.

¹⁰³ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 99.

¹⁰⁴ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 95.

¹⁰⁵ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 81.

¹⁰⁶ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 110.

¹⁰⁷ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 71.

¹⁰⁸ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 105.

¹⁰⁹ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 75. By 'alien word' Volosinov means the word of authority.

¹¹⁰ Volosinov, *Freudianism: A Marxist Critique*, trans. by I.R. Titunik, ed. in collaboration Neal H. Bruss (New York: Academic Press, 1976), p. 79.

¹¹¹ *Freudianism*, pp. 105-106.

¹¹² This definition of 'speech zone' is provided in Michael Holquist's 'glossary of terms', in Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 434.

¹¹³ *Philosophy of Language*, pp. 93-94.

¹¹⁴ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 80.

¹¹⁵ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 91.

¹¹⁶ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 81.

¹¹⁷ *Freudianism* p. 93.

¹¹⁸ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 94.

¹¹⁹ *Freudianism*, p. 11.

¹²⁰ *Freudianism*, p. 14. Italics in original unless otherwise indicated.

¹²¹ *Freudianism*, p. 15.

¹²² *Freudianism*, p. 22. See also p. 90.

¹²³ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 90.

¹²⁴ Volosinov argues that 'In the absence of form, the experience of inner speech is passion without agency': 'The wider and deeper the breach between the official and the unofficial conscious, the more difficult for motives of inner speech to turn into outward speech [. . .] wherein they might acquire formulation, clarity, and rigor. Motives under these conditions begin to fail, to lose their verbal countenance, and little by little really do turn into a 'foreign body' in the psyche. Whole sets of organic manifestations come, in this way, to be excluded from the zone of verbalized behavior and may become asocial. Thereby the sphere of the 'animalian' in man enlarges' (*Freudianism*, p. 89)

¹²⁵ *Freudianism*, p. 108.

¹²⁶ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 14.

¹²⁷ *Freudianism*, p. 108.

¹²⁸ *Freudianism*, pp. 107-108.

¹²⁹ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 93.

¹³⁰ In the upper strata 'that which is socially grounded is likely to be set down in writing or even more so in print'. The lower stratum is described as involving 'miscarriages of orientation' (*Philosophy of Language*, p. 92).

¹³¹ Volosinov, *Philosophy of Language*, p. 92. Here one is reminded of Havelock's insistence that the legitimate study of orality must approach 'communication, not as it is spontaneous and impermanent, but as it is preserved in lasting form' (*Preface to Plato*, p. 64). Volosinov divides behavioural ideology into lower and upper strata. The lowest is the 'most fluid, and quickly changing', involving things that do not take root socially: 'Experiences born of a momentary and accidental state of affairs, have, of course, no chance of further social impact or efficacy' (the impermanent outside the social record). 'The upper strata of behavioral ideology, the ones directly linked with ideological systems, are more vital, more serious and

bear a creative character. Compared to an established ideology, they are a great deal more mobile and sensitive, they convey changes in the socioeconomic basis more quickly and more vividly. Here, precisely, is where those creative energies build up through whose agency partial or radical restructuring of ideological systems comes about' (*Philosophy of Language*, p. 92).

¹³² *Philosophy of Language*, pp. 87- 89.

¹³³ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 91. By established ideological systems Volosinov means social ethics, science, art, and religion, etc., which he calls 'crystalizations of behavioral ideology'. He points out that: 'These already formalized ideological products constantly maintain the most vital organic contact with behavioral ideology and draw sustenance from it; otherwise without that contact, they would be dead, just as any literary work or cognitive idea is dead without living, evaluative perception of it' (*Philosophy of Language*, p. 91).

¹³⁴ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 92.

¹³⁵ *Freudianism*, pp. 88-89.

¹³⁶ Volosinov emphasises that art 'is just as immanently social; the extraartistic social milieu, affecting art from outside, finds direct, intrinsic response within it. [This is the case] of one social formation affecting another social formation. The aesthetic, just as the juridical or the cognitive, is only a variety of the social' (*Philosophy of Language*, pp. 95-96).

¹³⁷ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 87. Emphasis added.

¹³⁸ *Philosophy of Language*, p. 12.

¹³⁹ *Freudianism*, p. 116.

¹⁴⁰ Kristeva's sense of a radical poetic space suggests Bakhtin's notion of the 'interior infinite'; the grotesque possibilities of such become particularly significant in world subject to a totalising authority.

¹⁴¹ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. by Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 15.

¹⁴² One must keep in mind here Kristeva's concept of experience aligned as it is with acoustic techniques of poetic language that access and release the drive energies of the chora, thereby allowing the 'experience' of the non-signifying totality prior to meaning – 'Calling Back Rupture within Practice' (*Revolution in Poetic Language*, pp. 202-205). Revolution in poetic language then becomes poetic technique that ruptures the semiotic chora and destabilizes the authority of the symbolic (Kristeva, p. 203). Experience 'the repressed element of practice' - the signifying *process* itself, which is 'perpetually undermined by that which remains outside symbolization' (Kristeva, p. 204).

¹⁴³ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 203.

¹⁴⁴ Kristeva explicitly borrows the notion of *chora* from Plato's *Timeaus* to represent what she calls 'an essentially mobile and extremely provisional articulation constituted by movements and their ephemeral states' (*Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 25). This space, Kristeva argues, is a third space of 'being' between the rational and the irrational. The third nature is 'space, and is eternal, and admits not of destruction and provides a home for all created things, and is apprehended when all sense is absent, by a kind of spurious reason' (Plato, *Timeaus*, Cornford trans. 52 a-52b). Here one senses a correspondence with Plato's effort to find an oral space disconnected from the outside sound of poetics, an interior oral logic which is 'hardly real' and which he likens to a dream space which is neither 'in heaven or in earth' and therefore has 'no existence' (52 b-c). Since, as Plato argued, we cannot use language to arrive at the truth about this space, it remains 'the fleeting shadow of some other' (52 c). It haunts rational and irrational being. Plato suggested that access to the *third space* is available only to the wise who recognise

in the motions of this space, 'an imitation of divine harmony' (80 b). The space of Platonic Truth is inexpressible, that is, beyond utterance. For Kristeva, Plato's notion of space is the originary 'receptacle or nurse of all generation' (52a-52b). This suggests a feminine space outside or anterior reason: 'Space, which is everlasting, not admitting destruction: providing a situation for all things that come into being, but itself apprehended without the senses by a sort of bastard reasoning, and hardly an object of belief. This is indeed is that which we look upon as in a dream and say that anything that is must needs be in some place or occupy some room' (52a-52b quoted in Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 239n 12). This room is located beyond the senses in the unspeakable 'invisible and formless being' which is 'the soul before the body of the world', (Kristeva, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, pp. 153-54), transmitted only as essence in the energised form of inner light – the ultimate poetics of absolute truth.

¹⁴⁵ Kristeva uses the term 'signifiante' to indicate a radical poetic practice through which the repressed subversiveness of sound is released into language, and through language, into the world.

¹⁴⁶ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 237.

¹⁴⁷ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 28.

¹⁴⁸ *Revolution in Poetic Language* p. 89.

¹⁴⁹ Drucilla Cornell and Adam Thurschwell, 'Feminism, Negativity, Intersubjectivity', in *Feminism as Critique: Essays on Politics of Gender in Late-Capitalist Societies* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press Basil Blackwell, 1987), p. 154.

¹⁵⁰ *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by Leon S. Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), p. 238.

¹⁵¹ *Desire in Language*, p. 238.

¹⁵² Felicia Miller Frank, *The Mechanical Song: Women, Voice, and the Artificial in Nineteenth Century French Narrative* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995), p. 29.

¹⁵³ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, pp. 153-54.

¹⁵⁴ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 40.

¹⁵⁵ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 79.

¹⁵⁶ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 50.

¹⁵⁷ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 79.

¹⁵⁸ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 80.

¹⁵⁹ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 81.

¹⁶⁰ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 88.

¹⁶¹ *Desire in Language*, p. 65. Italics in the original.

¹⁶² *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 62.

¹⁶³ *Revolution in Poetic Language* p. 103.

¹⁶⁴ *Revolution in Poetic Language* p. 104.

¹⁶⁵ For Kristeva, a revolution in poetic language is the irruption of biological instincts into the stases of symbolic form. This radical poetic language is the semiotic other to symbolic language: 'the word as signifier for different modes of (literary) intellection within different genres or texts puts poetic analysis [. . .] at the intersection of language (the true practice of thought) with space (the volume within which signification, through a joining of differences, articulates itself' (*Desire in Language*, p. 65). Kristeva's notion of the 'joining of differences' corresponds with McLuhan's 'juxtaposition without copula'.

¹⁶⁶ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, pp. 96-105.

¹⁶⁷ *Desire in Language*, p. 111.

¹⁶⁸ *Revolution in Poetic Language* p. 26.

¹⁶⁹ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 86.

¹⁷⁰ Drucilla Cornell and Adam Thurschwell, 'Feminism, Negativity, Intersubjectivity', p. 148.

¹⁷¹ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 15.

¹⁷² *Desire in Language*, p. 88.

¹⁷³ *Desire in Language*, p. 89.

¹⁷⁴ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 29

¹⁷⁵ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 15.

¹⁷⁶ Kristeva finds poets such as Mallarme calling 'attention to the semiotic rhythm within language'. Through a play of associations Mallarme set out to create a 'language of the senses' capable of mimetically orchestrating the music of poetry denied by the linear uniformity of traditional form. Against the 'great organ of consecrated meter' he wanted to access and embody the 'infinity of shattered melodies' and the rhythms of an eternally unformed instinct. By way of creating an incantational unity of inside and outside, he sought to physically inscribe in bodily experience an irreducible rhythm, inside and yet beyond language. For Mallarme, the undermining of traditional poetic authority demanded a non-linear language, a language of the body and senses, rather than the mind: 'This concrete language [. . .] has first to satisfy the senses', it is a performance that expresses thoughts that are 'beyond the reach of spoken language' (Mallarme, *The Theatre and Its Double*). It is Mallarme's notion of the 'Mystery in Literature' that Kristeva finds so semiotically compelling (*Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 29).

¹⁷⁷ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 16.

¹⁷⁸ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 17.

¹⁷⁹ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 14.

¹⁸⁰ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 17. For Kristeva, the 'outside' is to be found in 'the a-signifying machine of the unconscious' where 'the flow itself exists only through language, appropriating and displacing the signifier to practise within it the heterogeneous generating of the "desiring machine"' (p. 17).

¹⁸¹ While the texts of the avant-garde expose the repressed semiotic material of a radical language, they privilege poetic form over semiotic process, the experience of heterogeneity as opposed to its practice. Although these texts suggest the means of achieving a radical turn in poetic language, Kristeva argues that they fail to achieve a revolutionary practice. Efforts to embody the semiotic energies underneath the text contradict the very process of shattering which is not 'a known truth but instead its expenditure' (*Revolution in Poetic Language*, p 188).

¹⁸² *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 189. What a revolutionary practice demands, Kristeva argues, is a process that constitutes the process of infinite semiotic motility and rupture. Although the avant-garde poets served to embody the presence of the semiotic chora, they ran the risk of immobilising, at the level of personal experience, the process they wished to unleash. Kristeva suggests that these texts become entranced by their acoustic forms and are therefore unable sustain the semiotic connection to revolutionary practice. It is not enough, she argues, to create the experience of heterogeneous contradiction, one must find the means to socially sustain its articulation within the class relations of capitalist society 'where every subject and discourse are ultimately determined by their position in production and politics' (*Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 191).

¹⁸³ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, pp. 190-1.

¹⁸⁴ Interestingly, Kristeva attempts to align her semiotic chora to Derrida's notion of the 'trace' (*Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 40). However, the correspondence breaks down in the essentialist interiority of Kristeva's construct, and Derrida acknowledges as much. He points out that Plato's notion of the chora is part of a strategy to banish the poetic rhythms of unreason from the Republic and, in effect, that Kristeva's chora feminises Plato's place of inner truth. While the seeking of truth may summon acoustic rhythms, the achievement of truth remains sacramental rupture beyond representation. While rhythm is the process of seeking truth, the chora remains the return to timeless truth. Ultimately, as the receptacle that holds pre-verbal rhythms, the chora is reduced 'to silence by "ontologizing it"' (Derrida, *Jacques Derrida: Positions*, trans. and annotated by Alan Bass, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972, p. 75). In connection with this Derrida emphasises this negation of the external world as the foundational practice of western metaphysics: 'To reduce the exteriority of the signifier is to exclude everything in semiotic practice that is not psychic' (*Positions*, p. 106 n. 37). Kristeva's semiotic chora is thus seen to offer a metaphysics of presence and restatement of phonocentric interiority as the originary 'Being of beings' (*Positions*, p. 106 n. 37). Indeed, arguably, Kristeva represents the archetype for Derrida's critique of the theories of sound as defending the metaphysical presence underpinning idealist constructs of language: the irruptions of the chora are interior emanations from an idealised anterior state; the textual practice of the semiotic chora recalls the epic rhythms of oral authority; the 'power' of sound is accessed through acoustic formulas that touch an original melody and continually replicate its song. Spivak argues that Kristeva's project is not undertaken to 'deconstruct the origin'. Rather, it is intended 'to recuperate, archeologically and formulaically what she locates as the potential originary space before the sign' in the 'geno-text' of the feminine body, the womb, or the mystery of language (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics*, London: Methuen, 1987, p.146). The revolution in poetic language is aligned 'in order to summon timeless "truths" [. . .] into the order of speech and social symbolism' (Kristeva, *About Chinese Woman*, p.38, in Spivak, *In Other Worlds*, p.136, italics added by Spivak)

¹⁸⁵ *Revolution in Poetic Language*, p. 213.

CHAPTER SEVEN – ELECTRONIC CARNIVAL

EcoBabble: The Techno-inversion of Spatial Acoustic Practice

In the year of 1962, two notable books are published that reveal the problem of spatial disorientation in the emerging electronic hegemony. As McLuhan triumphantly announced the end of an epoch in his *Gutenberg Galaxy*, Rachel Carson registered the sounds of a disappearing ‘other’ in her *Silent Spring*. The ideas to be found in this historical conjunction mark a political shift involving a consolidation of power in the space of consumption by a denying of the space of production. Carson’s fear concerning the degradation of the natural world, along with the mounting evidence of species’ extinction, reflected the connection between capitalist exploitation and survival. *Silent Spring* announced the new sound of capitalist production. While the electronic world apparently resonated with a limitless diversity and abundance, the natural world told a different story. Ultimately, Carson’s contaminated and exploited world would come to haunt McLuhan’s Eden of polyphonic intertextuality. The indictment in Carson’s documentation of global health hazards was stunning. The threats outlined – contamination of the food chain, cancers, genetic damage – spurred widespread public demands for regulating the practices of industry to protect the environment.

In its wake Carson’s alarm inspired an ecological movement. It also inspired an unparalleled corporate effort to manage the language of resistance with an advertising semiotics of engineered ambivalence. In a take-over of the language Nelson calls ‘eco-babble’, such phrases as ‘biodegradable disposable diapers’, ‘Mother Nature’s Gas Station’, ‘Clean, Safe Nuclear Power’, ‘sustainable development’, ‘ozone friendly detergents’, and ‘recyclable plastics’ are only a few of the many that became omnipresent in the media.¹ Subsequently, and in an increasingly sophisticated colonisation of

resistance, industry began to focus its attention on ecological hotspots, activist movements, and the growing public concern about environmental degradation. In what became known as 'Greenwashing', the public relations industry was directly employed to contain and undermine ecological activism.² Efforts were made to infiltrate grassroots organisations, disrupt language with 'eco-babble', and establish industry supported front groups aimed at fragmenting resistance.³ At the same time, there were efforts to encourage offending corporations to sanitise their images and present themselves as leaders in the struggle for environmental sustainability.

In response to such tactics, there was a rise in anti-corporate activism aimed specifically against the cultural subjugation and incursion of marketing and commercialisation. In street cultures of the unemployed, alienated, homeless and displaced youth could be found a collective defiance against a world order speaking of technological emancipation but in reality producing globalised poverty, inequality, and ecological ruin. Throughout the 1990s appear new resistance movements such as, 'Reclaim the Streets',⁴ 'adbusting',⁵ 'culture-jamming',⁶ 'the Pedestrian Liberation Front',⁷ as well as brand-based boycott campaigns. Such practices as adbusting and subvertising emerged out of Situationist ideas on the revolutionary nature of play and pleasure, ideas that took root in the punk rage of Britain's radical youth culture during the 1970s.⁸ Jordan suggests that much of the direct action was against the all-pervasive 'mediated forms of control and power [. . .] where choice is about the number of consumer brands available and democracy becomes yet another form of "interactive" marketing'.⁹

The direct action groups set out to disrupt the space of corporate speech and build alliances between radical environmental groups, traditional labour movements, and anti-

poverty organisations. Certainly, there was no shortage of media attention directed at influencing youth during this period. Indeed, in the 1980s and 90s, a transnational advertising industry emerged to gear its messages to the sacrilegious world of youth resistance, making a spectacle of long forbidden grotesque images in an effort to market products.¹⁰ In many respects, the promotion of an 'official' youth counter-culture had the effect of actively inhibiting the development of the genuine article. This could be seen in the music industry where, as Ferguson notes, 'the loop taken by new musical style from the underground to the mainstream is now so compressed that there's no moment of freedom and chaos when a counterculture can take root'.¹¹ In these circumstances direct action groups grew uneasy about carnivalesque strategies that encouraged a temporary empowerment, but that failed to 'develop a critical/political agenda'.¹² The subsequent withdrawal of activists from media-centred resistance campaigns also pointed to a concern with the techno-inversions of the sense of presence at the heart of media politics.¹³

Advertising is very much at the centre of things in all of these issues. Within the semiotic art of corporate advertising lies the carnivalesque capacity of electronic sounds and images to disrupt meaning and produce an engineered ambivalence. In the pursuit of this exercise the world becomes an internal game of media semiotics endlessly reconstructing the media context in which information is reported and desire is manufactured. As mentioned, such a technological inversion repositions the poetics of resistance into the replicated space of electronic production, and it is in this space that the semiotics of corporate language ceaselessly appropriates the subversive sound of spatial practice by way of reconstituting 'materiality'.¹⁴ In short, electronic orality appropriates the sound of lived experience to represent the 'authenticity' of the commodity-world.

This can be seen, for example, in fragmented pieces of conversation positioned against the background noises of daily life, as in ‘the Suave Shampoo ad that takes place in a cafeteria amid the clatter of trays and glasses’. In such cases, the sounds of actual conversations are inverted and transformed into ‘hypersignifiers of “real conversations”’.¹⁵

Goldman argues that the power of advertising lies in the fact that it is ‘not a closed, or uncontested, cultural universe’. Having ghosted the real world of contestation, the world of electronic replication thrives on intertextuality, deconstruction, and the interpretative transactions of the audience. Spatial disorientation can be so compelling that it enables an absorbing of popular resistance as fresh material for the engineering of consumptive practice. This power of electronic space to appropriate, invert, and signify resistance to authority speaks to what Goldman calls ‘channelling multiplicities of meaning and action through the univocality of commodity equivalence exchange’.¹⁶ In this development instrumental ambivalence filters the historical poetics of resistance through replicated space, translating sound into the oral logic and narrative conventions of the commodity form. Electronic space thus comes to represent the anti-linear logic of information capitalism that engineers consumption into perceived acts of resistance.

Advertisers seem to recognise that the transgression of narrative conventions from the vernacular edges and margins of popular culture offers the construction of a more resonant realism. Explicitly admitting its strategies of deception, corporate speech is even able to turn the questioning of advertising tactics into acts of consumption representing resistance. Goldman and Papson note that the advertising industry ‘manufactures’ participatory consumption among even the most cynical, disbelieving, and savvy spectators through the deployment of a radical semiotics, one that

commodifies resistance by admitting the false constructions of the pseudo-world and then selling 'protest products' that consumers can purchase as a way to demonstrate their resistance to advertising.¹⁷ In a recent case, *Benetton* transformed growing public concern about world poverty and disease into a t-shirt empire that uses social consciousness as a means of 'hailing the alienated spectator'.¹⁸ A *Sunlight Soap* commercial asks "'Who writes this stuff'" as it mocks the typical theme of dishwashing soap ads: that men are attracted to women whose dishes sparkle'.¹⁹ In another initiative, the fashion industry has transformed the 'body' into a protest sign against species extinction by way of buying clothes that display animals on the endangered list.

Advertising semiotics will even go to the lengths of finding a space of electronic ambivalence in the advertising, itself. An example of this is found in the Levi's campaign to sell blue-jeans through connecting the intertextuality of advertising to the interpretative power of the spectator. Levi's focused its campaign on youth resistance to consumer conformism, encouraging the construction of a radical identity that would speak for 'the street' and shun the pretence of designer labels as well as commercials. Using 'real kids' from New York, the ads repositioned their commodity in a rebellious space by linking the wearing of Levi jeans with the street-savvy youth. In this case, the pitch is that the kids know they are in a commercial: 'It is cool to know you are getting snowed, to admit it and then to wear Levi's as a sign that you know'. In a similar Levi's ad, a young man 'simply yawns in our faces, bored by the entire project'.²⁰ In effect the street-wise cool that inverts the inversion of television advertising is itself co-opted. Inside a pair of Levi's jeans, youth becomes resistance to a traditional consumer conformism. Contrary to fantasy-based advertising strategies that solve problems, the

Levi's ads flaunt 'deviance' and 'disorder' to create consumption out of a resistance to consumer culture.

More recently the rock music television channel, *MTV*, has become an instrument for an inversion of youth culture that seeks to socialise newer generations in the ways of a global consumer culture. In its programming acoustic performances merge with advertising to transform the social space of potential youth resistance into a longing for the transcendental. Disconnected images and raw inharmonious sounds suggest endless interpretations and juxtapositions. In Dada-like audio-visual noise that transgresses meaning, there is the construction of a rebellious electronic space for promoting nonconformist consumption of nonconformist products. Repositioning radical expression inside the entertainment network of pop videos, and interspersing these with equally 'hip' advertising techniques, the subversive potential of sound in youth culture is thus inverted into a continuous song of consumption. Reconfigured into music videos and staging grounds for commercials, 'the street' of acoustic encounter becomes very much a controlled space within a technological construct.

Contemporary semiotics finds the space of electronic ambivalence through a peculiar juncture of literary and media theory inside the postmodern intertextuality of advertising. In such circumstances 'dominant political-economic institutions and elites no longer require a *coherent* legitimating ideology'.²¹ The power of technological inversion lies in the replicating of everyday life, and, as corporations exploit the lived relation to technologised space, this replication conjures a world for what the advertising industry calls 'repositioning'.²² In effect, lived experience is addressed and reshaped by the media, 'serving corporate sponsors whose purpose is to rearrange reality so that viewers forget the world around them'.²³ By locating advertising in the lived space of

the world, electronic space intertextualises social and commercial relations in an ambiguous language of pseudo-community. Instability of meaning is beside the point, as the objective is the engineering of heteroglossia itself. In the space of electronic possibility, endless interpretation of voice messages, lyrics, visual abstractions, and raw sound encourage the 'practice' of self-fashioning through consumption. As might be expected, any potential radical poetic tends to be diffused by this orchestrated 'playing' with the spatial practice of language.

In something of a final irony, the world of advertising reconstructs nature as a place of genuine experience away from commodities. In this exercise, the sign of 'authentic' experience replaces experience, and an already inverted world is transformed into a representation signifying a space of unlimited potential, adventure, excitement, risk, and experience freed from the constraints of civilisation. Viewers are then encouraged to go 'into nature' in search of this world. There is disappointment, of course, but inevitably this sustains desire and the further consumption of substitutes.²⁴ In this corporate ghosting process, the 'virtualised' economy becomes the vanishing point of a superseded order of capitalism that mimetically disappears into the space of technology.²⁵ Notably, the degradation of the environment and the silencing of resistance go hand in hand with this technological 'disappearance' of the space of production. In its place corporate speech uses sound to 'hail and name viewers', calling them to enter a second nature.²⁶ However, and although the second nature of electronic orality resounds with semiotic abundance, it is possible to suggest that the postmodern world is actually the 'age of missing information' -- that there is, in fact, real loss.²⁷

Electronic Intertextuality

Like McLuhan, Bakhtin, Volosinov, and Kristeva attempt to articulate a material bodily principle of the oral. In particular, the views of Bakhtin and McLuhan seem to converge in a postmodern notion of radicality that unwittingly gives electronic orality the material bodily texture of the 'other'. In this theoretical convergence the inversionary powers of folk culture are seen to be incarnated in an electronic carnival form. In effect, Bakhtin's chronotope of carnival connects with technology via the application of the material bodily principle, reawakening the powers of the grotesque in electronic form. In turn, transformative technology becomes a further embodiment of carnival inversion, the oral spirit of carnival rendered in the grotesque form of acoustic excess.

For Bakhtin, the unofficial second life of carnival opposes the 'monolith of the Christian cult and ideology'.²⁸ For McLuhan, on the other hand, electronic technology is the means to oppose the monolith of linear rationalism by inscribing material bodily presence upon the interior 'life' of the spirit.²⁹ In both instances it is the 'hyperbolism of material bodily images', in Bakhtin's phrase, that exceeds official meaning and transgresses authority.³⁰ McLuhan's second life of the oral can be further framed as the spiritual rebirth of a lost orality. In this regard it is akin to a reincarnation of Bakhtin's disappeared oral spirit of medieval carnival, a spirit that 'liberates the world from all that is dark and terrifying', turning fears into 'amusing or ludicrous monstrosities'.³¹

McLuhan's 'grotesque' envisions a reconstituted body of the people to reveal the eternal miracles of the Word turned flesh in the electronic Body. In a sense, electronic orality revives folk culture by giving it bodily form in the life of the replicated world. It further provides a communion with technology that defeats the modern anxiety by way of bio-

technological monstrosities created in cybernetic joining with, and symbolic defeat of, that which is feared.

For Bakhtin, carnival made possible ‘the creation of the open structure of the great dialogue’, further allowing the possibility of ‘social interaction between people to be carried over into the higher sphere of the spirit and the intellect which had earlier always been primarily the sphere of a single and unified monologic consciousness’.³² This ‘great dialogue’ could indeed be considered the transposition of theological categories into reality itself.³³ The repressed oral spirit of the people reincarnated in ‘a new chronotope for a new, whole and harmonious man, and for new forms of communication’.³⁴ The fact that McLuhan comes to emphasise the special powers of the electronic world to transcend time and space suggests his awareness of the externalising and counter-inversionary force of Bakhtin’s chronotope. Indeed, the problematic association in Bakhtin’s thinking between ‘carnival’ and the ‘chronotope of the public square’ subsequently enables McLuhan’s electronic ‘body’ as an incarnation of a carnivalised second world.³⁵ McLuhan’s reading of carnivalised space is crucial to understanding how secondary orality is able to give primacy to the electronic text and thus substantiate the transcendental world of the reincarnated Word. In effect, McLuhan secures the ‘outside’ by way of an interiorisation of exterior form.

McLuhan’s theory can also be viewed as a reworking of Bakhtin’s notion of the ‘carnavalesque’ into a technologised form of dialogism, that is, into an electronic novel. The resulting ‘body’ of McLuhan’s theory suggests a recognition of the radical potentialities of a ‘grotesque orality’.³⁶ In turn McLuhan uses the electronic ‘incarnation’ of the Word to exteriorise the repressed interior infinite. In addition, his electronic replication of the public square makes ample use of the implicit theological overtones in

Bakhtin's concept of carnival renewal.³⁷ In an intricate transubstantiation of the 'folkloric' from the historical poetics of world into a theological abstraction, McLuhan's orality is saturated with a sense of the unlimited possibility of its electronic space. The carnivalisation of literature that opens into the great dialogue thus is able to serve as a literary foundation for McLuhan's reincarnation of pre-class, folk language in a technological form suited to its elasticity and ambivalence. In this case, an electronic orality further serves to realise Bakhtin's great dialogue by way of a limitless polyphonic orchestration in which the democratic spirit of lost orality found in 'the peculiar logic of the "inside out"' is electronically consolidated.³⁸ Arguably, McLuhan actively reconstructs the confusion between the represented world of literary text and the 'outside' by extending it to the technologically evolved electronic text that achieves revolution from within a context beyond word and world.

McLuhan's theory of secondary orality can be said to 'carnivalise' the media by finding in the technology a permanent form for infinite juxtaposition. It is in this development that television becomes a 'novelisation', an escape from the page into the reincarnated performance of public ritual. McLuhan's search for an orchestration of the elusive and complex life of language thus intersects with Bakhtin's emphasis on the carnivalisation of literature in novelistic discourse.³⁹ Indeed, both seek a form that will permit a life 'shaped according to a certain pattern of play'.⁴⁰ However, it must be said that McLuhan ultimately transforms the materialism of Bakhtin's utterance such that the destabilising agency of heteroglossia becomes a technologically orchestrated and multi-accented stasis. More specifically, utterance is interiorised as the original Word, then exteriorised in the bio-totality of the electronic world. Dialogism is thus reconstituted

into a world conversation of the now exteriorised Spirit of 'man' released from a state of interior repression.

Of interest, this convergence of Bakhtin and McLuhan has been further developed in some contemporary theory. Rutland develops this line of thinking, suggesting that the oral may be reconstituted in the new chronotope of electronic technology, 'simultaneity'. He notes that 'the process of carnivalesque inversion is alive in the postmodern situation which is the "exponential" speeding up of the process owing to the revolution in the means of cultural production and exchange in the twentieth century'.⁴¹ Rutland credits the speed of technology for the transgressive potentiality of postmodern electric forms. In this development emerges 'a prosthetic memory different in kind from that of societies that relied on written records, let alone those confined to oral tradition'. In electronic space simultaneity produces 'a temporal experience that cannot be comprehended within the linear categories of received systems of thought'.⁴²

As a result of this, Rutland finds that carnival 'has migrated both from the hitherto culturally central bourgeois novel and from exile in the vestigial carnival of popular entertainment to an *electronic global arena*'. He argues that while the 'body' of carnival has been 'left to an increasingly vestigial plebeian culture of fairs and midways', its 'spirit' has been 'redistributed and refocused once again in the new mass media of sound, image, motion and colour'. The new transgressive space of electronic media offers, according to this view, 'far more scope to the dialogic impulse than either printed fiction or the public square, for they combine the ubiquity and simultaneity of the one with the simulacra of the bodily presence of the other'. In this electronic presence of the absence, the 'Word' is freed from the body to be 'everywhere at once'.⁴³

Rutland concludes that the ambivalence and intertextuality of electronic media serve to delegitimise master narratives by 'breaking up of established codes and genres to yield new information'.⁴⁴ With McLuhan he explicitly identifies electronic orality as a discourse of unfinalisability that will be realised in the flux of technological form.⁴⁵ As he notes, 'postmodernity is a condition of "permanent revolution" in that the dialogical modality of carnival is at work consistently and ubiquitously through the mass media, flooding the margins into the centre, opening new spaces of discourse and empowerment'.⁴⁶

Fiske picks up on this last thought and develops it in a slightly more concrete way. While admitting the media are deeply inscribed with capitalism, he wishes to show the potential of electronic media and how its meanings may be positively absorbed into the social experience and subsequently rendered into popular culture.⁴⁷ In Fiske's view, the 'economics of the televised' produces a mass audience composed of subcultures that inevitably bring differentiated discourses to the task of understanding and producing meaning. Thus, contrary to notions of monopoly power, economic factors demand that television be 'made popular by a wide variety of social groups', a matter working against 'its apparent ability to exert ideological control over the passive viewer'.⁴⁸

Fiske further argues that notions of a monolithic media ignore the power of audiences to create their own meaning out of the electronic text. On this point he is adamant: audiences have the power to interpret, and therefore transgress, the messages directed at them.⁴⁹ Since each viewing subgroup selects what it watches and subsequently construct its own meaning, 'media power' is seen to be more than balanced by 'audience power'. Within a differing history, experience, and interest in each case, these groups are able to find a diversity of material from which to fashion distinctive

meanings and identities structured along racial, ethnic, occupational, gender, and generational lines. In effect, the 'oral' incursion of electronic media into public space is seen to go through a counter-inversionary process in which viewers continually destabilise any corporate control over meaning by claiming the material as their own.⁵⁰ Television thus contains the anti-monolithic voices of its own antithesis in the space of collateral dialogue it generates with respect to itself.⁵¹

Fiske also suggests that different cultures will produce different interpretations of a given television program. Incorporating such a 'program into local culture is seen to be an active, oral process that denies any overwhelming precedence to the Hollywood culture from whence it originates'. Indeed, he argues, 'the viewer's production of meaning will supersede the producer's intended message, as audiences will participate in the meanings of the program in a way that Hollywood moguls can neither foresee nor control'.⁵² As a result of all this, the media realises an interruption to its corporate authority that puts the lie to its alleged ideological power. Far from being 'the agent of the dominant classes', it becomes 'the prime site where the dominant have to recognize the insecurity of their power, and where they have to encourage cultural difference with all the threat to their own position this implies'.⁵³

In Fiske's view, the ability of the audience to construct divergent meanings from electronic materials further becomes an agency for sustaining the diversity of popular culture. In the electronic world is to be found a rekindling of folkloric richness in which intertextual diversity is 'easily incorporated, via gossip, into local, oral culture'.⁵⁴ Fiske likens the oral digestion of these materials to the resistant role of 'gossip' in women's oral culture and its ability to invert and transgress patriarchal authority.⁵⁵ Extending the notion that human potentiality lies in the awakened spirit of technological possibility, he

goes on to argue that a revived folk culture of television contains the remedy for the ills of modernity. More specifically, he insists that 'oral culture still lives despite the dislocations of mass society' and that 'television is not only readily incorporated into this, but [. . .] is actually essential to its survival'. In effect, 'TV is able to play in industrial societies a similar role to that played by folk culture in more homogenous ones'.⁵⁶ Fiske ultimately sees the electronic media as having the potential to create a renaissance in popular culture rivalling the creativity of the medieval festival. In the fragmented postmodern condition, it is the electronic media that is able to breathe a new life into oral culture.⁵⁷

For Fiske, the 'textuality of television is essentially intertextual'.⁵⁸ In this essential intertextuality, Fiske finds a 'language of the oppressed with which to think and talk that resistance'.⁵⁹ Indeed, he suggests that 'television text is like all texts, the site of a struggle for meaning'.⁶⁰ In a conjunction of real world diversity and the excess of meanings in the electronic text, Fiske locates a culture of unbounded possibility. In the folk interplay with electronic meanings, television becomes a postmodern form of heteroglossia. In the process of producing meanings out of the television text, it is this excess that defies monopoly. Fiske notes that there is an 'assertion of one's social identity in resistance to, in independence of, or in negotiation with, the structure of domination'. The exchange between the experience of the subjugated and the reading of the televised text thus suggests the promise of an electronic world: 'There is, in short, a power in being different'.⁶¹ It is through this technologically engendered capacity that viewers escape a 'pessimistic Marxism' in which any oppositional movement is immediately 'incorporated into the dominant ideology'.⁶²

In Fiske's notion of television culture, 'intertextuality' takes the form of a 'cultural agent, particularly as a provoker and circulator of meanings'.⁶³ It is Fiske's 'web of intertextual relations' that makes of television a circulator of such meanings 'in the culture'.⁶⁴ Televised intertextuality engages the mediating power of the audience to construct the text. As the viewer enters into relations with the televised, folk culture becomes a power-resistant mediator between text and world, meaning and difference. In this convergence of readerly subgroups and televised intertextuality, differentiated meanings are incorporated into the culture. Fiske argues that such meanings are by nature unstable in their interpretive relations with the reader's social circumstance.⁶⁵ In this relationship lies the capacity of audiences to enlist the media in a transformation of culture.

Fiske approaches intertextuality as 'the space *between* texts', a situated production of meaning that brings the world to bear on the text and in which every text refers to all others. Fiske's media theory suggests something of a realisation of Kristeva's revolution in poetic language by way of relocating cultural agency to the technological space between electronic text and social context. Readerly relationships with electronic media thus constitute a 'knowledge of reality' in which the 'reality itself is intertextual'.⁶⁶ In these circumstances the politics of difference become a radicalising of the relations of text and technology in which the world is carnivalised by a technology that realises the simultaneity of text and context. In effect, the space of resistance between texts is technologically enabled. Ultimately, Fiske finds a fundamental plurality and intertextuality of meanings in the television text itself, as electronic 'polysemy is the textual equivalent of social difference and diversity'.⁶⁷

Arguably, Fiske reinforces what Schiller calls 'the prevailing interpretation', an interpretation that sees 'media power as highly overrated and its international impact minimal'.⁶⁸ It is undoubtedly the case, as Fiske argues, that a 'subculture can make its own sense out of a text that clearly bears the dominant ideology'.⁶⁹ However, in a situation where hegemony need not rely upon doctrinal acceptance of monolithic meaning, and where the issues are in fact those of social control, surely the question becomes what a subculture will make of texts that colonise ambivalence as hegemonic strategy. By drawing an equivalence between the oral nature of electronic media and oral culture itself, Fiske furthers the mythology of electronic orality. As a result of this viewpoint, the theory of audience empowerment has, as Schiller also notes, 'served to minimize, if not cast doubt on, the influence of concentrated media-cultural power'.⁷⁰ When Fiske further argues that 'the viewer becomes the producer of meanings', he is perpetuating the very mythology used to ghost the space of corporate control.⁷¹ In his television culture the space between texts is appropriated as a 'textualised' space occupies 'lived' space. Fiske's television folk are inscribed by electronic replication; their production of space is undermined in lived relations to an imaginary real.

In audience empowerment theory the space of resistance corresponds with the intertextuality of electronic language in such a way that media heterogeneity predisposes cultural heterogeneity. Electronic technology thus realises popular democracy, as the media become a diversified public space in which audiences can realise their own cultural distinctiveness. It is this technologised plurality that is seen to ensure resistance and difference in response to any corporate engineering.⁷² However, once cultural diversity is defined in terms of a multiplicity of meanings, resistance itself becomes open to a programmatic reproduction that absorbs semiotic energies. In addition, once culture

is a construct of technological embodiment, an engineered 'difference' becomes the stuff of hegemony. This displacement through a technology of excess expression occurs in conjunction with the 'negation by replication' of the external world. Audience empowerment theory actually articulates the relocation of resistance from real world circumstances to the replicated world of a circumscribed heteroglossia.

Electronic space is able to mask this transubstantiation of the signs of resistance into symbols of plurality and the language of media-managed diversity. From this corporate enclosure of public space, there subsequently emerges the 'product' of oral culture. Along with the idea that an oral logic in technologised form enables a permanent democratic resistance to monopoly, the further idea that popular culture comes to rely upon the exchange between oral subculture and electronic media completes the illusion. A 'secondary orality' is thus reinforced by an interpretation of Bakhtin that rationalises the media as the new culture of the carnivalesque.⁷³ What is missing here, however, is a discussion concerning the implications of an electronic orality that systematically misrepresents itself as the lived experience of dialogic exchange. What is also missing is a discussion of alternatives that seek a space of resistance outside the seemingly revolutionised electronic text.

Haraway's Monsters

In Haraway's discourse of the body there is an implied critique of McLuhan's theory of second nature, especially the redemptory orality found reborn in the evolution of the electronic body. Haraway sees McLuhan's electronic extensions of the body as a colonisation of lived experience that manifests itself in various beasts of dissonance.⁷⁴ Indeed, McLuhan's replicated profusion of second nature is seen to render experience a matter of the ambivalent physiognomies and limitless excesses of the grotesque techno-

body. In response, Haraway attempts to deconstruct the electronic Body by situating techno-organic hybrids as ‘boundary creatures’ that challenge the notion of a technological transcendence of the world. In her view, body and world are not home to the birth of difference, nor are they the ‘raw material for humanization.’⁷⁵ Rather, body and world are seen as interanimating forces involved in the production of interspecies possibility. They are also agents of a locatable elsewhere, that is, a product of specific conditions of power ‘somewhere in particular’.⁷⁶

In Haraway’s view, those discourses of the body that seek to somatise oppression fall into the trap of theological rationalisation. She further notes that ‘this construction regenerates the infinite regress of the search for the illusive subject that paradoxically ends regularly in the discovery of the totalitarian object – nature, the gene, the word’.⁷⁷ Although Haraway herself finds hope in a cyborg metaphor of unfinalisable feminist partiality, she admits that its body also reveals the monstrous productions of the techno-scientific establishment. ‘Perhaps, ironically’, she suggests, ‘we can learn from our fusion with animals and machines how not to be Man, the embodiment of Western logos’. In these ‘taboo fusions’, Haraway suggests the possibility of a feminist logic of ‘permanent partiality’ that transgresses the imperialist dream of a common language and experience. She suggests that ‘from the point of view of pleasure’ in these fusions, fusions ‘made inevitable by the social relations of science and technology’, there may well be a ‘feminist science’.⁷⁸

In Haraway’s examination of monsters is a general questioning of the theological underpinning of electronic reincarnation.⁷⁹ Setting out to disconnect the cyborg promise from the Christian myth of the Fall, she argues that the cyborg body is monster, not sinner: ‘the cyborg is not made of mud and cannot dream of returning to dust’.⁸⁰ The

monster cannot 'embody' a salvation promise. The machine parts of the cyborg anti-Body violate the 'founding myth of original wholeness', and deconstruct any hope of a language of one.⁸¹ In the cyborg's defiance of representation and identity, Haraway finds a feminist agency where 'partial perspective' is capable of challenging totalising visions of dominance.⁸² The dissonant bodies of these boundary creatures place in doubt the master narrative of a technological reconciliation of Body, Word, and Spirit.

For Haraway, the cyborg 'reinvention of nature' demands a new language of 'non-representability, historical contingency, artefactuality'.⁸³ It demands as well a recognition that the 'stunning profusions of "nature" can help us refigure the kind of persons we might be'.⁸⁴ These profusions of a grotesque 'social body' serve to challenge the religious and bourgeois repression of dissonance.⁸⁵ In Haraway's conjunction of cyborg anti-Body and the potent non-identities of the marginalised, the political struggle to articulate the 'outside' is aligned with the regeneration of a prosthetic species of ungiven origin. In effect, the monster straddles the traditional boundary between human and non-human. In this radicalisation, the image of the cyborg is a metaphor for political resistance in the 'mythic time' of the high technology age: 'The cyborg is our ontology; it gives us our politics'. In Haraway's framework, the cyborg resides outside the dominant relations of western rationalism as a 'condensed image [. . .] of both imagination and material reality, the two joined centres structuring any possibility of historical transformation'.⁸⁶

Haraway finds an illegitimate language produced in the joining of technology and difference, an outsider science that questions technology as well as theories recalling 'us to an imagined organic body to integrate our resistance'.⁸⁷ There is no techno-rebirth of a common language of resistance here, no ideal form of oppositional history.⁸⁸ Resistance

is a situated knowledge and practice 'constructed and stitched together imperfectly, and *therefore* able to join with another, to see together without claiming to be another'. It is this necessarily split vision that constructs the promise of a radical feminist logic to resist the 'master, the Man, the One God, whose Eye produces, appropriates, and orders all difference'.⁸⁹

As opposed to theorising in terms of 'Global Systems', Haraway's cyborg is the potential 'anti-Body' that resists both reductive representation and technological salvation by articulating the language of 'power-differentiated communities'.⁹⁰ Specifically, she wishes to spatially interrogate the electronic presence of multi-vocality by aligning agencies of heteroglossia with a 'situated resistance', a world that transgresses the abstract and disembodied 'we' through the 'marked body' of a positioned and articulated marginality.⁹¹ In Haraway's view, resistance is not a matter of the Body, as 'only material struggle' is able to 'end the logic of domination'.⁹² Indeed, in her view, the quest to 'embody the body' works against the world of situated resistance. Rather, a radical vision is always a politics of location in which the experienced physicality of the outside world is the body positioned in history: it is 'always a complex, contradictory, structuring and structured body, versus the view from above, from nowhere'.⁹³

For Haraway, a politics of resistance must produce and articulate 'specificity, heterogeneity, and connection through struggle, not through [. . .] appeals to each her own endless difference'. The point of the matter, she insists, is to make 'connections and affinities, and not to produce one's own or another's experience as a resource for a closed narrative'.⁹⁴ Haraway hastens to emphasise that the peripheral position of the cyborg outsider offers no 'naturally' guaranteed power of resistance by virtue of its marginality.

The cyborg is positioned in the contemporary web of power and knowledge, and it therefore eschews emancipatory theories of technologically embodied plurality.

In turn, the political promise of the cyborg lies precisely in the epistemology and social practice of partial perspectives that establish ‘a ground for conversation, rationality, and objectivity – which is power-sensitive, not pluralist, “conversation”’.⁹⁵ Against a technologically embodied plurality, Haraway suggests a monster-making union of feminism and technology that reconstructs the world according to the ‘rationality’ of a ‘webbed resistance’ to dominant visions.⁹⁶ These situated knowledges ‘are always *marked* knowledges; they are re-markings, reorientations, of the great maps that globalized the heterogeneous body of the world in the history of masculinist capitalism and colonialism’.⁹⁷ Further, these possibilities ‘are not the products of escape and transcendence of limits, i.e., the view from above, but rather the joining of partial views and halting voices into a collective subject position’. It is this that ‘promises a vision of the means of ongoing finite embodiment, of living within limits and contradictions, i.e., of views from somewhere’. Ultimately, ‘location is about vulnerability; location resists the politics of closure’.⁹⁸

Haraway thinks she recognises the unrecognised signs of a feminist ‘outside’ in which ‘partiality, not universality, is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims’.⁹⁹ In the situated articulation of partiality, ‘bodies are maps of power’ that reveal all forms of totalisation as products of a world reduced to the positionings of power. In this world, only ‘the dominators are self-identical, unmarked, disembodied, unmediated, transcendent, born again’.¹⁰⁰ For Haraway, cyborg fusions position the postmodern body and discourse in a struggle over ‘how to see’, a struggle that challenges the dominance of linear authority.¹⁰¹ Indeed, the cyborg offers a way of seeing the potent

possibilities of partiality -- not a 'body' as such, rather it is a 'location', a postmodern splitting in point of view. Immersed in the resonances between technology and marginality, it occupies a place for re-envisioning the contemporary situation of technological transformations, contradictions, resistances, and complicities.¹⁰² In this boundary place, the 'webbed accounts' of the cyborg articulate a feminist language where knowledge is a reclaimed vision.¹⁰³

In the meeting of electronic technology and feminist partiality, Haraway locates the 'power to see' and to 'participate in revisualizing worlds turned upside down in earth-transforming challenges to the views of the masters'. Indeed, she suggests that it is in 'the intricacies of these visualization technologies in which we are embedded that we will find metaphors and means for understanding and intervening in the patterns of objectification in the world'.¹⁰⁴ Cyborg imagery involves a re-envisioning of the world that articulates the knowledge of 'those ruled by partial sight and limited voice'.¹⁰⁵ Haraway insists that any resistance must deny the radicality of heterogeneity and forge local and global 'affinities of difference', that is, monstrous surprises modelled after cyborg creatures that escape category and capture. Radical potential is thus bound to an embodied liminality: here be monsters, not just monstrous words.

It is in this feminist merging of the images of science and fiction that Haraway finds 'hope for an "elsewhere"'.¹⁰⁶ In this imagery of cyborg non-identity she locates a logic of resistance to erase patriarchal and capitalist categories of pre-ordained difference. For Haraway, cyborgs are 'compounds of the organic, technical, mythic, textual, and political – and they call us into a world in which we may not wish to take shape, but through [which] we might have to travel to get elsewhere'.¹⁰⁷ Reading technology through feminist partiality, she finds a situated knowledge outside the Fall in

the ‘semiotic space called earth’ – nature radicalised by technological context. In this, she envisions a feminist politics of resistance based on the intertextual animation of margins and technologies as embodied articulators of a ‘New World’. Thus, the richness of ‘nature’, nature reinvented in feminist form, is empowered and articulated by electronic space.¹⁰⁸

Haraway goes on to suggest that a new politics of marginality involves ‘a third birth’, an ‘elsewhere’ in which cyborg fusions create an unfixed context for a postmodern feminist intertextuality. This feminist world is occupied not by those who are ‘born’ different, but rather by those who are made and marked by history. The third birth of the cyborg is thus the required ‘science fiction’ of an elsewhere inhabited by monsters who do not fit ‘the available maps and who refuse to ‘be originally fixed by difference’.¹⁰⁹ In this unfixed context is a ‘deconstructive relationality [. . .] that exceeds domination’. Through the diffractive and ‘*a*modern’ vision of the cyborg, electronic technology finally allows a feminist language of the margins.¹¹⁰ Finally ‘imagin-able’ is a context that can articulate the complex webs of women’s local and global positionings and interrupt the text of patriarchal capitalism.¹¹¹ The cyborg, then, suggests a feminist account of technology that serves as a means to ‘better enable us to contest for meanings, as well as for other forms of power and pleasure in technologically mediated societies’.¹¹² The feminist view of science does not see technology as a ‘luminous device’ for reproducing the patriarchal One.

Feminist science is thus a ‘fallen vision’, a networking of views from the margins with the intricacies of visualization technologies. Haraway insists that feminists must develop ‘a critical practice for recognizing our own “semiotic technologies” for making meanings, *and* a no-nonsense commitment to faithful accounts of a “real world”’.¹¹³

Such partiality disrupts ‘god tricks’ promising vision from everywhere and nowhere, common myths in rhetorics surrounding Science. She suggests that ‘splitting not being is the privileged image for feminist epistemologies – feminist science seeks the objectivity of partial connection’.¹¹⁴ In effect, feminist vision embodies partial perspectives that reclaim ‘the sensory system that has been used to signify a leap out of the marked body and into a conquering gaze from nowhere’.¹¹⁵ Haraway wants a feminist writing of the cyborg body that metaphorically re-emphasizes vision, because it is necessary to reclaim the power of modern sciences based on patriarchal paradigms of infinite vision. Understanding technically, socially, and psychologically how these visual systems work should allow an embodying of feminist objectivity:

The instruments of visualization in multinationalist, postmodernist culture have compounded these meanings of dis-embodiment. [. . .] Insisting metaphorically on the particularity and embodiment of all vision [. . .] and not giving in to the tempting myths of vision as a route to disembodiment and second-birthing, allows us to construct a usable, but not an innocent, doctrine of objectivity.¹¹⁶

Haraway acknowledges that ‘virtual space seems to be the negation of real space’, but hastens to add that ‘perhaps this negation is the real illusion’.¹¹⁷ Perhaps, potential lies in a techno-biopolitics that turns on ‘revising the world as coding trickster with whom we must learn to converse’.¹¹⁸ Postmodern theories that disembody the world are immersed in the trickster-grammars of electronically realised semiotic difference: ‘The fanciest statements about radical decontextualization as the historical form of nature in late capitalism are tropes for embodiment, the production, the literalization of experience in that specific mode’.¹¹⁹ Haraway notes that ‘a cyborg world is about the final imposition of a grid of control on the planet’, but that it could also be ‘about lived social and bodily realities in which people are not afraid of their joint kinship with animals and machines, not afraid of permanently partial identities and contradictory standpoints’.¹²⁰

In these counterworlds the power of Myth to immobilise may well be outdone by the radicalised resistance of the partial perspective of feminist erasure:

Feminist objectivity makes room for surprises and ironies at the heart of all knowledge production; we are not in charge of the world. We just live here and try to strike up non-innocent conversations by means of our prosthetic devices, including our visualization technologies.¹²¹

Haraway offers an infidel vision involving the imagining of a potent 'outside' of feminist science. In her search for an 'anti-form' to articulate the feminist narrative, what might have been a move toward a more located spatial practice is reduced to a rendering of partiality. In this case, replicated space becomes potentially counter-inversionary through a feminist reading of a techno-social-virtual implosion that generates the cyborg grotesque. The implosion of representation in virtual space, made visible through the partiality of a feminist vision of electronic space, reveals a new political 'language of technology' in which bio-technological conjunctions communicate a world of semiotic resistance beyond the body. Haraway suggests that the electronic semiotic is able to overcome representation within a sustainability of difference generated by feminist nature and science.

In 'the cyborg incarnation' of feminist objectivity there is seen to be an imaginative means of 'mapping our social and bodily reality' that moves 'outside salvation history' and myths of metaphysical origin.¹²² This new context undermines the closed narrative of the Body, suggesting 'a rich topography of combinatorial possibility' involving the 'here, now, this elsewhere, where real, outer, inner and virtual space implode'.¹²³ In the circumstances of postmodern fragmentation, electronic technology's capacity to mutate traditional human and nonhuman configurations is 'the promise of monsters'. Indeed, the juxtapositional possibilities and 'fruitful couplings' made visible

suggest a radical technological embodiment of feminist partiality as 'significant prosthesis'.¹²⁴

In Haraway's cyborg metaphor, the ambivalence of the world is not 'origin' or 'given' or 'presence', but rather an artefactual form of techno-implosion. In this, the social process of writing is revealed in the artefactual resistance of the cyborg to forms of authority. The cyborg's boundary occupation resists identification and thereby articulates a world reinvented in its image. Extending Derrida, Haraway reveals fissures in technology that serve to reconstruct the visual in a cyborg language of the partial.¹²⁵ In the process, she finds a new visual rationalism that locates 'reason' with the 'exterior truth' of technologically enabled partiality. She also locates within the permanent partiality of electronic technology an anti-writing of margins beyond fixed form. In effect, Haraway offers a postmodern ideology of electronically realised fragmentation that radically empowers the margins to resist authority by partialising the given. In a sensed correspondence between the partiality of feminist discourse and the intertextuality of electronic space, she locates the potentiality to subvert the masculine history of linearity, hierarchy, patriarchy, and teleology.¹²⁶

Haraway joins those others for whom electronic technology articulates the language of ambivalence required to defeat narrative authority. She views the cyborg as a conjunction of science, technology, fiction, and margins holding revolutionary promise. Writing with the electronic language of ambivalence makes possible an 'elsewhere' in which the marginalised can speak a language of the many. However, in embracing the cyborg in the way she does, Haraway's notion of the survival of a delimited 'social space' becomes unavoidably linked to the social embodiment of technological prostheses.¹²⁷ In effect, monstrous production is tied to monstrous form such that the

'elsewhere' itself becomes inextricably electronic. In the assumed affinities between margins and feminist readings of electronic technology, Haraway transubstantiates a radical sociality into the delimited sphere of a transformative technology. Arguably, she thereby locates an ill-fated resistance within a space that must itself be resisted.

Haraway's 'cyborg myth' also confounds the more radical implications of her notions of situated knowledge and articulation. More specifically, her notion of the articulation of difference seems at odds with her representation of partiality. Her situated articulation invokes a voice that is unidentifiable, and therefore outside representation, but her image of the cyborg restricts her considerations to a world of visualisation technologies, electronic becoming, and the refiguring multiplicities of feminist representation. Haraway tries to move beyond the world of representation, succeeding to the extent that she establishes a model of situated social practice. Conceivably, her notion of articulated difference could also serve, if developed by way of a spatial practice in world, to transgress representations of heterogeneity. However, a technologically invested and differentiated social practice is not in a position to challenge a hegemony based on replicated heterogeneity and anchored in an oral ambivalence.¹²⁸ As much as Haraway seeks situated difference to counteract authoritative form, her embracing of technology situates the sustainability of difference in an electronic space that denies all potential outside of itself.

Ultimately, for Haraway, the semiotic space of the cyborg 'is the irretrievable loss of the illusion of the one'.¹²⁹ However, Haraway tends to become immersed in the logic of deconstructing the One to the point of foregoing any critical analysis of the very electronic space she intends to use in the reconstruction of a feminist 'elsewhere'.

It would seem she is content to consider a reclamation of the unused emancipatory potentials of the new technology and leave aside any serious question of a hegemonic process inherent to electronic space itself. It is not that Haraway is unaware of new forms of hegemony; it is rather the case that she does not engage them.¹³⁰ In the manner of McLuhan, she positions herself as a visionary and speaks programmatically.¹³¹ Needless to say, the electronic revolution is well underway and brings its own issues in tow. Even if Haraway herself foregoes the question as to the further capacity of electronic space to absorb her monsters of resistance, it should be noted that the cyborg anti-Body may well be open to colonisation by the hegemonic ambivalence of electronic form. Given the fate of various counter-cultural movements during the past fifty years, it would seem that the effort to formulate strategies of resistance within electronic space, no matter what the radical positioning of the contestants, assures nothing.

Hayles and the Posthuman: Data Made Flesh

Hayles explicitly sets out to extend Haraway's feminist reconstruction of science, noting the significance of cyborgs as 'simultaneously entities and metaphors, living beings and narrative constructions' that articulate in a crucial manner 'the conjunction of technology and discourse'.¹³² Advancing the notion of a situated knowledge located in the time-space of electronic technology, Hayles suggests that by 'manifesting itself as both technological object and discursive formation, it [the cyborg] partakes of the power of imagination as well as of the actuality of technology'. It is this mimetic association between narrative and technology, this 'doubled articulation' enabled by the electronic database, that reveals the world as the distributed knowledge of posthuman possibility.¹³³ Situated in the actuality of electronic technology, cognition is distributed through databodies in a dataworld.

Hayles uses the concept of 'data embodiment' to question the dominance of the 'last flesh' ideology in the posthuman age of information.¹³⁴ In her 'materiality of informatics', she attempts to biologise data production as a means of getting beyond both the anthropomorphism of human agency and the body politics of liberal individualism.¹³⁵ She argues that a denial of physical reality accompanying theories of electronic transcendence opens into an ideology of disembodied information, information that reinforces 'the desire for mastery [and] the imperialist project of subduing nature' by leaving the body behind. As opposed to this, Hayles suggests that electronic technology can make possible a distributed cognition by virtue of overriding the abstract individual and materialising the codes of life that are a collective consciousness. 'Embodiment', she argues, 'replaces a body seen as a support system for the mind; and a dynamic partnership between humans and intelligent machines replaces the liberal humanist subject's manifest destiny to dominate and control nature'.¹³⁶

This reconstruction of the 'posthuman' situation questions the cultural dominance of a neo-liberal postmodernism immersed in the search for a resistant language of the body.¹³⁷ Hayles suggests that in the denatured context of embodied information the products of a distributed consciousness are technology and language, and it is these that promise to extend the social in the 'always unformed space' of what is possible.¹³⁸ In the interfaced world of cyborg heteroglossia and the 'wonder of plenitude, difference is finally revealed (or actualised) as a "social" construction of the materiality of informatics and the enactment of its life codes'.¹³⁹

As opposed to those who see a radicality in electronically disembodied transcendence, Hayles insists that subverting modernity demands the embodiment of technological instantiation over a fluidity of informational pattern. She accepts that a

'disembodied posthuman' disrupts the identity given to the body by such authorities as God, nature, or scientific categorisation. However, she insists that it is the 'materiality of the database' that makes such a transgression possible. In particular, the experience of posthuman embodiment is made possible through the enculturating practices of electronic prostheses.¹⁴⁰ Incorporative possibility is instantiated in the technological contexts of a made, not given, electronic world. Such embodiment defeats an essentialism of the body by revealing the material distribution of cognition. The posthuman experience is thus a sensory awareness of 'social' potentiality in a dynamic system spread across complex and multiple sites and human and non-human life-codes. In such circumstances 'a coherent, continuous, essential self is neither necessary nor sufficient to explain embodied experience'.¹⁴¹

Informatics is thus seen as an extra-human constitution of both self and environment that asserts the material bodily principle through an evolutionary instability. In the 'materiality of informatics', Hayles finds specific non-human processes embodying the potentiality the liberal humanist body denies. In reconstructing the posthuman as a matter of 'bio-data-bodies', she further seeks to relocate electronic communication within an evolutionary history of embodiment.¹⁴² She suggests that this history has always been involved with the ambivalence of narrative form, serving to actualise 'within the mind an embodied realization of the person's ongoing processes'.¹⁴³ This 'enaction', or awareness of process, 'sees the active engagement of an organism with the environment as the cornerstone of the organism's development'.¹⁴⁴ Such processes of sensory perception enacted by technological prosthetics constitute the body's sustainable relationship to its environments, that is, its data-body.

In turn Hayles argues that 'chaos' is not only theoretically possible, but is actually lived in the endless reconstructive possibilities of cyberspace, something realised by the dynamic relationship between human and machine in the database.¹⁴⁵ In effect, information embodies the emergence of bio-technological beings. The materiality of this informatics encodes and narrates life as a process of becoming in which survival is enacted through the situated performances and improvisations of electronic extensions.¹⁴⁶ Technology thus 'embodies' because it extends the cognitive system that the body inhabits. The distribution of this cognition involves the body writing the mind in the life codes of the informatic world. Ultimately, rather than transcending the physical world, Hayles suggests that electronic technology reasserts the relationship between the human and the prosthetics of survival.

In Hayles's view, electronic technology activates human evolution by distributing the incorporating powers of cognition outside the confines of the body, allowing 'human functionality' to expand because 'the parameters of the cognitive system it inhabits expand'. Indeed, she notes that what previously appeared to be the 'internalization [of thought and subjectivity] now appears as a gradual propagation of organized functional properties across a set of malleable media'.¹⁴⁷ However, the posthuman is not given or produced, but rather an emergent joining of human and artificial life-forms in one system. In this, technology enters the body by way of mutual data codes and activates evolutionary potential in the incorporated reality of electronic space. Notably, this process is 'not a question of leaving the body behind but rather of extending embodied awareness in highly specific, local, and material ways'.¹⁴⁸

For Hayles, the posthuman possibility is something that 'would be impossible without electronic prosthesis'.¹⁴⁹ These prostheses demonstrate how 'nature, too

complex to fit into the Procrustean bed of linear dynamics, can renew itself precisely because it is rich in disorder and surprise'.¹⁵⁰ In a world where material is embodied through the evolutionary capacities of technological prostheses, electronic extensions become emergent and incorporating practices that envelop body and text.¹⁵¹ Hayles argues that these 'bodily practices' have a physical reality that can never be fully assimilated into discourse.¹⁵² In her view, the union of virtual and material allows a perception of the extra-discursive.

According to Hayles, the postmodern assimilation of the body into discourse fails to recognise the 'real' mechanisms of change by overlooking the evolutionary feedback between technological extension and discourse.¹⁵³ 'We have never been modern', she argues, but 'we have always been posthuman'.¹⁵⁴ The electronic era makes possible the construction of a new materiality grounded in the data exchange between technology and discourse. Indeed, it is in 'the feedback loop between technological innovations and discursive practices' that the embodying agencies of posthuman informatics are to be found. 'Formed by technology at the same time that it creates technology, embodiment mediates between technology and discourse by creating new experiential frameworks that serve as boundary markers for the creation of corresponding discursive systems'.¹⁵⁵

As part of her vision, Hayles wants to relocate discourse as a biological process within an artificial environment thoroughly mediated by technology. It is her wish 'to entangle abstract form and material particularity' such that it becomes impossible to maintain the separation between informatics and literature.¹⁵⁶ In her effort to bring together cognitive science and literary analysis, she insists on viewing cognition as experience, on the one hand, and technology as a bio-evolutionary distribution of cognitive abilities, on the other. In this, an evolutionary step occurs when electronics and

computerisation are able to enlist the entire code of life in the pursuit of survival. For Hayles, this is the promise of the posthuman collective. The 'orderly disorder' of evolutionary systems is replicated at every level of 'being', suggesting a reconciliation of being and becoming in the emergent practices of bio-technical engineering.¹⁵⁷

In the discursive interface between science and postmodern literature, Hayles finds an emerging ecological consciousness linked to constestations between linear and electronic systems of communication. In her view, the posthuman offers co-evolutionary ecologies that disrupt authority through the 'feedback loop' of cybernetic materiality. This feedback cycle involves the complex interconnections of the electronic era and connects 'theory with culture and culture with theory through the medium of technology'.¹⁵⁸ The embodied anti-linear cognitive dynamics are seen to denaturalise language while establishing conditions for posthuman constructions 'conducive to the long-range survival of humans and of the other life-forms, biological and artificial, with whom we share the planet and ourselves'.¹⁵⁹ In this framework, 'information' becomes the context of situated knowledges that is materially incorporated and distributed as technologies.

The materiality of informatics reveals a mimetics of technology and cognition realised in the ecological practice of the posthuman body. The new environments created by the expanding power and sophistication of intelligent machines demand the evolution of the body's internal structures in keeping with those complexities.¹⁶⁰ Borrowing from Bateson, Hayles suggests 'that those organisms that survive will tend to be the ones whose internal structures are good metaphors for the complexities without'.¹⁶¹ In this sense, electronic information is the 'outside', the evolutionary embodiment of the metaphor. In turn, the posthuman can be viewed as the mutating capacity of the human

organism to survive in the electronic world. According to this view, and by replicating the creative force of nature in highly evolved and complex ways, technology is able to reconstruct the human rather than merely subdue nature. As well, organic ecosystems are able to merge with abstract informational networks to produce a life-world of embodied cognition much as envisioned in Bateson's 'ecology of mind'.¹⁶²

Ultimately, embodiment is seen as 'inherently destabilising with respect to the body'. It is 'other and elsewhere, at once excessive and deficient in its infinite variations, particularities and abnormalities'. Hayles's posthuman informatics may thus be understood as the fundamental unfinished body, the capacity of technology to enact the richness of nature and produce new patterns of survival, to enact the evolution of 'the capacity to evolve', as the incorporating practices of electronic technology make the posthuman body self-actualising. It indicates the emergence of an informational entity undergoing continuous construction and deconstruction: it is, in Gleick's phrase, 'the morphology of the amorphous', where more is difference.¹⁶³ In the splicing together of the posthuman, distributed cognition disrupts the 'human' of enlightenment authority and allows the data-body to become the 'flesh' of posthuman possibility. In such embodiment there is an escape from the logos of modernity by virtue of the techno-human interface and its ability to embody extra-discursive excess.

Hayles's notion of 'embodiment' as distributed text aims to further radicalise theories of intertextual subversion by electronically extending the reader's body into the unfinished writing space of evolving cybersystems. In this development electronic space is seen to break canonical truths traditionally ensconced in print through reciprocal acts of embodiment involving both the new non-linear technology and the ambivalence in audience interpretations of discursive texts. In Hayles's interpretation of this, history

becomes a technological enactment of information codes in the indeterminate evolutionary relations of a data world that exceed human construction. She sees subversive potential in a world inhabited by posthuman creatures, the kith and kin of an information code that is the evolutionary material of all life forms.¹⁶⁴ In turn, she takes what McLuhan called 'the next logical step' of embodying the posthuman in a de-natured electronic nature.¹⁶⁵

Hayles suggests that informatics, virtual bodies, as well as literature are all narrative extensions of the body's relationship to information environments akin to biological adaptation. In this, data become multiple and indeterminate narratives through which the body enacts itself in cybernetic space. Against those who find a subversive indeterminacy in the disembodied 'electronic body', she calls for a materiality of informatics that situates the human-machine interface in the bio-social evolution of history as an incorporated data-base. In her view, information is the evolving substrata that always exceeds meaning, while cyberspace embodies the randomness of presence.¹⁶⁶ As oral radicality becomes bio-technological symbiosis, the trajectory from orality theory to posthuman possibility is thus revealed. In the cybernetic fusion of text, body, and electronic world, 'information narratives' tell the posthuman story of evolutionary possibility.¹⁶⁷ As electronic information 'embodies' and replicates, the posthuman is realised: electronic orality is information's lost body.

In her posthuman reconstruction, Hayles locates the potential of new life forms emerging from 'a territory that cannot be assimilated into either order or disorder', as well as from 'a trace that cannot be assimilated into the binary oppositions it deconstructs'.¹⁶⁸ Arguing that informatics is an emergent form of internal and external complexity beyond the old dualisms, Hayles suggests that electronic information takes us

beyond the machine metaphor. Far from making the physical world obsolete, however, informatics sustains the world through enacting the life-codes of mutuality. The actualising of organic survival is the extra-discursivity of computational code that creates life through the emergent properties of the posthuman collective. Indeed, by enacting evolution, virtual reality and hypertext constitute and produce immersive environments.

Technology, Hayles suggests, has become so 'entwined with the production of identity that it can no longer meaningfully be separated from the human subject'.¹⁶⁹ As a response she wishes to understand 'embodied experience as it is constructed by interactions with information technologies, and the technologies themselves'. The posthuman is thus a simultaneously 'enacted body, present in the flesh on one side of the computer screen and the represented body produced through the verbal and semiotic markers constituting it in an electronic environment'.¹⁷⁰ She further suggests that electronic technologies no longer represent reality, they virtually recreate it. Through acts of embodiment that animate relationships with the database, this physical 'recreation' links the 'discursive' to the 'material' and sets free the disruptive possibilities of a technological transgression. By equating materiality with informatic evolution, and by locating in the data systems of cyberspace a language outside the Logos of the Body, Hayles basically defines the 'posthuman' as a bodily immersion in a technological experience evolving beyond human sociality.

For Hayles, the posthuman, is 'a coupling so intense and multifaceted that it is no longer possible to distinguish meaningfully between the biological organism and the information circuits in which the organism is enmeshed'. With this, she argues, comes 'a corresponding shift in how signification is understood and corporeally experienced [. . .] flickering signification is the progeny of the fascinating and troubling coupling of

language and machine'.¹⁷¹ Hayles suggests that as the connections between 'technology, text, and human expand and intensify to the point where quantitative increments shade into qualitative transformation draws closer' revolution becomes possible in the language of interdigitation.¹⁷² In electronic language 'writing yields to flickering signifiers underwritten by binary digits [and] the narrator becomes not so much a scribe as a cyborg authorized to access the relevant codes'.¹⁷³ In these conditions, electronic technology reconstitutes and embodies the plenitude of what it means to be posthuman:

What binds the decoder to the system is not the stability of being a member of an interpretive community [. . .]. Rather, it is the decoder's construction as a cyborg, the impression that his or her physicality is also data made flesh.¹⁷⁴

Hayles's posthuman analysis leads to an insistence on information as the transformative agency of history in which informatics, virtual bodies, and literature are narrative extensions of the body's relationship to information environments. In effect, electronic technology evolves a prosthetic narrative that creates a space of endless potential out of chaos. In the theorising of a new world born of electronic relations, information becomes the body denied by an outmoded quest to transcend Newton's mechanical vision. Re-envisioning the 'natural' in terms of the 'informational', the cyborg is seen as an evolutionary leap made possible through the conjoining of cognition and technology.¹⁷⁵ In this, radical potentiality is relocated into an evolutionary improvisation of cyborg reconstructions that construct the world and subvert nature and humanity by way of ever furthering technological disruption.¹⁷⁶ The achievement of 'information' via the electronic body signals a revolution in which bodily resistance to authority is materialised in wired flesh.

In Hayles view, this excess of information, and the instantaneous nature of its transmission, precludes any stable context for anchoring meaning and interpretation.

The electronic world is seen to extend 'the productive force of codes beyond the text to include the signifying processes by which the technologies produce texts, as well as the interfaces that enmesh humans into integrated circuits'.¹⁷⁷ In this development, electronic space becomes an evolutionary catalyst that radically reorganises the perceptual world in line with the nonlinear experience of hypertext and data world. For Hayles, it may only be 'a matter of time before the distinction between text and context collapses altogether'.¹⁷⁸ It is this loss of stable context that distinguishes the posthuman era:

The prospect that human beings can become simulacra suggests that a new social context is emerging which will change not only what it means to be in the world but what it means to be human. Within this context-of-no-context, the postmodern shades into the posthuman.¹⁷⁹

Hayles's posthuman embodiment of information would seem to give technology the political force of a materialism in which the limits of embodied sociality are overridden and displaced by an embodied information – a development that realises the complexity of biology denied by the social and finally offers to substantiate the subversive potential of their joining.¹⁸⁰ As data, the 'lived' becomes the bio-code of a subvocalised heteroglossia, a new language of 'non-representability' in which data profusion is the grotesque excess that escapes the limits of the humanist body.¹⁸¹ In effect, Hayles transubstantiates the richness of the world into the excess of databodies. One can only assume that under such circumstances any dedicated politics of change is made superfluous by the mutational powers of such excess.

In her attempt to delimit the social and reclaim the body from the strictures of metaphysical presence, however, Hayles's technological reconstruction of the world reveals itself as something of a theoretical elaboration of a pseudo-materialism. Arguably informatics represents not only an appropriation of materialism, but also a

theoreticism that rationalises replication by way of attributing a bodily form to electronic space. The de-contextualised, post-modern information 'environment' as distributed information system raises interesting questions, but questions must also be asked concerning the possible abuses when hard won epistemological and ontological insights are leveled within an undifferentiated virtual reality.

Ultimately, Hayles understands the potential power of decontextualised information, but fails to address its potential problems. In particular, she fails to consider the possibility that the 'condition of virtuality' is itself an ideological overlay, that is, a hegemony dressed out as evolutionary progression and sustained by an enfleshing of information through a pseudo-materiality of technified survival and control. In deconstructing disembodied information, and in attempting to interrogate the ideological means by which 'information lost its body', Hayles is content to discover a subversive materiality of informatics that, arguably, has long since been appropriated and inverted by a corporate world indifferent to the finer points of an evolutionary theory.

Notes to Chapter Seven

¹ Nelson, *Sign Crimes Road Kill*, pp. 203-204. In the hegemonic context of electronic orality, Kate Soper's insights into the politics of the idea of nature reinforce the political importance of spatial confusion engineered and sustained through the ideological power of technological inversion: 'It is not language that has a hole in its ozone layer; and the 'real' thing continues to be polluted and degraded even as we refine our deconstructive insights at the level of the signifier [. . .]. It is one thing to recognize that much that is referred to as 'nature' takes the form it does only in virtue of human activity, another to suppose that this has no extra-discursive reality, or that there are no discriminations to be drawn between that which is and that which is not an effect of culture' (*What is Nature? Culture, Politics and the non-Human*, Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995, p. 151). Soper draws attention to the importance of distinguishing between the 'naturalist' notion of nature and nature in the realist sense why which she means 'those material structures and processes that are independent of human activity (in the sense that they are not a humanly created product), and whose forces and causal powers are the necessary condition of every human practice, and determine the possible forms it can take. Such a concept of nature as the permanent ground of ecological action is clearly indispensable to the coherence of ecological discourse about the 'changing face of nature' and the need to revise the forms of its exploitation' (pp. 132-3). In addition, Soper points to the importance of recognising the realist, extra-discursive materiality of nature in 'any discourse about the culturally 'constructed' body and its continually changing gender "significations"' (p. 133). The politics of resistance to capitalist power must work at exposing the distinctions between the 'ecological and ideological conceptions of nature' (p. 119).

² Ghosted by electronic space, the physical world is filtered through the art of advertising giants that transcribes the earth into the electronic language of 'corporate greening'. In the early 1990s, DuPont began to fill the airwaves with images of seals, whales, and dolphins cavorting in 'nature' and set to the symphonic orchestrations of Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* (Joshua Karliner, *The Corporate Planet: Ecology and Politics in the Age of Globalization*, San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1997, p. 171). The image of 'planet Earth' becomes the corporate symbol of Dow Chemical's dedication to ecological sustainability (p. 171). A case in point is the recent television advertising campaign sponsored by the automobile company Nissan: '*The last thing the world needs is another car. So we built one. Nissan. Built for the Human Race*'. Here, words of resistance are appropriated, technologically inverted, and translated into corporate speech.

³ For example, in 1990, *Burson-Marsteller*, one of the world's biggest corporate 'greenwashers' moved into British Columbia and established a 'grassroots' coalition innocuously called the *B.C. Forest Alliance* which announced itself as committed to 'a B.C. solution to B Cs problem' (Karliner, *The Corporate Planet*, p. 184, see also Tara Jones, *Corporate Killing: Bhopals Will Happen*, London: Free Association Books, 1988, p. 32). Claiming to be a non-partisan group of concerned citizens, in 1995 the Alliance finally admitted that it was funded by a consortium of B. C. logging companies (Karliner, *The Corporate Planet*, p. 184, see also Andrew Rowell, *Green Backlash: Global Subversion of the Environment Movement*, London: Routledge, 1996, p. 206). The admission came after five years of issuing press releases, half-hour television infomercials, the staging of media events, and 'making' news. The technological inversion of the world is painted green. Industry calls itself environment friendly or eco-responsible: 'Work for the World, Care for the Community' (the new slogan of the techno-giant Komatsu, a company that produces earth-movers and tree-rippers). The commercial tag for the *B.C. Council of Forest Industries* is 'Forests Forever' and is voiced over stunning television images of old growth forests. *The Canadian Agricultural Chemicals Association* has now changed its name to *The Canadian Crop Protection Institute* (Joyce Nelson, *Sign Crimes, Road Kill*, p. 207). *The National Wetlands Coalition* in the United States, sponsored by oil and gas companies and real estate developers, lobbies against 'restrictions on the conversion of wetlands into drilling sites and shopping malls' (David Korten, *When Corporations Rule the World*, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers and West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1995, p. 143). *Consumer Alert* lobbies against government regulations on product safety and *Keep America Beautiful* works to give its sponsors, the bottling industry, a green image 'by funding antilitter campaigns . . . [that try] to convince the public that litter is the responsibility of consumers not the packaging industry' (Korten, p. 143). See also Paul Hawken, *The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability* (New York: Harper Business, 1992). Eco-slogans acoustically sanitise corporate identity by repositioning sound in

'electronic nature': 'Naturally Resourceful' (*Domtar*), 'Get One for the Great Outdoors' (*Nissan*), or 'Heir to Air' (*Saab*) (Joyce Nelson, *Sign/Crimes RoadKill*, p. 208). The replicated earth has become the commodity's context.

⁴ 'Reclaim the Streets' has been called Britain's fastest growing activist phenomenon of the 1990s. Since 1991, RTS has been invading 'private property' and holding carnivalesque street festivals, reclaiming public space along stretches of highway, on city streets, inside construction sites. Unannounced, the group 'ambushes' the space, 'encloses' the space with barricades and a booming sound system, and reclaims it for the people by dancing, socialising and planting trees in the asphalt ('Reclaim the Streets: an interview by Naomi Klein', *The Anarchives*. Vol. 4. Issue 9. www.tao.ca: The Anarchives TAO Communications, November 23, 1997). For John Jordan, one of the original organisers of Reclaim The Streets, direct action is about grounding radical practice in the material space and experience of living under conditions of corporate domination. What started out as a local campaign against building the M11 motorway through an East London neighbourhood and an ancient woodland grew from palpable popular concern over the destruction of living space to the car itself as a force of social control and domination: 'Once the car was taken as a symbol of social divisions, private space versus public space, isolation from nature/the outside world (the steel cocoon/bubble) and of the break up of community – its not a big step to see the car as central to the economic system and a key pin of increasing corporate power (look at the top transnational corporations of the G7 nations, only one is not car or oil-based). RTS has always tried to take the 'single issue' of transport and the car, into a wider critique of society – an attack on the enclosure of capitalism, to wrestle power away from the undemocratic and profoundly unecological hands of corporations and to dream of reclaiming all space for collective use as commons' (John Jordan, 'Reclaim the Streets: an interview by Naomi Klein', *The Anarchives* Vol. 4. Issue 9, pp.1-2).

⁵ Adbusting is the political practice of 'subvertising' advertising billboards by painting over them with messages that erase and reveal corporate intention. For example, across a MasterCard billboard is painted 'YourMaster'. In Canada *Adbusters Magazine* more particularly targets television advertising by producing (and trying to get Canadian and American networks to air) 'advocacy uncommercials'. Examples of those rejected by CBC, NBC and ABC include 'Autosaurus', an anti-ad for cars which shows a huge dinosaur made out of abandoned vehicles that topples to the earth, a bar code stamped on the bald head of a television viewer reinforces the accompanying message: 'The Product is You'. The 'Buy Nothing Day' anti-ad shows an obese pink pig that belches at the viewer out of the belly of a beautiful satellite image of the United States. Other rejected by the networks include, 'Television Violence May Be Hazardous To Your Health', 'A Tree Farm Is Not A Forest', and 'Ecological Economics' – a bull in a china shop (*Adbusters*, Spring 1998, p. 30).

⁶ Culture jamming is another form of direct action which uses various methods of effacing and inverting the space of the corporate-designed culture industry – guerrilla theatre, shadow summits, newspaper replications such as 'The Evading Standard', anti-genetics campaigns, anti-logging and anti-globalisation actions.

⁷ The Pedestrian Liberation Front was the 'spoof guise' spear-heading the anti-car manufacturers' actions and car launch sabotage efforts conducted by Reclaim the Streets at the London International Motorshow in 1996 (Jordan, *The Anarchives*, p. 2).

⁸ See Roger Sabin, 'punk rock: so What? : : : over twenty years of fear and loathing' (*Speak Magazine*. Summer 99, San Francisco, pp. 72-77). In 1977, the Sex Pistols attempted to use the acoustic resistance of youth against the propaganda of consumption. Lyrics, such as, 'No future, no future, no future for you, no future for me', cut into the ideology of the global village and issued acoustic heresies against the corporate myth of progress. As Hedbigge notes in his study of youth subculture, Punk was beyond categorisation, an acoustic profanity against the spectacle: 'punks wore clothes that were the sartorial equivalent of swear words, and they swore as they dressed – with calculated effect [. . .] the forbidden is permitted, but [. . .] nothing, not even these forbidden signifiers (bondage, safety pins, chains, hair dye, etc.) is sacred and fixed' (*Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, London: Methuen, 1979, pp. 114-115).

⁹ Jordan, 'Reclaim the Streets', p. 3. The alignment between social activists and the ecological movement is by no means an inherently radicalising force. Ecology is itself a site of contestatory relations and one must recognise, as Kate Soper argues, 'how largely the appeal to the preservation of a 'natural' order of intrinsic worth has figured in the discourse of social conservatism, an uncritical ecological naturalism is always at risk of lending ideological support to those systems of domination that have played a major role in generating ecological crisis' (*What is Nature?* pp. 149-150).

¹⁰ Robert Goldman and Stephen Papson note that Benetton ads such as the one that showed a priest kissing a nun (1992) did generate angry public reaction. One respondent to Advertising Age's fax survey suggested that Benetton might 'for their next campaign [. . .] feature a pile of [. . .] ! After all, that's real life too' (Adrienne Ward, 'Socially Aware' or 'Wasted Money': AA Readers Response to Benetton Ads' in *Advertising Age*, p. 4, in *Sign Wars: The Cluttered Landscape of Advertising*, London: The Guilford Press, 1996, p. 106). Following this suggestion, 'a Powell-Peralta skateboard ad framed a pile of shit with a fly sitting on it with the ambiguous caption Quality Doesn't Matter' (*Sign Wars*, p. 106).

¹¹ 'The Comfort of Being Sad: Kurt Cobain and the Politics of Damage', *UTNE Reader*, July/August, 1994, p. 62, quoted in David Korten, *When Corporations Rule the World*, p. 154.

¹² Jordan, 'Reclaim the Streets', p. 4.

¹³ Stephen Dale, *McLuhan's Children: The Greenpeace Message and the Media*, pp. 196-200. *Greenpeace*, for example, now suggests that the politics of resistance may have to look beyond media for the space of radical resistance: 'a major challenge for ecologicalists and the press in the 1990s will be to cut through the growing forest of ecological doublespeak from politicians, polluters and others who see the advent of concern for the planet as nothing more than a nifty marketing tool' (*Greenpeace* activist, Peter Dykstra quoted by Joyce Nelson in *Sign Crimes/Road Kill*, p. 204).

¹⁴ Karliner notes another process, which is now widespread in school systems throughout Canada and the United States. 'Exxon [for example . . .] is rewriting the history of the Valdez oil spill for an audience of the nation's impressionable youth. [The company] is distributing, free of charge, its version of the truth to 10,000 elementary school teachers, for viewing by kids who were too young to remember the devastating spill in Prince William Sound' (*The Corporate Planet*, p. 186). In Canada, the Atomic Energy Control Board has been providing schools across the country with nuclear power learning kits designed to undermine strong anti-nuclear sentiments by 'educating' the next generation. In keeping with the earth-denying powers of technological inversion, Exxon has most recently added a high-tech interactive video game to its school kits. The Energy Cube encourages students to make 'real-world energy choices'. Yet there is no discussion in the Cube of the ecological impacts of fossil fuels, and the only way to win one Monopoly-like game is to choose an oil-driven energy path' (p. 187). Schools have also now become major new markets for advertising as corporations supply schools with free computers and televisions in exchange for the schools' agreement to show company commercials to students as part of their lesson plans. The most obvious example of targeting is Channel One, the 12-minute daily newscast originally developed by Whittle Communications, in which are embedded two minutes of advertisements for various products geared toward young people. Channel One is now in some 12,000 schools in the U.S. and reaches 40% of children in grades 6 through 12. The appeal of Channel One to advertisers is that it guarantees that they will reach the target audience - what critics have called the 'captive audience' - since subscriber schools are required to show the program every day to all children (See Penny Newcomb, 'Hey Dude. Let's Consume': *Forbes*, 11 June 1990, pp. 26-31. See also S. K. List, 'The Right Place to Find Children', *American Demographics*, February 1992, pp. 44-48).

¹⁵ Goldman and Papson, *Sign Wars*, p. 59.

¹⁶ *Reading Ads Socially*, p. 173.

¹⁷ A magazine spoof produced by *Adbusters* (a Canadian magazine devoted to inverting technological inversion) reveals the efforts of the advertising and public relations industry to repackage language and world into corporate-babble:

[Image of a human figure sucked dry and turned to wood]

Good News!

There is no global warming.

The oil industry has a job to do: tankers to schedule refineries to build. So when 2,500 eminent scientists signed a declaration calling for a reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, there was no time to lose. The industry had to act [. . .]. They called in Burston-Marstellar.

We created the Global Climate Coalition to downplay concerns. We found scientists and conservative think tanks to debunk theories and reinterpret evidence [. . .] Dealing with global warming is a big job. But we've made steady progress. We've killed a proposed tax on fossil fuel. And we've provided oil and auto industries with a reliable means of fending off ecologicalists.

Now these industries can go back to doing their job. And you can keep yours.

We think that's good news. Don't you?

Burston-Marstellar

Managing Perceptions, Motivating Behaviors

(Adbusters, Spring 1998), p. 65.

In this version of 'subvertising', *Adbusters* articulates the relationship between an engineered public backlash to the bad news in the news and the good news world represented by advertisers.

¹⁸ Goldman and Papson, *Sign Wars: The Cluttered Landscape of Advertising*, p. 83.

¹⁹ Goldman and Papson, *Sign Wars*, p. 89.

²⁰ Goldman, *Reading Ads Socially*, p. 182.

²¹ *Reading Ads Socially*, p. 174.

²² *Corporate Watch*, an organisation that tracks the global greenwashing strategies of corporate speech, has documented the translations of ecological degradation into the greening of capitalism. *Chevron*, the U. S. based oil giant, has been particularly skillful in its ability to reposition the space of petroleum production inside the electronic world of corporate poetics. The company's 'People Do' advertising campaign has for more than a decade worked on tempering public perception about the ecological hazards of an economy reliant upon non-renewable resource exploitation. The campaign inverts the negative fallout from oil spills and petroleum production by focusing on wildlife, often endangered species, as the central image of *Chevron's* ecological responsibility and unrecognised contribution to cleaning up the planet. The following is the text of a recent ad sponsored and spoken in the corporate *person* of *Chevron Oil*:

Beneath a halo of mist and warmth lies a tragedy. Nearly three quarters of Hawaii's native bird species have disappeared forever. But for the endangered Hawaiian Stilt, hope comes in an unlikely sanctuary. A six-acre pond located, curiously enough, in the heart of a refinery. Now, for the first time in generations, these delicate creatures are beginning to thrive.

Do people help nature reach a new dawn?

People Do.

The company has claimed a role in the preservation of all kinds of animals and habitats, from butterflies to coral reefs to bears, foxes and birds. *Chevron's* sanctuary for the endangered Hawaiian Stilt (the Ae'ō) is, in real terms, a six-acre catchment pond surrounded by petroleum storage tanks in the Campbell Industrial Park on the island of Oahu. While *Chevron's* ad leads one to believe that the company maintains a special haven just for the Stilts, *Chevron* is required by law to have the catchment pond to help control damages in the event of a catastrophic oil spill (Heather Spalding, 'Greenwash Award (1996) to Chevron Oil',

Corporate Watch). The Stilts' occupation of the 'pond' articulates the destruction of marshlands and mudflats through agriculture, industrial development, and tourism. Loss of habitat is one of the key factors driving the bird onto the endangered species list (www.corpwatch.org). See also U. S. -based Transnational Resource and Action Center (TRAC), (www.trac.greenwash). In a 1990s advertising campaign launched by the Chlorine Chemistry Council in the United States, chlorine becomes the sanitation agency for a dangerous and disease-infected world: 'Chlorine. Life wouldn't be the same without it. Protecting the public can be a dangerous job, but thanks to chlorine, it's a lot safer [. . .]. When we think about chlorine, we generally think of water. And with good reason: more than 98% of U.S. public water supplies that are disinfected are made clean and safe with chlorine. Since its introduction in 1908, water-borne diseases such as cholera, typhoid and dysentery have become nearly non-existent (*Corporate Watch*).

²³ Paul Hawken, *The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability* (New York: Harper Business, 1993), p. 132.

²⁴ Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle*, 1970.

²⁵ Arthur Kroker, 'Wired Flesh', *Adbusters: Journal of the Mental Environment* (Summer 1995), vol. 3 No. 4, pp. 35-40.

²⁶ See Goldman and Papson, *Sign Wars: The Cluttered Landscape of Advertising*, especially Chapter 3 'Yo! Hailing the Alienated Spectator', pp. 83-105. See also Judith Williamson, *Consuming Passions*, (London: Marion Boyars, 1986).

²⁷ McKibben suggests this when he notes that what is missing is 'information about the physical limits of a finite world. About sufficiency, and need, about proper scale and real time [. . .] about the human need for community and solid, real skills' (*The Age of Missing Information*, New York: Random House, 1992, p. 17).

²⁸ Bakhtin, *Rabelais and his World*, p. 75.

²⁹ McLuhan sees the defeat of linear authority over the external world in the electronic access to the other world of the interior landscape made possible through what he calls 'the metaphysical organicism of our electronic milieu' – a 'contrapuntal' space, 'the simultaneous storehouse of all experience' (*Gutenberg Galaxy*, pp. 248-250). By 'experience' McLuhan means the perception of the inner spirit – context overcome by electronic text – the artistic key to the world and language of simultaneity (*Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 268). McLuhan sees the electronic environment as the evolution of a medium able to 'communicate the massive unconsciousness of collective man [. . .]. For the electric puts the mythic or collective dimension of human experience fully into the conscious wake-a-day world' (*Gutenberg Galaxy*, p. 269). Electronic technology irrupts the repressed unconscious and interior spirit of humanity into the text, into the world thereby technologically harmonising body and soul in a space beyond the limits of history.

³⁰ *Rabelais*, p. 64.

³¹ *Rabelais*, p. 47.

³² Bakhtin, *The Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, p. 177.

³³ Aaron Fogel, 'Coerced Speech and the Oedipus Dialogue Complex', in *Rethinking Bakhtin*, ed. by Morson and Emerson, p. 175. It would also appear that efforts to locate an 'other' in the oral become vulnerable to an idealisation that locates speech as the 'great dialogue' of a utopian sociality and human becoming. Fogel suggests that such 'conversational idealism' denies the structure of power by which speech is silenced or forced and that speech acts must be seen as dialogical encounters between and inside class relations, materialised in a zone of social contact. Fogel concludes that 'dialogue between the classes, as opposed to "conversation" which takes place within a class, will involve more "drama", more actions like coercive inquiry, detection, selling negotiating, blackmailing, and so on'. Michael Andre

Bernstein has recently articulated not only the precise dangers of these oral idealisations but suggests the means by which an undifferentiated orality achieves the semblance of radical other. He suggests another side to dialogue that reinforces Fogel's concerns about forced speech and enforced silence. Bernstein suggests that "dialogism itself is not always just clement or life enhancing, and that the resonance of multiple voices may be a catastrophic threat as much as a sustaining chorale ('The Poetics of Ressentiment', in *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 199).

³⁴ *Dialogic Imagination*, 168.

³⁵ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 147.

³⁶ In Rabelais' situation, the role of spectacle and grotesque realism challenged the prohibitions of church and state. In electronic circumstance of contemporary information era, McLuhan constructs grotesque idealism, electronic excess as the mask of power. The combination of human and animal represents most ancient images of grotesque realism. Now we have the combination of human and technology in 'second nature'. The first is the grotesque of the concrete earth; the second is the grotesque of the abstract cosmos. The grotesque realism of carnival was a reaction to feudal repressions, exaggeration and trickster-like transformations. Today polar bears selling coke is an appropriation of grotesque symbolism and its transubstantiation into grotesque commodification - the always-unfinished language of consumption. McLuhan and other theorists of orality construct an oral logic that corresponds to (or indeed appropriates) Bakhtin's ambivalent 'logic' of the material bodily lower stratum. In McLuhan, the second logic of electronic orality evolves beyond distinctions between higher and lower orders. It is the attainment of power through the spatial conquest of lived experience, 'literary' abundance achieved in the excesses of second nature which hides the actual consumption of world.

³⁷ The convergence of Bakhtin and McLuhan also suggests a theological link based on the vulnerability of the 'body' to religious appropriation. Arguably, Bakhtin's notion of 'carnival' is a folk reclamation of the Catholic inversion in which the pagan relationship to the earth is translated into a system of monologic power. Correspondingly, McLuhan's electronic rebirth is the death of the external world and the return of man unto 'himself'. In effect, electronic orality becomes the material bodily principle of carnival developed by way of a Catholic imagery of rebirth and exteriorised as interior infinite embodied. Emerson suggests that it is the conception of the life of language that offers 'a glimpse of Bakhtin's powerful, veiled, ultimately spiritual relationship with the genuinely authoritative word' ('The Tolstoy Connection in Bakhtin', in *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 153). Ironically, in both Bakhtin and McLuhan, Christ is seen to be the ultimate symbol regeneration. Word turned flesh brings abstract authority down to earth and in direct contact with the people: 'Christ is a symbol of the necessity for enfleshment. Abstract cognition and pretensions to an ultimate, singular authority cannot embody values; only a view made concrete in time and space, Bakhtin argues, can create a soul within the other and participate in an active relationship [. . .]. Resurrection in the flesh is a powerful image, not because it allays our fears of physical extinction but because it emphasises the inseparability of soul and body, the need for soul to be enacted through a particular and delimited body. Thus Bakhtin reverses the traditional idea underlying the wonder of resurrection. He stresses the inseparability of body and soul not because the body has a soul but because souls must have bodies; his is a religion not so much of resurrection as of incarnation' ('The Tolstoy Connection in Bakhtin', *Rethinking Bakhtin*, p. 157). For Bakhtin, the carnivalesque excess of the body is the soul of the people embodied in the material world, the reclamation of the body from its ecclesiastical condemnation and speech from its mimetic union with the eternal Word. For McLuhan, the excess of the electronic body is the oral Spirit incarnated in a technologically orchestrated mullet-consciousness.

38 *Rabelais*, p. 11.

³⁹ *Dialogic Imagination*, p. 263. The paradox of orality is also detectable in Bakhtin's use of the term orchestration to address the complexity of forms in novelistic discourse. He compares the multivoicedness of the novel to the orchestral possibilities of a musical score. The term orchestration is used to challenge the idealist reduction of communication to individual acts of self-contained expression. For Bakhtin, orchestration is the means for achieving the polyphonic novel: 'music is the metaphor for moving from seeing (such as in "the novel is the encyclopedia of the life of the era") to hearing (as Bakhtin prefers to

recast the definition, “the novel is the maximally complete register of all social voices of the era”). Through orchestration ‘a single “horizontal” message (melody) can be harmonized vertically [. . .] and each of these scores with its fixed pitches can be further altered by giving notes to different instruments. The possibilities of orchestration make any segment of text almost infinitely variable’ (Emerson and Holquist’s ‘Glossary’ of terms, in Bakhtin, *Dialogic Imagination*, pp. 430-431).

⁴⁰ Bakhtin, *Rabelais*, p. 7. Both seek as well, in Booth’s phrase, ‘a representation [. . .] of human “languages” or “voices” that are not reduced into, or suppressed by, a single authoritative voice: a representation of the inescapably dialogical quality of human life at its best’ (Wayne Booth, ‘Introduction’, Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, xxii). Bakhtin finds this ‘totality of the world’ - the dialogic exchange between artistic work and heteroglossia - in the dialogic and carnivalised world of the novel (*Dialogic Imagination*, p. 263). McLuhan finds it in the limitless interplay of patterns inside the electronic carnival square (*The Mechanical Bride*, p. 34, *The Vanishing Point*, p. 183, ‘Wyndham Lewis: This Theory of Art and Communication’, in McNamara, *The Interior Landscape*, pp. 93-94).

⁴¹ Barry Rutland, ‘Bakhtinian Categories and the Discourse of Postmodernism’, in *Critical Studies: A Journal of Critical Theory, Literature and Culture*, p. 131. Walter Ong also explores these same notions of the electric restoration of oral democratisation (*Interfaces of the Word*, p. 225).

⁴² Rutland, ‘Bakhtinian Categories’, p. 131.

⁴³ ‘Bakhtinian Categories’, p. 132.

⁴⁴ ‘Bakhtinian Categories’, p. 131.

⁴⁵ It is this technological inversion that underpins McLuhan’s ‘electronic materialism’. The social materials of orality are technologised or replicated and then offered as what Fredric Jameson calls ‘a substitute for Marxist historiography in the way they offer a feeling of *concreteness* comparable to economics subject matter, at the same time that they dispense with any consideration of the human factors of classes and of the social organisation of production’ and communication (*Marxism and Form*, p. 74).

⁴⁶ Rutland, ‘Bakhtinian Categories’, p. 133.

⁴⁷ John Fiske and John Hartley, *Reading Television* (London: Methuen, 1978), John Fiske, *Television Culture* (London: Methuen, 1987), John Hartley, *Understanding News* (London: Methuen, 1982).

⁴⁸ *Television Culture*, p. 93. For a discussion that exemplifies concerns over media monopoly and cultural imperialism see Armand and Michelle Mattelart, *Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture: The Ideological Apparatuses of Imperialism* (Sussex: Harvester Press; Atlantic Highlands, 1979). Sean MacBride’s (Commissioner) summary report for UNESCO articulates the growing concern in the developing world about the political and cultural consequences of a world information order controlled by US media conglomerates (*Many Voices, One World: Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow: Towards a New More Just and more Efficient World Information and Communication Order*. International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, UNESCO (London: K. Page, 1980). See also Herbert Schiller, *Culture, Inc.: The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), and Armand and Michelle Mattelart, *The Invention of Communication* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1996).

⁴⁹ Fiske’s *Television Culture* brings together Bakhtin and McLuhan in a theory of transformative technology that argues that the ‘oral’ forms of television and their mosaic juxtaposition of meanings play a culturally rejuvenating role in information-based societies (pp. 106-7). Fiske suggests the ‘popular pleasures offered by television can evade, resist, or scandalize ideology and social control’ (*Television Culture*, p. 240). Later, Fiske uses Volosinov to reinforce the notion that electronic orality is key to the reproduction of oral culture as resistance to corporate univocality: ‘Volosinov argues that the multiaccentuality of the sign is crucial, for it is this that enables it to play an active role in the class struggle: its polysemic potential is always mobilized in and against a structure of domination, and the

strategy of the dominant is to control polysemy, to reduce the multi-accentual to the uniaccentual' (Fiske, *Television Culture*, p. 316, see also Volosinov, *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, p. 23). Against this interpretation of media power, we are suggesting that it is in the replication of acoustic space that electric technology finds its power to embrace what Lefebvre calls an appearance of multi-accentuality in 'non-differential' technological space; i.e., to represent space as opposed to 'living it spatially' (*The Production of Space*, p. 230).

⁵⁰ *Television Culture*, pp. 77-82.

⁵¹ Fiske approaches television and its programs as 'potentials of meaning rather than as commodities', as texts produced by readers as opposed to products 'produced, distributed and defined by industry'. Television becomes text at the moment of contact 'when its interaction with one of its many audiences activates some of the meanings/pleasures that it is capable of provoking' (*Television Culture*, p. 14). Depending on the social circumstances of viewers, one program can stimulate a multiplicity of texts. Thus program and text enter into a potentially contradictory relationship in which efforts to control the message are counteracted by how audiences socially experience the program. In this sense, television texts 'are unstable and unconfined'. Meanings are not restricted to the boundaries between programs but rather 'are part of the "flow" of television as experienced by its audiences' and circulated discursively through talk about the experience of the text (*Television Culture*, p. 15).

⁵² Fiske, *Television Culture*, p. 79. Fiske rests his conclusions on studies done by Katz and Liebes that noted culturally specific viewer interpretations of the U.S. night-time soap opera *Dallas*, which has been shown in countries throughout the world (Elihu Katz and Tamar Liebes, 'Mutual Aid in the Reading of *Dallas*: Preliminary Notes from a Cross-Cultural Study', in *Television in Transition*, ed. by Phillip Drummond and Richard Patterson, London: British Film Institute, 1985, pp. 187-198). Ironically, this program has been used as a case in point by those developing countries concerned about the power of American cultural imperialism in the mid-70s and 1980s debates about Third World concerns over the growing information imbalances in U. S. in the Western dominated so-called 'New World Information Order' (Schiller, *Culture, Inc.*, pp. 149-50). See also Sean MacBride (Commissioner), *Many Voices, One World: Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow: Towards a New More Just and more Efficient World Information and Communication Order* (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, UNESCO, London: K. Page, 1980).

⁵³ *Television Culture*, p. 326.

⁵⁴ *Television Culture*, p. 79.

⁵⁵ *Television Culture*, p. 78. Fiske notes the power of oral resistance to English imperialism over Scotland, Ireland, and Wales demonstrated by the fact that 'one of the first acts of the English conquerors was to outlaw the native language for they well knew that political control required linguistic control, and conversely, that political resistance depended upon a language of the oppressed with which to think and talk that resistance' (*Television Culture*, p. 78). While this is an important observation, the direct application of this example to bolster Fiske's argument of 'audience power' in the electronic world ignores the power of technological inversion to *present* electronic orality (and oral interactivity with it) as the language which produces 'resistance', 'subversion', and 'empowerment' in the viewer (Herbert Schiller, *Culture, Inc.*, p. 149). By defining resistance and its expression in terms of electronic space, audience empowerment theories contribute to the spatial disorientation that grounds electronic hegemony.

⁵⁶ *Television Culture*, p. 107.

⁵⁷ *Television Culture*, p. 80.

⁵⁸ *Television Culture*, p. 15. Of interest, in his analysis Fiske seems prepared to draw equivalence between oral resistance and oral technology, repositioning the former within the electronic text. Rationalising an oral-electronic rebirth, he notes that 'it is the heteroglossia of television that allows its texts to engage in a dialogic relationship with viewers' (*Television Culture*, p. 90). In turn, he somewhat later he notes that 'it

is the essential oral forms of television that allow it to be embedded so firmly in socio-cultural life of its viewers and that enable such an active, participatory, selective set of reading relations' (*Television Culture*, p. 107).

⁵⁹ *Television Culture*, p. 78.

⁶⁰ *Television Culture*, p. 93. Fiske notes that 'the structure of the text typically tries to limit its meanings to ones that promote the dominant ideology, but the polysemy sets up forces that oppose this control. The hegemony of the text is never total, but always has to struggle to impose itself against the diversity of meanings that the diversity of readers will produce' (*Television Culture*, p. 93).

⁶¹ *Television Culture*, p. 19.

⁶² *Television Culture*, p. 38.

⁶³ *Television Culture*, p. 1.

⁶⁴ *Television Culture*, p. 85.

⁶⁵ *Television Culture*, p. 115.

⁶⁶ *Television Culture*, p. 115.

⁶⁷ *Television Culture*, p. 16.

⁶⁸ Herbert Schiller, *Culture, Inc.*, p. 146. Schiller argues that this 'limited-effects' paradigm emerged in reaction to Third World concern in the 1980s about the role of Western electronic imperialism in the ordering of a world economy controlled by a transnational corporate system. Theories of audience power have served to undermine, by making apparently obsolete, views of cultural disempowerment which approach electronic media as instruments for extending the markets of international capitalism and homogenising the 'excolonial world for Western-structured "development"' (Schiller, *Culture Inc.*, p. 138). In the 1970s the emergence of the Third World was accompanied by the new paradigm of 'development communication' in which media globalisation was seen to be the end of imperialist domination. The power of electronic media offered the world 'a transition from coercion to communication' (*Culture Inc.*, p. 140). However, out of this 'new world information order' emerged a transnational commercial culture that saw the developing world as an untapped market demanding the 'free flow of information' to set the conditions for cultural transformation into western consumerism. Concern about the impact of the Western media monopoly on economic independence and cultural diversity came to a head in the mid-1970s. Subsequently, in 1984, amidst calls from Third World countries for UNESCO to curb cultural imperialism and correct global information imbalances, the United States withdrew from the organization arguing that any effort to impose balance would place 'restraints on Western media and restrict activities of transnational corporations' (*Culture Inc.*, p. 145). The MacBride Commission's recommendations to increase the number of voices in the global media arena were subsequently overridden by the unrestrained expansion of U.S.-based commercial television and the singularity of the corporate voice. Schiller attributes the U.S. withdrawal from UNESCO to 'transnational corporate aggressiveness' and the centrality of electronic colonisation to furthering a transnational global economy (*Culture Inc.*, pp. 135-145).

⁶⁹ *Television Culture*, pp. 70-71.

⁷⁰ Schiller, *Culture, Inc.*, p. 151. Reinforcing this point, Schiller argues the following: 'Theorizing over media influence, which puts determination and control in the hands of the individual viewer or listener or reader, gives critical, if unintended, support to the legitimacy of corporate speech [. . .]. If viewers actually are able to make up their own meanings and interpretations of messages, of what concern is the corporate voice, booming through and over the cultural landscape?' (*Culture Inc.*, p. 164). As Schiller emphasises: 'Whatever the unique historical history of each of the many subgroups in the nation, they are all subject to

the rule of market forces and the domination of capital over those market forces' (*Culture Inc.*, p. 153. See also Phillip Schlesinger, 'On National Identity: Some Conceptions and Misconceptions Criticized', in *Social Science Information* 2, 1987, p. 232).

⁷¹ *Television Culture*, p. 79.

⁷² Ithiel de Sola Pool, *The Technologies of Freedom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983).

⁷³ *Television Culture*, p. 78, pp. 105-107.

⁷⁴ See *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan (c)_Meets_Oncomouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997). In this her most recent work, Haraway uses the cyborg creature 'Oncomouse' (a genetically altered mouse made and owned by Dupont and used for breast cancer research) as a vehicle for exploring links between corporate greed, property rights, biotechnology, and the medical promise of eternal life enshrined in the technological order. In this beastly product is the space of economic power that has been ghosted by the 'neutral' potential of techno-culture. For Haraway, it seems, the products of the techno-world, themselves, articulate relations of power that that world claims to transcend.

⁷⁵ Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, pp. 198-199.

⁷⁶ Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, p. 196.

⁷⁷ Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, p. 78.

⁷⁸ Haraway, *Modest_Witness*, p. 173.

⁷⁹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 181. Haraway tends to reduce postmodern politics to a choice between technology and theology. Although 'both are bound in the spiral dance', she announces that she 'would rather be a cyborg than a goddess'. She subsequently attempts to cut off the feminist return to the metaphysical Mother through the possibilities of the bio-technical other, through 'regeneration, not rebirth'. Since the cyborg is a feminine form that has no place of return, she insists that it is time to abandon the metaphysical quest for 'unitary identity'. It is the cyborg that speaks for difference, and Haraway wishes to efface the 'birth of difference' and articulate a 'production of difference' in bastard bio-technical offspring (*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 181)

⁸⁰ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 151.

⁸¹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 176.

⁸² *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 154.

⁸³ A cyborg 'is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction' (*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 149). It suggests a radicalising affinity between technology, language, and politics. It is in this always-imperfect embrace that Haraway finds new metaphors and embodiments of resistance to modern forms of domination.

⁸⁴ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 3

⁸⁵ By 'social body', Haraway is suggesting a new 'body politic' constructed in affinities of difference that make up the collective body of the objective world – affinities between human and non-human, organic and inorganic actants that make the world.

⁸⁶ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 150.

⁸⁷ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 154.

⁸⁸ By way of example Haraway makes reference to master narratives of the feminist 'other', which characterise Third World Women as the essentialised resistance of the subjugated (*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* p. 193).

⁸⁹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 193.

⁹⁰ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 187.

⁹¹ Against forces of power that ground their authority in transcendent forms of the unlocatable, the everywhere of totalization and single vision, Haraway argues for both situated and embodied knowledges. Here she suggests is the alternative to the so-called infinite realm relativism which 'is a way of being nowhere while claiming to be everywhere equally [. . .]. Relativism is the perfect mirror twin' of totalizing ideologies. The alternative is 'partial, locatable, critical knowledges sustaining the possibility of webs of connection called solidarity in politics and shared conversations in epistemology' (*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 191).

⁹² *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women* p. 68.

⁹³ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 195.

⁹⁴ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 113.

⁹⁵ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 195

⁹⁶ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 191.

⁹⁷ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 111.

⁹⁸ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 196.

⁹⁹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 195

¹⁰⁰ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 193.

¹⁰¹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 194.

¹⁰² *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 195

¹⁰³ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, pp. 194-195. See also Haraway, 'The Promises of Monsters' in *Cultural Studies*, ed. by Lawrence Grossberg et al (New York: Routledge), p. 295.

¹⁰⁴ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 195.

¹⁰⁵ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 196.

¹⁰⁶ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 239n 3.

¹⁰⁷ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 301.

¹⁰⁸ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 315.

¹⁰⁹ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 300.

¹¹⁰ 'The Promises of Monsters', p. 299.

¹¹¹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 239n. 3.

¹¹² *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 154.

¹¹³ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 187.

¹¹⁴ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, 193.

¹¹⁵ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 188.

¹¹⁶ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 189.

¹¹⁷ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 324.

¹¹⁸ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 298.

¹¹⁹ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 299.

¹²⁰ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 154.

¹²¹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 199.

¹²² *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 150.

¹²³ 'Promises of Monsters', p. 328.

¹²⁴ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 195

¹²⁵ Haraway's 'vision' seems to find potential in electronic technology as a radicalising of narrative form allowing for a feminist narrative in which experience is the embodiment of difference. The 'situated' is thus the technological context of a realised intertextuality that effaces Derrida's pronouncement that 'there is no outside the text' by re-imagining the 'outside' as the product of a textual infidelity. Indeed, cyborg 'writing' defies both the 'origin' and the 'other' through an 'elsewhere' that weaves together a network of permanently contradiction-ridden points of view.

¹²⁶ See for example, Julia Kristeva, 'Women's Time', in *New Maladies of the Soul*, p. 190.

¹²⁷ By 'social space' Haraway 'designates a kind of relationship, an achievement among many actors, not all of them human, not all of them organic, not all of them technological' that collectively contribute to the making of living objects in the postmodern world ('The Promises of Monsters', p. 297). She reinforces the notion that electronic technology is itself a destabilising force that transgresses patterns of domination by way of 'interference'. She suggests the possibility of an 'elsewhere' composed of 'interference patterns' that counteract the infinite replication of the same. However, the contestatory relationship Haraway defines between 'diffraction' (mapping of interference) and 'replication' (fixed positionality) assumes the inability to replicate difference ('The Promises of Monsters', p. 300). Arguably, electronic replication is not a copy of the same, but rather a simulated reproduction of difference.

¹²⁸ Seemingly, Haraway suggests that an association of feminist partiality and technological possibility counteracts the phonocentricity of an electronic other. She further questions the notion of an oral resistance to the visual rationalism of patriarchal capitalism and seeks a new 'vision', the metaphors of which she positions against the phonocentrism of a feminist resistance rooted in an essentialist view of sound. In Haraway's view, such feminist affirmations of nature and the body as sites of resistance have failed to recognise that the conjugation of nature, orality, and woman's body also sustains the ideological transmission of hegemony. Indeed, the positing of essentialist sites of radicality is seen to be as dangerous as the abstract absolutes they claim to inherently resist (*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 134).

¹²⁹ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 124.

¹³⁰ *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 245 n. 4. Haraway suggests that 'postmodernism releases heterogeneity without a norm, and we are flattened, without subjectivity'. In these circumstances 'normalization gives way to automation, utter redundancy', requiring a heterogeneous partiality in which 'only a cyborg would have a chance'. Haraway notes in passing that domination now works 'by networking, communications redesign, stress management.' She further notes that 'the discourse of biopolitics gives way to technobabble, the language of the spliced substantive; no noun is left whole by the multinationals.' (*Simians, Cyborgs, and Women*, p. 245 n 4).

¹³¹ Interestingly, McLuhan's work anticipates embracing the non-identity of the Minotaur kept in the electronic labyrinth and fed human flesh. The promise Haraway sees in the creaturely inhabitants of electronic space suggests a further theorisation of the distinction McLuhan made between the old mechanical technology and the new electronic one, a distinction that spatialised the beginning of a new organicism. As McLuhan insisted, in the electronic world technological evolution implies the capability of constructing a 'living machine' which finally challenges 'the dubious assumption that the organic is the opposite of the mechanical'. McLuhan went on to note that 'since all organic characteristics can now be mechanically produced, the old rivalry between mechanism and vitalism is finished' (*Mechanical Bride*, p. 34). This served as the basis of his identification of electronic media as living organism, as cyborg promise. In turn, if human beings were to resolve problems 'created by technology' they could not fight organicism with organicism. Rather they would have to learn to use their unhuman technological body.

¹³² Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999), p. 114.

¹³³ Hayles, *How We Became Posthuman*, p. 115.

¹³⁴ Christopher Dewdney coins this notion of the 'end of the body' in *Last Flesh: Life in the Transhuman Era* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1997). Dewdney argues that the pathway to the posthuman era will be through a migration from the corporeal self into a digital substrata.

¹³⁵ Hayles wants to distinguish her use of the term 'informatics' from that of Haraway's 'informatics of domination', insisting upon it as a descriptive term 'no more value-laden than physics, biology, or literature' (*How We Became Posthuman*, p. 313 n. 4). In Hayles's view informatics is the 'material, technological, economic, and social structures that make the information age possible. Informatics includes the following: the late capitalist mode of flexible accumulation; the hardware and software that merged telecommunications with computer technology; the patterns of living that emerge from and depend on access to large data banks and instantaneous transmission of messages; and the physical habits – of posture, eye focus, hand motions, and neural connections – that are reconfiguring the human body in conjunction with information technologies' (*Posthuman*, p. 313n. 4). Within this 'non value-laden' use of 'informatics', Hayles assumes that this conjunction is evolutionary and hence outside the politics of power.

¹³⁶ *Posthuman*, p. 288.

¹³⁷ Hayles, *Chaos Bound: Orderly Disorder in Contemporary Literature and Science* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990), p. 290.

¹³⁸ As a point of clarification, by 'denatured' Hayles means that the explicit 'making' of the world via technology denies the world as 'naturally given'.

¹³⁹ *Chaos Bound*, p. 292. Hayles uses the term 'emergent' to define the posthuman as a system of organisation in which embodiment is generated out of parts acting in concert – that is distributed cognition becomes the new mechanism of social construction.

¹⁴⁰ Hayles's notion of embodiment attempts to see the posthuman as a process of evolutionary becoming out of the pattern/randomness of the cybernetic system that is the material world. The posthuman is the

emergence of cognition and technology that erases human/non human boundaries and therefore articulates the materiality of informatics as the new ground for animate and inanimate life forms.

¹⁴¹ *Posthuman*, p. 201.

¹⁴² Arthur Kroker suggests that the human species is 'gripped in the cyber-jaws of virtualization' and as a consequence is 'rapidly evolving into an electronic species – half flesh and half data'. Kroker sees this transformation of flesh into data as a means of developing new sensory technologies and new ways of thinking in terms of cyberspace and 'net consciousness'. On the other hand he argues that this process cannot be separated from power, 'virtualization also means the shutting down of the human sensorium, and putting in its place a kind of vacant process of virtualization, which really means the harvesting of flesh' in the technological recreation of the data body ('Wired Flesh', *Adbusters: Journal of the Mental Environment*, Summer 1995, p. 35). However, following McLuhan, Kroker posits electronic technology as an evolutionary leap beyond the limits of the physical body. Drawn into its mimetic spell, he welcomes the possibilities of the electronic rebirth: 'We might have started the 20th century with one body, a body of flesh and bone, but surely to god we end it with two bodies – a physical body, which has its own time and its own way to death, and an electronic body, with its own memories and its own senses of touch and reflection' ('Wired Flesh', p. 36). Kroker also tries to raise questions about the cyber-electronic ideology underpinning the power of what he calls 'the virtual class'. He sees the information superhighway as a means of 'delivering up the body to virtualization', a more intensive colonisation of body and mind. He suggests that: 'the promotional culture of the virtual class which speaks eloquently about how the expansion of the high-speed data network will facilitate every aspect of contemporary society: heightened interactivity, increased high-tech employment in a 'globally competitive market', and a mass acceleration of access to knowledge. Not a democratic discourse but a deeply authoritarian one, the ideology of facilitation is always presented in the crisis-context of technological necessitarianism. As the CEOs of leading computer companies and their specialist consultants like to say: *We have no choice but to adapt or perish given the technological inevitability associated with the coming to be of technotopia*' ('Wired Flesh', pp. 38-9). Like McLuhan and the other theorists of electronic 'rebirth', Kroker's insights into the power of electronic reality are colonised by electronic language. In attempting to separate what he sees as the evolutionary promise of electronic technology from the spatial 'reality' of its ideological power, he contributes to the rationalisation of the pseudo-concreteness of the 'second body'. Theorising 'the virtual class' serves to relocate class constestations from the world of the body to the new world of information where resistance is reduced to data.

¹⁴³ *Posthuman*, p. 156. Literature 'embodies' information in narrative forms, which are then 'read' by human beings imbedded in the life world of feedback loops between texts and technology. For Hayles, 'the feedback loops that run between technologies and perceptions, artifacts and ideas, have important implications for how historical change occurs' (*Posthuman*, p. 14). She wishes to use the resources of narrative, particularly its resistance to various forms of abstraction and disembodiment. Technology interanimates literary texts 'as they are encoded within information media' and produces a 'complex relation to changes in the construction of human bodies as they interface with information technologies' (*Posthuman*, p. 29). Linking literature and science by way of technological mediation is 'a way of understanding ourselves as embodied creatures living within and through embodied worlds and embodied words' (*Posthuman*, p. 24). Hayles finds in the posthuman narrative 'a technical-cultural concept', an 'inter-reading' in which the presence of the dataworld infiltrates the text and generates the cyborg.

¹⁴⁴ *Posthuman*, p. 155.

¹⁴⁵ In her use of the term 'chaos', Hayles suggests the always-destabilising force of the unformed. In Newton's mechanics, and encoded within linguistic structures, 'is the assumption that linearity was the rule of nature, nonlinearity the exception'. Hayles argues that chaos theory has revealed the opposite. The orderly disorder of chaotic systems had no recognised place within classical mechanics. By demonstrating that such systems not only exist but are common, chaos theory has in effect opened up, or more precisely brought into view, a third territory that lies between order and disorder (*Chaos Bound*, pp. 11-15).

¹⁴⁶ *Posthuman*, p. 198.

¹⁴⁷ Edwin Hutchins, *Cognition in the Wild* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995), p. 312 quoted in Hayles, *Posthuman*, p. 290.

¹⁴⁸ *Posthuman*, p. 291.

¹⁴⁹ *Posthuman*, p. 291.

¹⁵⁰ *Chaos Bound*, p. 11.

¹⁵¹ Hayles uses the term 'emergent' to define the posthuman as a system of organisation in which embodiment is generated out of parts acting in concert – that is, distributed cognition becomes the new mechanism of social construction. In the chaotic, unpredictable nature of complex dynamics, she suggests, subjectivity is emergent rather than given, distributed rather than located solely in consciousness, emerging from and integrated into a chaotic world rather than occupying a position of master and control removed from it.

¹⁵² *Posthuman*, p. 195.

¹⁵³ *Posthuman*, p. 195.

¹⁵⁴ *Posthuman*, p. 291. Here, Hayles follows the ideas of Bruno Latour explicated in *We Have Never Been Modern*, trans. by Catherine Porter (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993). She suggests that the 'materiality of informatics' is a restatement of Latour's argument that 'quasi-objects operate within networks that are at once in material real, socially regulated, and discursively constructed' (*Posthuman*, p. 321 n 23). Transformed into database, Hayles's materialism depends on the reconstruction of context, which defines the physical world as a network of technological extensions produced in the pattern/randomness dialectics of informational codes that are the life-forms of evolutionary possibility.

¹⁵⁵ *Posthuman*, p. 205.

¹⁵⁶ *Posthuman*, p. 23.

¹⁵⁷ See *Chaos Bound: Orderly Disorder in Contemporary Literature and Science*. Hayles reinforces Kevin Kelly's idea that the new biology of machines allows the complexity of Nature to shape our social systems and the economic world, and thereby disrupt the mastery of human control. Kelly argues that: Nature has all along yielded her flesh to humans [. . .] now Bios is yielding her mind – we are taking her logic [. . .]. At the same time that the logic of Bios is being imported into machines, the logic of Technos is being imported into life [. . .]. The world of the made will soon be like the world of the born: autonomous, adaptable, and creative but, consequently, out of our [human] control (*Out of Control: The New Biology of Machines, Social Systems, and the Economic World*, New York: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1994, pp. 2-4). Here is the necessity of modelling technology after biology and the emergence of literature as the co-evolved history of their symbiosis. For Hayles, as far as the emergence of a denatured world goes, 'never before have such strong feedback loops among culture, theory and technology brought it so close to being a reality' (*Chaos Bound*, p. 295). Kelly is the executive editor of *Wired* magazine. It is interesting to note that the magazine has dubbed Marshall McLuhan its 'patron-saint'.

¹⁵⁸ *Chaos Bound*, xiv.

¹⁵⁹ *Posthuman*, p. 291.

¹⁶⁰ For Hayles, in the world of informatics embodiment is the prosthetic practice of ecological survival through the material distribution of cognition in human and non-human agents (*Posthuman*, p. 289). As Hayles further elaborates: 'also changed in this perspective is the relation of human subjectivity to its environment. No longer is human will seen as the source from which emanates the mastery necessary to dominate and control the environment. Rather the distributed cognition of the emergent human subject

corresponds with – in Bateson’s phrase, becomes a metaphor for – the distributed cognitive system as a whole, in which ‘thinking’ is done by both human and nonhuman actors [. . .]. To conceptualize the human in these terms is not to imperil human survival but is precisely to enhance it, for the more we understand the flexible, adaptive structures that coordinate our environments and the metaphors that we ourselves are, the better we can fashion images of ourselves that accurately reflect the complex interplays that ultimately make the entire world one system’ (*Posthuman*, p. 290).

¹⁶¹ *Posthuman*, p. 287.

¹⁶² See Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1972).

¹⁶³ James Gleick, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (New York: Viking, 1987).

¹⁶⁴ *Chaos Bound*, p. 11. Hayles sees information technology itself as the means by which language, context, social relations, and cultural experience are destabilised and denatured. Informational uncertainty emphasises context over text. For example, Hayles sees ‘organisms as information texts that can be opened to a literal embodiment of intertextuality by a variety of gene-splicing techniques. Such techniques point to the deconstruction of the body as text, rendering problematic distinctions between originary texts and clones’. She points to other examples of contexts denatured by way of information technologies such as MTV: ‘What do you see? Perhaps demon-like creatures dancing; then a cut to cows grazing in a meadow, in the midst of which a signer with blue hair suddenly appears; then another cut to cars engulfed in flames. In such videos, the images and medium collaborate to create a technological demonstration that any text can be embedded in any context. What are these videos telling us, if not that the disappearance of a stable, universal context *is the context* for postmodern culture?’ (*Chaos bound*, p. 272). Such examples of technological interference, Hayles argues, serve to remind us ‘that context is *always already a construction*’ (*Chaos Bound*, p. 273).

¹⁶⁵ McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, p. 84. The materiality of informatics echoes McLuhan’s notion of the electronic achievement as ‘an extension of the process of consciousness itself, on a world scale, and without any verbalization whatever’ (*Understanding Media*, p. 83). Recalling those who saw a transgressive power in the orality of the electronic text, Hayles wishes to embody electronic information as a means to radically inscribe the posthuman body. As she points out, ‘by the 1960s McLuhan was speculating about the transformation that media, understood as technological prostheses, were effecting on human beings’. Further, he clearly recognised that the ‘electronic media are capable of bringing about a reconfiguration so extensive as to change the nature of ‘man’ (*Posthuman*, p. 34). In electronic media McLuhan saw a discursive revolution in which the Body could finally speak its mind through a language of the senses – an ‘uttering [or] (outing) of all our senses at once’ in a new world of hypertextual possibility (*Understanding Media*, p. 83). In a re-stating of McLuhan, Hayles locates in technological evolution the means by which living organisms adapt to changing contexts by way of prosthetic extensions to the body. In Hayles’s framing of the new world, as culture moves from book to computer, history evolves beyond hierarchical social order and realises a network culture. Hayles’s theory maps the ‘missing space’ in McLuhan’s electronic materialism by making informatic systems both science and world.

¹⁶⁶ Hayles proceeds to argue that it is the ‘randomness’ rather than the ‘pattern’ of informatics that should be invested with plenitude. The resistance of randomness to pattern is nature’s logic; embodied randomness is ‘the embodied mind’ (*Posthuman*, pp. 286-7). She further suggests that a shift from presence/absence occurs in a de-natured world. ‘Located within the dialectic of pattern/randomness and grounded in embodied reality rather than disembodied information, the posthuman offers resources for rethinking the articulation of humans with intelligent machines’ (*Chaos Bound*, p. 291). In the data world, resistance becomes a matter of evolutionary disruptions to fixed patterns: ‘When randomness erupts into the material world, mutation achieves its potency as a social and cultural manifestation of the posthuman’ (*Posthuman*, p. 249). Electronic technology thus makes materially present the absence of randomness as the creative ground from which the posthuman pattern can emerge (*Posthuman*, p. 285). Notably, for Hayles, the so-called triumph of ‘immateriality’ over ‘materiality’ is based on the mistaken assumption that pattern and presence are opposites. As opposed to this, she argues that the materiality of informatics articulates an alignment of pattern and presence in which technological evolution is the context of social

transformation. For Hayles, what the posthuman might become is tied to the adaptations of data-bodies to data-world. Information technologies reveal the complexity of the data world, which is sustained by the randomness of the substrata: 'Once the text's physical body is interfaced with information technologies [. . .], the pattern that is story stands in jeopardy of being disrupted by the randomness implicit in information' (*Posthuman*, p. 41). Through the complementarity of pattern and presence in the materiality of informatics, Hayles finds that resistance to authority is evolutionary.

¹⁶⁷ *Posthuman*, p. 35.

¹⁶⁸ *Chaos Bound*, p. 17.

¹⁶⁹ *Posthuman*, xiii.

¹⁷⁰ *Posthuman*, p. 29, xiii.

¹⁷¹ *Posthuman*, p. 35.

¹⁷² *Posthuman*, p. 46.

¹⁷³ *Posthuman*, p. 43.

¹⁷⁴ *Posthuman*, p. 47.

¹⁷⁵ *Posthuman*, p. 6.

¹⁷⁶ *Posthuman*, pp. 119-220.

¹⁷⁷ *Posthuman*, p. 46. Hayles points out that 'abstracting information from a material base meant that information could become free-floating, unaffected by changes in context' (*Posthuman*, p. 19). In turn, the emergence of the 'hyper-real' in which 'any text can be embedded in any context' constitutes a denaturing of the given. This denatured world opens into reconfigured spaces that resist authority by way of a 'radical erosion of context, evolving bodies and technologies 'into mutating surfaces that transform into one another' (*Posthuman*, pp. 119-220). Ultimately, it is a matter of 'self-production in a machine context'. (*Posthuman*, p. 318, n. 20).

¹⁷⁸ *Chaos Bound*, p. 275.

¹⁷⁹ *Chaos Bound*, p. 276.

¹⁸⁰ See also, Kevin Kelly, *Out of Control: The New Biology of Machines, Social Systems, and the Economic World* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1994). Kelly takes the notion of technological possibility somewhat further by aligning the diversity of electronic culture with the digital complexity of a 'neo-biological civilization'. Here, he suggests is a new life-form 'at once both made and alive' within the collective consciousness or 'hive mind' of a 'superorganism', which marks the end of liberal individualism and the birth of the posthuman 'bios-sphere' (*Out of Control*, p. 2-11). In effect, posthuman embodiment performs a transgression of authority in cyberspace as, 'hypertext allows the reader to engage the author for control of the writing space [. . .]. Meaning is multiple, a swarm of interpretations' (*Out of Control*, p. 465). Through the distributive capacities of electronic technology and digitalisation, society merges with the complexity of the machine, producing 'a highly evolved form where 'the creative is realized by complex systems'. In what he calls a correction to McLuhan, Kelly argues that the new online electronic communities weave together not a global village but rather a 'crowded global hive' where 'all evolution, including the evolution of manufactured entities, is coevolution' (*Out of Control*, p. 74). Electronic technology allows nature to exceed its own limits through its capacity to engineer the evolution of disorderly order.

¹⁸¹ Invoking the essentialist notion of 'subvocalization', an acoustic substrata inside language (and reminiscent of Ong), Hayles likens her materiality of informatics to a kind of silent reading in which the virtual sound of the text incorporates the inherently unfinalisable complexity of meaning. In the same way that silent reading is the bodily enactment of suppressed sound-data, electronic prosthetics is the body's way of 'speaking' its mind informatically. By prosthetically accessing the data-base, language finds its utterances surrounded by 'a shimmer of virtual sounds, homophonic variants that suggest alternative readings to the words printed on the page. Subvocalization actualizes these possibilities in the body and makes them available for interpretation' (*Posthuman*, p. 207). In effect, technology accesses the subvocal database transgressing the power of the word, mutating meaning, and making for unpredictable alterations in reading and transmission. See also Garret Stewart, *Reading Voices: Literature and the Phonotext* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990). This notion of subvocalization is a rearticulation of Ong's acoustic interior which is also McLuhan's concept of 'acoustic space' – the sound of the Word that is repressed by the linear mechanics and visual privileging of modernity. Here again we see experience reduced to interiorisation or incorporation of excess data into the body which destabilises the ideology of a homeostatic language and body by way of 'writing' 'or 'sounding', with the body, as incorporating practices of technological mimetics.

CONCLUSION – SOUND AND SPACE

This thesis has argued that the subject of ‘orality’ may be approached as a social-historical practice involving issues beyond those of ‘orality-literacy’; it has subsequently sought to locate the notion of a ‘secondary orality’ in a practice of acoustic space. Accordingly, this history of orality is not to be located in the difference between oral exchange and more permanent literary techniques, but rather within oral practice, within the tensions of its destabilising powers and technological incarnations. Confounded by an equating of orality with the authority of classical oral tradition and its mimetic performative forms, the orality theorists nonetheless believed they had discovered the rebirth of a radicalising oral logic of permanent form in the sound of electronic space -- a form capable of both capturing the transitoriness of the oral and dethroning the power of abstract visualisation. The explicit reluctance of the orality theorists to deal with the oral in all its complexity, and to instead concentrate upon oral technologies, has served to make plausible a radicality that proposes to transgress authority by technologically transcending it. This thesis has sought to question this radicality as an appropriation and inversion of oral powers. Notably, these earlier theories of a radical electronic oralisation are precursors to those contemporary theories that posit the electronic media as the realised language of ambivalence, heteroglossia, and democratic spirit.

In investigating the implications of a ‘secondary orality’, this thesis has raised several matters with respect to the importance of ‘sound’ in the understanding of orality itself. It has been argued that in the course of oral encounter sound produces the ‘space’ of such encounter. In short, sound is not only an utterance, but also an interspatial medium through which sociality is articulated. Additionally, it has been suggested that sound is not the metaphysical equivalent of an inaccessible and abstract interior. Rather,

it is the material means to produce the space of lived experience. In order to analyse the oral as lived, the connection must be maintained between this encounter and this production. Ultimately, human sound cannot be removed from the world without a reduction to abstract forms that deny social agency.

As a condition for the social production of intonation and meaning, sound exercises a subversive potentiality in the spatialising of world. It is, however, subversive in its connection to the external world, not in its connection to meaning as such. More specifically, the subversive potential of sound lies in the ability of a spatial acoustic practice to articulate the complexity of the phenomenal, not in any primordial or extra-verbal condition put forward as unfinalisable representation. As a site of contestation, sound suggests the political centrality of spatial control, a matter that becomes detailed in the fissures of sound. In effect, it is the space of production, not 'meaning', or even a multiplicity of meanings, that has subversive potential.

It is neither the 'spoken' nor 'written', but rather the 'space' itself that is social. Of crucial importance, acoustic subversion requires a space produced in the contingency of lived experience in which to be subversive. Arguably, such action is not sustained in the gaps found between reality and representation. Rather, in such circumstances the heteroglossia revealed in the intonational accents is reduced to a plurality of equivalent forms. Removed from the world, multiple meanings may maintain an appearance of radical indeterminacy; but, in an already transcribed space of resistance, fragmentation sustains hegemony. Relocated into a mimetic space of equivalence, stories subsequently become the *techne* of commodity exchange that subsumes the symbolic realm. In contrast to this, it is possible to suggest that the realm of acoustic encounter is not characterised by a repressed heterogeneity. Indeed, the history of radical poetics has not

been so much a struggle to reconstruct past acoustic space, or release a repressed acoustic interior, as it has been a struggle to reconnect with existing acoustic space.

The notion that dialogue itself is a site of contestation serves to question those theoretical constructions suggesting an inherently radical 'otherness' in orality, speech, or dialogue. The thesis has argued that the subversive potential of sound lies in its concrete associations with the material world. Detached from this world, the unofficial second life of the people loses its subversive potentiality. Sound also reveals the relationship between 'interiorisation' and the spatial control of material production in which the 'lived' is ghosted and replaced by the 'transcribed'.¹ In such circumstances the evidence and articulation of the external world outside representation becomes a spectre of resistance, an 'other' that the new electronic myth must repress. In this regard Derrida's recent emphasis on the power of ghosts is important in understanding the spatial issues involved in a radical oral-electronic indeterminacy.

Because it involves the production of space, the matter of orality cannot be reduced to language. The oral 'speaks' in spaces of the world, not above or beyond them. Indeed, ideas of media empowerment are entirely problematic when they arise from theorising the forms of communication in disregard to their spatiality. Shifting signifiers may well direct a cultural critique to the historical circumstances of language production through a transgression of univocal meaning and representational authority. However, in the tendency to make all things constructions of language, there is no basis for resistance to the power of an electronic language rooted in a technological second nature. The engineered release of repressed possibility has become a powerful tool that 'radicalises' the body of electronic heteroglossia through replicating and interiorising its outside space in manner beyond traditional notions of the physical world. Through this

action the extra-discursive materiality required to resist the transcendental electronic body is denied.

In the postmodern context McLuhan's oral restoration project retains a measure of plausibility because the experience of replicated orality continues to simulate a subversive potentiality. More recently McLuhan's project has been advanced through an application of Bakhtin's literary theory to the media. The latter theory has allowed a mapping of the oral logic found in McLuhan's notion of electronic technology as a 'second life in second nature'. Interestingly, the principle or agency of carnivalisation (grotesque realism) would seem to be what is required to align a postmodern theory of unfinalisability and fragmentation with an electronic orality. In effect, it provides the missing link between the quest for a literary alternative to a linguistic authority and those efforts to substantiate and privilege orality as the postmodern form.

Postmodern theories of semiotic transgression do issue a cultural challenge to the territories of media control. Arguably, however, the postmodern construct is itself a product of electronic ideology, indirectly revealing the 'discovery' of ambivalence in technology and its subsequent rationalisation by way of literary theory.² The 'mosaic juxtaposition' of electronic orality resonates in the intertextuality of postmodernism. In the circumstances of electronic sound, however, the radical indeterminacy of a postmodernist reading of fragmentation is depoliticised in the mimetic association between technology and the release of repressed energies. This points out the inadequacy of 'radical indeterminacy' in connection with an explanation of the ideology of contemporary capitalism, something that is especially apparent in the acoustic space of electronic language where power is grounded in the very multiplicity of meanings assumed to be transgressive.

Electronic technology creates an unparalleled mythical space that confuses the 'lived' with the 'engineered' by virtue of colonising living language and representing the ambivalence of lived experience.³ It is this cultural imperialism of electronic sound and space that ideologically substantiates the re-association of the human sensorium as envisioned by McLuhan: the acoustic participation in the electronic body reveals the imagery of the Eucharist adapted to sound. In such circumstances a resistance to the dominant electronic language by way of an interactivity or intertextuality is questionable, as this involves the very mimetic act that confuses as equivalent the electronic and social bodies. In the electronic age, and by virtue of a replicated world of engineered excess, myth is no longer compelled to act reductively.

In the world of electronic media it is precisely the space of face to face oral exchange that is appropriated, replicated, and translated into corporate speech.⁴ By simulating the spatial rhythms and social conditions for intoning the experience of oral exchange, secondary orality claims the space of oral culture historically associated with subversive stances and appears to challenge the authority of industrial rationality. This mimetic representation of world inside the text denies the contestatory nature of external relationships among living people.⁵ 'This latest mutation in space – postmodern hyperspace – has finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world'.⁶ In the pseudo-concreteness of the electronic world, sense of identity and physical reality are displaced from the body; in the pseudo-concreteness of the associated lived relations, radical energies are absorbed and reconstituted into shifting constructs of a corporate speech.

Secondary orality assumes an unproblematic equivalence between everyday and electronic word-forms within an undifferentiated acoustic environment.⁷ It subsequently abstracts a social connection to world while replicating the dynamics of oral practice. Although electronic technology may seem a rupture in the history of power, one that releases a radical interiority repressed by a corrupt exteriority, the transcendentalism of the electronic 'second nature' betrays its detachment from all historical situation. In particular, electronic space appears to materialise the 'presence' of the represented world, a mimetic patterning of external to internal world claimed possible by a bio-technical evolution. However, in its replication, electronic orality simply disconnects sociality from the material world of acoustic encounter.

The power of electronic orality lies in the experience of a replication that disorients transgressive social practice from the real space of its production. Electronic colonisation constructs a spatial hegemony sustained and consolidated by way of a lived relationship to this hyper-reality.⁸ By inventing another 'material reality' in its mimetic realisation of a new language and world, electronic technology perpetuates, in Althusser's phrase, a 'lived relation to the imaginary real'.⁹ The replication of contestation within the reified space of electronic technology is the means by which abstract space negates spatial practice. When resistance is focused inside the space of the electronic, subversion subverts itself by perpetuating a replicated connection of text and world. In this engineering of sound, an electronic mimesis silences historical poetics and negates political resistance through a spatial disorientation.

By replicating the relationship between acoustic poetics and world, electronic orality projects the traditional authority of the spoken word by simultaneously appropriating and replicating vernacular transgression as 'sound-image'. In effect the

ideology of late capitalism posits a manufactured ambivalence that serves to undermine oral practice while naturalising electronic form as dominant space.¹⁰ In turn, by moving social space inside technological space, electronic media become imbedded in a master narrative of global participation. Resistance to this electronic form lies in a distinguishing of the oral world and an articulation of the irreducible connection between social practice and its external space. 'World', not 'word', is a central context of resistance in the contemporary period, requiring a differentiation of practice from replication.

Notes to Conclusion

- ¹ In his critique of mythology Barthes makes a similar point concerning the power of electronic media to ghost the external world by 'becoming' the postmodern Nature. He suggests that: 'what the world supplies to myth is an historical reality [. . .] what myth gives in return is a natural image of this reality. [. . .] The world enters language as a dialectical relation between [human] activities [. . . but] comes out of myth as a harmonious display of essences. A conjuring trick [. . .] has turned reality inside out (*Mythologies*, p. 144).
- ² There would seem to be a relationship between the collapse of legitimation based on grand historical narratives and the emergence of an electronic orality. The suggestion here is that the very sense of a collapse of representational authority is conditioned by the 'context' of the subversive possibilities of this unfinalisable language of becoming (Zsuzsa Baross, 'Poststructuralism' in *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*, ed. by Irena R. Makaryk, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, pp. 158-161)
- ³ In the 'ambivalent' space of the electronic master-narrative, 'myth is speech justified in excess' (Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 130).
- ⁴ Raymond Williams suggests that the power of this technology lies in its influence over sensory ways of knowing. We have suggested that the replication of oral life and acoustic space is the central agency of this influence. Electronic technology taps into the rhythms of sound and speech as a 'way of transmitting a description of experience [. . .] the experience is re-created in the person receiving it, not merely as an "abstraction" or an "emotion" but as a physical effect on the organism' (*The Long Revolution*, London: Chatto and Windus, 1961, p. 24). The duplication of experience confounds the difference between world and representation.
- ⁵ Lefebvre appears to reinforce the suggestion that the locations of the outside become more difficult to sense as technological replication undermines the struggle for difference: 'It is no longer a matter of the space of this or the space of that: rather, it is space in its totality or global aspect that needs to be subjected to analytic scrutiny' under the circumstances of lived ideology in the electronic world (*Production of Space*, p. 37).
- ⁶ Fredric Jameson, 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', in *New Left Review*, July-August 1984, p. 83.
- ⁷ Walter Ong, *Interfaces of the Word*, pp. 292-3.
- ⁸ World is made into an object of consumption. Electronic space becomes Debord's society of the spectacle: 'The spectacle is the uninterrupted conversation which the present order maintains about itself, its laudatory monologue [. . .] a self portrait of power [. . .] a second nature seems to dominate our environment with its fatal flaws [. . .] contact among men can no longer take place except through it [. . .] because this communication is essentially unilateral (*Society of the Spectacle*, Detroit: Black & Red, 1970).
- ⁹ Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. by Ben Brewster (London: New Left Books, 1977), p. 233. In the context of electronic monopolies of power, this notion of lived relation to the hegemonic real suggests an adaptation of Volosinov's concept of behavioral ideology that posits experience itself as a historically contestatory site where the electronic power of spatial disorientation dislocates experience and consciousness from the space of production.
- ¹⁰ See McLuhan's discussion of electronic 'annihilation of space' (*Understanding Media*), pp. 92-96.

Bibliography

- Abrams, M. H., *Natural Supernaturalism: Tradition and Revolution in Romantic Literature* (London: Oxford University Press, 1971)
- - -, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York: Norton, 1958)
- Allen, Milton, *Radio and Poetry* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1949)
- Althusser, Louis, *For Marx*, trans. by Ben Brewster (London: New Left Books, 1977)
- Anderson, Perry, *Considerations on Western Marxism* (London: NLB, 1976)
- Arendt, Hannah, *The Life of the Mind* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1978)
- Aristophanes, *The Birds*, trans. by David Barrett and Alan H. Sommerstein (Middlesex: Penguin, 1978)
- - -, 'Birds', in Aristophanes. *Plays: 2*, trans. by Patrick Dickinson (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), pp. 6-75.
- Aristotle, *Aristotle's Poetics*, trans. by Leon Golden and comm. by O.B. Harrison, Jr. (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1968)
- - -, *The Poetics of Aristotle*, ed. and trans. by S. H. Butcher, M. P., 4th edn. (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1917)
- Ashton, John, ed., *Chap-Books of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Benjamin Bloom, 1966)
- Atwood, Margaret, *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press Limited, 1972)
- Babcock, Barbara, *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978)
- Bachelard, Gaston, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. by Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969)
- Bagdikian, Benjamin, *The Media Monopoly* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1983)
- Bakhtin, Mikhail M., *The Dialogic Imagination*, ed. by Michael Holquist and trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981)

- , *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, intro. by Wayne C. Booth, ed. and trans. by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984)
- , *Rabelais and His World*, trans. by Helene Iswolsky (London, England: The MIT Press, 1968)
- Ball, Hugo, *Flight out of Time* (New York: Viking, 1974)
- Barthes, Roland, *Mythologies*, trans. by Annette Lavers (London: Paladin Grafton Books, 1957)
- , *The Grain of the Voice: Interviews 1962-1980* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1985)
- Baross, Zsuzsa, 'Poststructuralism' in *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory: Approaches, Scholars, Terms*, ed. by Irena R. Makaryk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), pp. 158-161
- Bates, Marston, *Man in Nature* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964)
- Bateson, Gregory, *Angels Fear: Towards an Epistemology of the Sacred* (Toronto; New York: Bantam, 1988)
- , *Steps to an Ecology of Mind* (Bungay, Suffolk: Chandler Press, 1973)
- Baudrillard, Jean, *The Transparency of Evil*, trans. by James Benedict (London and New York: Verso, 1993)
- , *For a Critique of the Political Economy of the Sign*, trans. by Charles Levin. (St. Louis, MO: Telos Press, 1981)
- , *Symbolic Exchange and Death*, intro. by Mike Gane and trans. by Iain Hamilton (Grant. London: Sage, 1993)
- , *The Mirror of Production* (St. Louis: Telos Press, 1975)
- Behrman, D., *In Partnership with Nature* (Paris: UNESCO, 1972)
- Benhabib, Seyla and Drucilla Cornell, eds., *Feminism as Critique: Essays on the Politics Of Gender in Late-Capitalist Societies* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press (Basil Blackwell), 1987)
- Benjamin, Walter, *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*, trans. by Harry Zohn (London: NLB, 1973)
- , 'The Storyteller', in *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt and trans. by Harry Zohn. (London: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968)

- , *Charles Baudelaire: A Lyric Poet in the Era of Capitalism*, trans. by Harry Zohn. (London: NLB, 1973)
- , *Illuminations*, ed. by Hannah Arendt and trans. by Harry Zohn (London: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1968)
- , *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. by John Osborne (London: NLB, 1977)
- Berger, A. A., *Television as an Instrument of Terror: Essays on Media, Popular Culture and Everyday Life* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1980)
- Berger, John, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Viking Press, 1973)
- Berland, Jody, 'Angels Dancing: Cultural Technologies and the Production of Space', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paul A. Treichler (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 38-55
- Bernstein, Michael Andre, 'The Poetics of Ressentiment', in *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges*, ed. by Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1989), pp.197-223
- Bird, Elizabeth and Robert Dardenne, 'Myth, Chronicle, and Story: Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News', in *Media, Myths and Narratives*, ed. by James W. Carey (Beverly Hills, California: Sage, 1988), pp. 72-83
- Bissell, Claude T., 'Herbert Marshall McLuhan', in *Marshall McLuhan: The Man and His Message*, intro. by John Cage, ed. by George Sanderson and Frank Macdonald (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, Inc., 1989), pp. 5-11
- Black, John, *Dominion of Man: The Search for Ecological Responsibility* (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Co., 1970)
- Blake, William, *The Poetry and Prose of William Blake*, ed. by David Erdman (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1965)
- , *The Complete Writings of William Blake*, ed. by Geoffrey Keynes (London: Oxford University Press, 1966)
- Boorstin, Daniel, *The Americans: The Democratic Experience* (New York: Random House, 1973)
- , *The Republic of Technology: Reflections on Our Future Community* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978)
- Bourdieu, Pierre, *On Television and Journalism*, trans. by Priscilla Parkhurst Ferguson

(London: Pluto Press, 1997)

Brandt, Joan, *Geopoetics: The Politics of Mimesis in Post-structuralist French Poetry and Theory* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997)

Brown, Lester, *Seeds of Change: The Green Revolution and Development in the 1970s* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1970)

Brown, Richard H., *A Poetic for Sociology: Toward a Logic of Discovery for the Human Sciences* (Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 1977)

Brown, Steward, ed., *VoicePrint* (United Kingdom: Longman, 1989)

Brownlow, Timothy, *John Clare and Picturesque Landscape* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983)

Buchan, David, *The Ballad and the Folk* (London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972)

Buck-Morss, Susan, *The Dialectics of Seeing: Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project* (Cambridge, Mass. and London, Eng.: The MIT Press, 1989)

Budick, Sanford, and Wolfgang Iser, *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989)

Bundy, Robert, *Images of the Future: The Twenty-first Century and Beyond* (Buffalo, New York: Prometheus Books, 1976)

Burke, James, 'Communication in the Middle Ages', in *Communication in History: Technology, Culture and Society*, ed. by David Crowley and Paul Heyer (New York: Longman, 1991)

Burke, Peter, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London: Temple Smith, 1978)

Burnet, Thomas, *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, 2 vols (np.: 1759)

Burton, Robert, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Amsterdam: Theatrum Orbis Terrarum Ltd., 1971)

- - - , *The Anatomy of Melancholy (A Selection)*, ed. by Lawrence Babb (np: Michigan University Press, 1965)

Cage, John, *Silence: Lectures and Writings* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973)

Calder, Nigel, ed., *Nature in the Round: A Guide to Environmental Science* (New York:

- Viking Press, 1974)
- , *Technopolis: Social Control of the Uses of Science* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1970)
- Campbell, Joseph, *Creative Mythology, The Masks of God* (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1968)
- , *Myths, Dreams and Religion* (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1970)
- , *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1968)
- Cardiff, David, 'The Serious and the Popular', in *Media, Culture and Society: A Critical Reader* (London; Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1986), pp. 228-246.
- Carey, James W., ed., *Media, Myths and Narratives: Television and the Press* (Beverly Hills, California: Sage, 1988)
- , 'Canadian Communication Theory: Extensions and Interpretations of Harold Innis', in *Studies in Canadian Communications* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1975), pp. 27-59
- Carpenter, Edmund, 'The New Languages', in *Explorations in Communications*, ed. by Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan (Boston: Beacon, 1960), pp. 162-179
- Carpenter, Edmund and Marshall McLuhan, eds., *Explorations in Communications* (Boston: Beacon, 1960)
- Carpenter, Kenneth E., *The Luddites: Three Pamphlets 1812-1839* (New York: Arno Press, 1972)
- Carroll, David, *Paraesthetics: Foucault, Lyotard, Derrida* (New York & London: Methuen, 1987)
- Carson, Rachael, *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973)
- Cassirer, Ernst, *Language and Myth* (New York: Dover Pub., 1946)
- Cavell, Richard, 'Spatial Form', in *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Literary Theory*, ed. by Irena R. Makaryk (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), p. 630.
- Chambers, W. & R., *The Book of Days A Miscellany of Popular Antiquities in Connection with The Calendar including Anecdote, Biography, & History curiosities of Literature and Oddities of Human Life and Character*, 2 vols (London, Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers, 1869)

- Chandler, James K., *Wordsworth's Second Nature: A Study of the Poetry and Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984)
- Chaytor, H. J., *From Script to Print: An Introduction to Medieval Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1945)
- Chomsky, Noam. *The Manufacturing of Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1988)
- Cicero, Marcus Tullius, *De oratore*, ed. by Edward William Sutton and Harris Rackham. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1942)
- Chilcott, Tim, *A Real World & Doubting Mind: A Critical Study of the Poetry of John Clare* (Hull: Hull University Press, 1985)
- Clare, Johanne, *John Clare and the Bounds of Circumstance* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987)
- Clare, John, *John Clare's Autobiographical Writings*, ed. by Eric Robinson ; with wood engravings by John Lawrence (Oxford [Oxfordshire]: Oxford University Press, 1983)
- , *The Letters of John Clare*, ed. by J. W. and Anne Tibble, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1951)
- , *The Poems of John Clare*, ed. by J. W. Tibble. 2 vols (London: J. M. Dent, 1935)
- , *The Prose of John Clare*, ed. by J. W. and Anne Tibble (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951)
- , *The Essential Clare*, intro. and selected by Carolyn Kizer (Hopewell, New Jersey: The Ecco Press, 1992)
- , *John Clare: Selected Poetry and Prose*, ed. by Merryn and Raymond Williams (London: Methuen, 1986)
- Clark, *A New Almanack and Prognostication for this yeare, being the first after bissextile, and from Our Saviors passion 1599: calculated properly for the famous town of Ipswich, but may indifferently serve for any other place within this kingdome*, Fiche (Cambridge, England: Printers to the Universitie (1633) 1983)
- Cohen, David William, 'The Undefining of Oral Tradition', *Ethnohistory*, 36:1 (1989), pp. 9-18
- Coleridge, Samuel T, *Biographia Literaria or Biographical Sketches of My Literary Life*

- and Opinions*, ed. by George Watson (London: J.M. Dent and Sons Ltd., 1956)
- Collins, Richard, *Media, Culture and Society: A Critical Reader* (London; Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1986)
- Commoner, Barry, *The Closing Circle: Nature, Man and Technology* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971)
- Cornell, Drucilla and Adam Thurschwell, 'Feminism, Negativity, Intersubjectivity', in *Feminism as Critique: Essays on the Politics of Gender in Late-Capitalist Societies*, ed. by Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell (Cambridge: Praxis International, 1987), pp. 143-162
- Cott, Jonathan, *Conversations with Glenn Gould* (Boston and Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1984)
- Cowen, Joseph and George Julian Harney, *Northern Tribune: A Periodical for the People* (Newcastle-Upon-Tyne: William James Lindon, Jan. 1854 to Mar. 1855 (monthly))
- Creech, James, *Diderot: Thresholds of Representation* (Columbus: Ohio State University, 1986)
- Crosby, Ruth, 'Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages', *Speculum* II. (1926), pp. 88-110
- Crownfield, David R., ed., *Body/Text in Julia Kristeva: Religion, Women, and Psychoanalysis* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992)
- Crowley, David and Paul Heyer, ed., *Communication in History: Technology, Culture and Society* (New York: Longman, 1991)
- Culler, Jonathan, *The Pursuit of Signs: Semiotics, Literature, Deconstruction* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981)
- Curran, James, *Bending Reality: The State of the Media* (London; Dover, N. H.: Pluto Press in association with the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom, 1986)
- Dale, Stephen, *McLuhan's Children: The Greenpeace Message and the Media* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1996)
- Dansereau, Pierre, *Inscape and Landscape* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975)
- Darling, F. Fraser, *Wilderness and Plenty* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1970)
- Darvall, Frank Ongley, *Popular Disturbances and Public Order in Regency England*

(Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969)

Debord, Guy, *Society of the Spectacle* (Detroit: Black & Red, 1970)

De Kerckhove, Derrick, *The Skin of Culture: Investigating the New Electronic Reality* (Toronto: Somerville House Publishing, 1995)

DeNevers, Noel, ed., *Technology and Society* (Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley, 1972)

de Sola Pinto, Vivian, and Allan Edwin Rodway, eds., *The Common Muse: An Anthology of Popular British Ballad Poetry XVth-XXth Century* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1957)

de Sola Pool, Ithiel, *The Technologies of Freedom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983)

Derrida, Jacques, perf., *Ghost Dance*. directed by Ken McMullen (Great Britain and Germany: Looseyard, Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen, and Channel Four, 1983)

---, *Margins of Philosophy*, trans. by Alan Bass (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982)

---, *Of Grammatology*, trans. by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974)

---, 'How to Avoid Speaking: Denials', in *Languages of the Unsayable: The Play of Negativity in Literature and Literary Theory*, ed. by Sandord Budick and Wolfgang Iser (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), pp. 3-70

---, *Dissemination*, trans. by B. Johnson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981)

---, 'Semiology and Grammatology: Interview with Julia Kristeva', in *Positions: Jacques Derrida*, trans. and annotated by Alan Bass (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 15-36

---, *Specters of Marx: The State of Debt, the Work of Mourning, and the New International*, trans. by Peggy Kamuf, intro. by Bernd Magnus and Stephen Cullenberg (New York: Routledge, 1994)

Detwyler, Thomas R., ed., *Man's Impact on the Environment* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1971)

Diamond, Irene and Gloria Feman Orenstein, eds., *Reweaving the World: The Emergence of Ecofeminism* (San Francisco: Sierra Books, 1990)

Dineson, Izak, *Out of Africa* (New York: Random House, 1938)

- Dodd, William (1842), *The Factory System Illustrated*, intro. by W. H. Chaloner (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1968)
- Drabble, M. and J. Stringer, *Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987)
- Downing, Peter, *The Media Machine* (London: Pluto Press, 1980)
- Dunbar, Dirk, *The Balance of Nature's Polarities in New-Paradigm Theory* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, 1994)
- Durning, Alan Thein, 'Can't Live Without It', *World Watch*, May-June (1993), pp.13-18
- Eagleton, Terry, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Cambridge, MA: Basil Blackwell, 1990)
- , *The Function of Criticism: From the Spectator to Post-Structuralism* (London: Verso, 1984)
- , *Walter Benjamin or Towards a Revolutionary Criticism*, (London: Verso, 1981)
- Easthope, Anthony, *Poetry as Discourse* (London and New York: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1983)
- Edgerton, S. Y., *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Linear Perspective* (New York: Basic Books, 1975)
- Edwards, Viv and Thomas J. Sienkewicz, *Oral Cultures Past and Present: Rappin' and Homer* (Cambridge, Mass.: Basil Blackwell, 1991)
- Ehrlich, Paul R., *The Population Bomb* (San Francisco: Sierra Club; New York: Ballantine Books, 1968)
- Eliade, Mircea, *Images and Symbols, Studies in Religious Symbolism*, trans. by Philip Mairet (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1952)
- , *The Sacred and the PROFANE: The Nature of Religion*, trans. by Williard R. Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1961)
- Eliot, T. S., *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism: Studies in the Relation of Criticism to Poetry in England* (London: Faber and Faber, 1964)
- Ellul, Jacques, *The Technological Society* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1964)
- , *Propaganda: The Formation of Men's attitudes* (New York: Vintage Books, 1973)
- Engels, Frederick, 'Dialectics of Nature', in *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels*

Collected Works, trans. by Clemens Dutt, vol 25 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1987), pp. 313 – 588

Evernden, Neil, *The Natural Alien* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985)

Farrell, Thomas, J., ed., *Bakhtin and Medieval Voices* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1995)

Farvar, M. Taghi, and Milton, John P., eds., *The Careless Technology: Ecology and International Development* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Natural History Press, 1972)

Fekete, John, *The Critical Twilight: Explorations in the Ideology of Anglo-American Literary Theory from Eliot to McLuhan* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977)

Ferkiss, Victor C., *Technological Man: The Myth and the Reality* (New York: George Braziller, 1969)

Findley, Timothy, *HeadHunter* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1993)

---, *Inside Memory: Pages from a Writer's Notebook* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 1990)

Finkelstein, Sidney, *Sense and Nonsense of McLuhan* (New York: International Publishers, 1968)

Fiske, John, *Television Culture* (London: Methuen, 1987)

Fogel, Aaron, 'Coerced Speech and the Oedipus Dialogue Complex', in *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges*, ed. by Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1989), pp. 173-196.

Foucault, Michel, *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, ed. by Donald Bouchard (Oxford: Cornell University Press, 1977)

---, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (New York: Vintage, 1973)

Frank, Feliscia Miller, *The Mechanical Song: Women, Voice, and the Artificial in Nineteenth Century French Narrative* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1995)

Frederick, Grace, 'Rediscovering the Dialectics of Nature', *Political Affairs*, 55: 5 (1976), pp. 32 - 43

Freeman, Judi, *The Dada & Surrealist Word-Image*, contribution by John C. Welchman (London, England and Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1990)

- Frye, Northrop, *The Bush Garden* (Toronto: Anansi, 1971)
- , *The Modern Century* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1967)
- , *Northrop Frye on Culture and Literature: A Collection of Review Essays*, ed. by Robert D. Denham (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1978)
- , *The Secular Scripture: A Study of the Structure of Romance* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1976)
- Gardner, Carl, *Media, Politics and Culture* (New York: Macmillan, 1979)
- Gauraudy, Roger, *Karl Marx: The Evolution of his Thought*, trans. by Nan Aptheker. (New York: International Publishers, 1967)
- Giedion, Sigfried, *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1948)
- , *Space, Time and Architecture: The Growth of a New Tradition* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press London, Oxford University Press, 1975)
- Gill, James E., ed., *Cutting Edges: Postmodern Critical Essays on Eighteenth-century Satire* (Knoxville: The University of Tennessee Press, 1995)
- Gill, Sam, *Beyond the Primitive: The Religions of Non-Literate People* (Englewood Cliffs, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1982)
- Girard, Rene, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. by Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1977)
- Gleick, James, *Chaos: Making a New Science* (New York, N.Y. : Viking, 1987)
- Glover, Richard, 'A Poem on Newton', in *Observations on Poetry, especially occasioned by the late poem on Leonidas*, ed. by Henry Pemberton (New York: Garland Pub., 1970), pp. 13-16
- Goldman, Robert, *Reading Ads Socially* (London: Routledge, 1992)
- Goldman, Robert and Stephen Papson, *Sign Wars: The Cluttered Landscape of Advertising* (London: The Guilford Press, 1996)
- Gombrich, E. H., *Gombrich on the Renaissance* (London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1972)
- Goody, Jack, ed., *Literacy in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968)

- , *The Domestication of the Savage Mind* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977)
- , *The Interface between the Written and the Oral* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987)
- Gouldner, Alvin, *The Dialectic of Ideology and Technology* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1977)
- Graham, Frank, J., *Since Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1970)
- Gramsci, Antonio, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1971)
- Graves, Robert, *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* (New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1984)
- Green, Nicholas, *The Spectacle of Nature: Landscape and Bourgeois Culture in Nineteenth-century France* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1990)
- Greenblatt, Stephen, ed., *Allegory and Representation: Selected Papers from the English Institute, 1979-80* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1981)
- , *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991)
- Grossberg, Lawrence, Cary Nelson, and Paul A. Treichler, eds., *Cultural Studies* (New York: Routledge, 1992)
- Gurevitch, M. Bennet, T. Curran, J. and J Wollacott, *Culture, Society and the Media* (London: Methuen, 1982)
- Hall, Edward T., *The Hidden Dimension* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969)
- , *The Silent Language* (New York: Doubleday and Company Inc., 1959)
- Halper, Nathan, 'Marshall McLuhan and Joyce', in *McLuhan: Pro&Con*, ed. by Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968), pp. 58-81
- Haraway, Donna, 'The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. and intro. by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula Treichler (New York and London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 295-337
- , *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* (New York:

Routledge, 1991)

- , *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium. FemaleMan (c)_Meets_Oncomouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997)
- Harkin, Michael, 'History, Narrative, and Temporality: Examples from the Northwest Coast', *Ethnohistory*, Vol. 35 no. 2 (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1988), pp. 99-130
- Harvey, William, 'EX-Libris' of William Harvey, Stirling Library, Stirling, Scotland
- Haug, W. F., *Critique of Commodity Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1971)
- Havelock, Eric, *Origins of Western Literacy* (Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1976)
- , *The Muse Learns to Write: Reflections on Orality and Literacy from Antiquity to the Present* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1986)
- , *Preface to Plato* (New York: Grossett and Dunlap, 1967)
- , *The Greek Concept of Justice from Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978)
- , 'Sophistication of Homer', in *Essays in His Honor*, ed. by I. A. Richards (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 259 - 275
- , 'Why was Socrates Tried', in *Studies in Honour of Gilbert Norwood* (Phoenix Suppl., Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952), pp. 95-109
- , *Harold Innis: A Memoir* (Toronto: Harold Innis Foundation, 1982)
- Havelock, Eric and Jackson P. Hershbell, ed., *Communication Arts in the Ancient World* (New York: Hastings House, 1978)
- Hawken, Paul, *The Ecology of Commerce: A Declaration of Sustainability* (New York: Harper Business, 1993)
- Hawkes, Terence, *Shakespeare's Talking Animals: Language and Drama in Society* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973)
- Hayles, N. Katherine, *How We Became PostHuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1999).
- , *Chaos Bound: Orderly Disorder in Contemporary Literature and Science* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990).

- Hebdige, Dick, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (London: Methuen, 1979)
- , *Hiding in the Light: On Images and Things* (New York: CoMedia, Routledge, 1988)
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being and Time*, trans. by John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (New York: Harper Row, 1962)
- Heim, Michael, *Electric Language: A Philosophical Study of Word Processing* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1989)
- , *The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993)
- Hesiod, *Works and Days*, trans. by Dorothea Wender (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1973)
- , *Theogony*, trans. by Dorothea Wender (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1973)
- , *The Works of Hesiod, Callimachus, and Theognis*, trans. by The Rev. J. Banks and Elton, Tytler, and Frere with James Davies (London: Henry G. Bohn, 1856)
- , *Hesiod*, trans. by Richard Lattimore (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1959)
- Higgins, C. S. and P. D. Moss, *Sounds Real: Radio in Everyday Life* (New York: University of Queensland Press, 1982)
- Highwater, Jamake, *Ritual of the Wind: North American Indian Ceremonies, Music and Dance* (New York: A. Van der Marck Editions, 1984)
- Hill, Peggy, 'Captured Words', *Toronto Globe and Mail*, 17 November 1990, p. C9.
- Hill, William (1837-43), Joshua Hobson (1843-44), George Julian Harney (1845-50), William Rider, and G. A. Fleming (1850-52), *Northern Star* (Leeds & then London: Feargus O'Connor (1837-52) and Harney (1852), 18 November 1837 to 24 April 1852, name changed to *Star of Freedom* [London], 1 May to 27 November 1852)
- Hindley, Charles, *Curiosities of Street Literature*, foreword by Michael Hughes (New York: Augustus M. Kelley Publishers, 1970)
- Heyer, Paul, *Nature, Human Nature, and Society: Marx Darwin, Biology, and the Human Sciences* (London: Greenwood Press, 1982)
- Hockett, Charles Francis, *Man's Place in Nature* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co.,

1973)

- Homer. *The Iliad of Homer*, trans. by Alexander Pope (London: Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1929)
- Horace, *Horace: Satires, Epistles and Ars Poetica*, trans. by H. Rushton Fairclough. (London: William Heinemann Ltd., Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1955)
- Huizinga, J., *The Waning of the Middle Ages: A Study of the Forms of Life* (London: E. Arnold and Co., 1924)
- Huxley, Aldous, *The Politics of Ecology* (Santa Barbara, California: Centre for the Study of Democratic Institutions, 1963)
- Innis, Harold, A., *The Bias of Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964)
- , *Empire and Communications* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972)
- , *Changing Concepts of Time* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952)
- , *The Idea File of Harold Adams Innis*, intro. and ed. by William Christian (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980)
- , *Canadian Economic History and its Problems* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1934)
- , *Essays in Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956)
- , *The Fur Trade in Canada: An introduction to Canadian Economic History*. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962)
- , *The Press: A Neglected Factor in the Economic History of the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1949)
- , *The Strategy of Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962)
- Irving, John A., *Mass Media in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1962)
- James, Lois, *Fiction for the Working Class: 1830-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963)
- Jameson, Fredric, *Marxism and Form: Twentieth-Century Dialectical Theories of Literature* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971)

- - -, 'Postmodernism, or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism', (*New Left Review* July-August 1984), p. 83
- The John Grierson Project, *John Grierson and the NFB* (McGill University, Toronto: ECW Press, 1984)
- Johnston, William M., 'Karl Marx's Verse of 1836-1937 as a Foreshadowing of His Early Philosophy', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, XXVIII (1967), 259 - 268
- Jonson, Ben, *Discoveries* (London: John Lane, The Bodley Head Ltd., 1923)
- - -, *Timber*, ed. by Felix Emmanuel Schelling (Boston: Ginn & Company, 1892)
- Karliner, Joshua, *The Corporate Planet: Ecology and Politics in the Age of Globalization* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1997)
- Katz, Corinne A., 'Genres of Power: A comparative Analysis of Okiek Blessings, Curses and Oaths', *Man*, 24: 4 (1989), 637-655
- Kelly, Kevin, *Out of Control: The New Biology of Machines, Social Systems, and the Economic World* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1994)
- Kelsen, Hans, *Society and Nature: Perspectives in Social Inquiry* (New York: Arno Press, 1974)
- Kershner, R. B., *Joyce, Bakhtin, and Popular Literature: Chronicles of Disorder* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of Carolina Press, 1989)
- Kivikuru, Ullamaija, 'Communication in Tanzania: The Case of Tanzanian Villages', (unpublished paper, IAMCR XVI Conference, Barcelona, Spain, 1988)
- Klonsky, Milton, 'McLuhan's message or: which way did the second coming went', *McLuhan: Pro&Con*, ed. by Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968)
- Korten, David C., *When Corporations Rule the World* (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers and West Hartford, Connecticut: Kumarian Press, Inc., 1995)
- Kristeva, Julia, *Revolution in Poetic Language*, trans. by Margaret Waller (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984)
- - -, 'Bataille, Experience and Practice', in *On Bataille: Critical Essays*, ed. and trans. by Leslie Anne Boldt-Irons (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 237- 264
- - -, *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by Leon S.

Roudiez, trans. by Thomas Gora, Alice Jardine, and Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980)

---, *New Maladies of the Soul*, trans. by Ross Guberman (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995)

---, *In the Beginning was Love: Psychoanalysis and Faith*, trans. by A. Goldhammer. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987)

Kroker, Arthur, *Technology and the Canadian Mind: Innis/McLuhan/Grant* (Montreal: NewWorld Perspectives, 1984)

---, 'Wired Flesh', *Adbusters: Journal of the Mental Environment* (Summer 1995), pp. 35-40

Kroker, Arthur and Michael A. Weinstein, *Data Trash: The Theory of the Virtual Class* (Montreal: New World Perspectives, 1994)

Lacey, Norman, *Wordsworth's View of Nature* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1965)

Laslett, Peter, *The World We have Lost* (London: Methuen, 1965)

Lasn, Kalle, ed., 'Television Violence May Be Hazardous To Your Health', 'A Tree Farm Is Not A Forest', and 'Ecological Economics: A Bull in a China Shop', Advertisements, in *Adbusters: Journal of the Mental Environment*, (Spring 1980), pp. 30, 65

Leclercq, Jean, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, trans. by Catharine Misrahi (New York: Fordham University Press, 1974)

Lefebvre, Henri, *The Production of Space*, trans. by Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford, UK & Cambridge USA: Blackwell, 1991)

---, *Writings on Cities*, intro., trans., and ed. by Eleonore Kofman and Elizabeth Lebas (Oxford, UK and Cambridge USA: Blackwell, 1996)

Leiss, William, *The Domination of Nature* (New York: George Braziller, 1972)

---, *The Limits to Satisfaction: An Essay on the Problem of Needs and Commodities* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976)

Levinson, Paul, *Digital McLuhan : A Guide to the Information Millennium* (New York: Routledge, 1999)

Levi-Strauss, Claude, *The Savage Mind* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1966)

- Lewis, Peter, ed., *Radio Drama* (New York, Longman, 1981)
- Lewis, Wyndham, *Time and Western Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957)
- Lindsay, Jack, *William Blake: His Life and Work* (London: Constable, 1978)
- List, S. K., 'The Right Place to Find Children' *American Demographics* (February 1992), 44-48
- Livingston, John, *One Cosmic Instant: Man's Fleeting Supremacy* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1973)
- , *The Fallacy of Wildlife Conservation* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1981)
- Lodge, David, ed., *20th Century Literary Criticism* (London: Longman, 1972)
- Lonsdale, Roger, *The New Oxford Book of 18th Century Verse* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984)
- Lord, Albert B., *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964)
- Lukacs, Georg, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T., 1971)
- Liotard, Jean-Francois, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi; foreword by Fredric Jameson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984)
- Malinowski, Bronislaw, 'The Problem of Meaning in Primitive Language', in *The Meaning of Meaning*, ed. by C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards (New York: Harcourt Brace; London: Kegan Paul Trench, 1923), pp. 296-336
- , *Myth in Primitive Psychology* (New York: Norton, 1926)
- Mager, N. H. S. K. and P. S., *Power Writing, Power Speaking* (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1978)
- Mander, Jerry, *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* (New York: Morrow, 1978)
- , *In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1991)
- Marcuse, Herbert, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964)
- Margalef, Ramon, *Perspectives in Ecological Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968)

- Marshall, Barnaby, 'Artifacts: is the internet...god', *Shift Magazine*, November 1997, p. 22.
- Martin-Barbero, Jesus, *Communication, Culture and Hegemony* (London: Sage, 1993)
- Marx, Karl, *Capital: A Critical Analysis of Capitalist Production*, ed. by Frederick Engels, 3 vols (New York: International Publishers, 1967)
- Marx, Karl, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy (Rough Draft)*, trans. by Martin Nicolaus (Harmondworth, England: Penguin Books, 1973)
- Marx, Karl, *The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, trans. by Martin Milligan and ed. by Dirk Struik (New York: International Publishers, 1964)
- , *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (Moscow: Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1961)
- Marx, Karl, and Frederick Engels, *Marx and Engels on Ecology*, ed. and comp. By Howard L. Parsons (London, England: Greenwood Press, 1977)
- , *The German Ideology*, ed. by R. Pascal (New York: International Publishers, 1947)
- , *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels: Collected Works*, vol. 25 (London: Lawrence and Wishart, 1987)
- Matejka, Ladislav, 'On the First Russian Prolegomena to Semiotics', in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (V. N. Volosinov) trans. by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (New York and London: Seminar Press, 1973), pp. 161-174
- Mattelart, Armand and Michelle, *The Invention of Communication* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1996)
- , *Multinational Corporations and the Control of Culture: The Ideological Apparatuses of Imperialism* (Sussex: Harvester Press; Atlantic Highlands, N. J.: Humanities Press, 1982)
- MacBride, Sean (Commissioner), *Many Voices, One World: Communication and Society, Today and Tomorrow: Towards a New More Just and more Efficient World Information and Communication Order* (International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems, UNESCO, London: K. Page, 1980)
- McChesney, Robert W, 'Corporate Concentration: A Threat to the Right to Communicate', in *Virtual Conference on Media Concentration* (Madison: School of Journalism and Communication, University of Wisconsin, 1999)

- , 'The Global Media Giants: The Nine Firms that Dominate the World,' *Extra!* November/December 1997, vol. 10 no 6, pp. 11-12
- McKibben, Bill, *The Age of Missing Information* (New York: Random House, 1992)
- McLuhan, Eric and Marshal McLuhan, *Laws of Media* (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1988)
- McLuhan, Marshall, 'The Aesthetic Moment in Landscape Poetry', in *The Interior Landscape: The Literary Criticism of Marshall McLuhan 1943-1962*, ed. by Eugene McNamara (New York and Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 165-67
- , 'At the moment of Sputnik the planet becomes a global theater in which there are no spectators but only actors', in *The Man and His Message*, ed. by George Sanderson and Frank Macdonald (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, Inc., 1989), pp. 70-80
- , 'Coleridge as Artist', in *The Interior Landscape: The Literary Criticism of Marshall McLuhan 1943-1962*, ed. by Eugene McNamara (New York and Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 115-133
- , *Counterblast* (New York: Harcourt: Brace & World, 1969)
- , *Culture is our Business* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1970)
- , 'The Effect of the Printed Book on Language in the 16th Century', in *Explorations*, ed. by Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), pp. 125-35
- , 'Five Sovereign Fingers Taxed the Breath', in *Explorations*, ed. by Edmund Carpenter and Marshall McLuhan (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960), pp. 207-208
- , *From Cliche to Archetype* (New York: Viking Press, 1970)
- , 'Playboy Interview: Marshall McLuhan', *Playboy*, interview by Eric Norden, March (1969), pp. 53-70
- , *The Global Village: Transformation in World, Life and Media in the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989)
- , *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962)
- , *The Interior Landscape: The Literary Criticism of Marshall McLuhan 1943-1962*, ed. by Eugene McNamara (New York and Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1969)

- - -, 'Introduction', in *The Bias of Communication* by Harold Innis (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), i-xvii
 - - -, *Letters of Marshall McLuhan*, ed. by Matie Molinaro, Corinne McLuhan, and William Toye (Toronto and New York: Oxford University Press, 1987)
 - - -, *Mechanical Bride: Folklore of Industrial Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1967)
 - - -, *Medium is the Massage* (New York: Bantam, 1967)
 - - -, 'The Relation of Environment & Anti-Environment', in *The Human Dialogue: Perspectives in Communication*, ed. by Ashley Montague and Floyd Matson (New York: The Free Press, 1967), pp. 39-47
 - - -, 'Tennyson and Picturesque Poetry', in *The Interior Landscape: The Literary Criticism of Marshall McLuhan 1943-1962*, ed. by Eugene McNamara (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp.135-55
 - - -, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964)
 - - -, *War and Peace in the Global Village*, with Quentin Fiore and co-ordinated by Jerome Agel (New York: Bantam, 1968)
 - - -, 'Wyndham Lewis: His Theory of Art and Communications', in *The Interior Landscape: The Literary Criticism of Marshall McLuhan 1943-1962*, ed. by Eugene McNamara (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 83-94
 - - -, *Understanding McLuhan*, live lecture, University of Toronto, 17 July 1978 (Hamilton, Ontario: Southam Inc., 1995) '[on CD-ROM]'
 - - -, 'James Joyce: Trivial and Quadrivial', in *The Interior Landscape* ed. by Eugene McNamara (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 23-47
 - - -, 'The Medium and the Message', *Canadian Forum*, Spring (1960), p.19
- McLuhan, Marshall and Harley Parker, *Through the Vanishing Point: Space in Poetry and Painting*, ed. by Ruth Nanda Anshen (New York: Harper & Row, 1968)
- McLuhan, Marshall with Louis Forsdale, 'Technology and the Human Dimension', in *The Man and His Message*, ed. by George Sanderson and Frank Macdonald (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, Inc., 1989), pp. 12-24
- McNamara, Eugene, 'The Beatrician Moment', in *The Interior Landscape: The Literary Criticism Marshall McLuhan 1943-1962* (New York and Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1969), pp. 96-7
- McQuail, Denis, *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction* (London: Sage, 1987)

- - -, *Towards a Sociology of Mass Communication* (London: Collier MacMillan, 1969)
- Melody, William H., and Liora Salter and Paul Heyer, eds., *Culture, Communication, Dependency: The Tradition of H. A. Innis* (Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing Corp., 1981)
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962)
- Meyrowitz, Joshua, *No Sense of Place: The Impact of Electronic Media on Social Behavior* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)
- Miller, Jonathan, *McLuhan* (London: Fontana/Collins, 1971)
- Miller, John, 'Songs of the Labour Movement', in *The Luddites and Other Essays*, ed. by Lionel Munby (London: Michael Katanka Books Ltd., 1971), pp.115-143
- Morris, Edward P., *On Principles and Methods in Latin Syntax* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902)
- Morris, Pam, *Literature and Feminism: An Introduction* (Oxford UK & Cambridge US: Blackwell, 1993)
- Morrow, Glenn R., *Plato's Epistles*, 2nd ed. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1962)
- Morson, Gary Saul, and Caryl Emerson, *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1989)
- Muchembled, Robert, *Popular Culture and Elite Culture in France, 1400-1750* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1985)
- Mulcaster, Richard (1582), *Mulcaster's Elementarie* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1925) 'on Microfilm'
- Muller, Herbert, *Uses of the Future* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974)
- Munby, Lionel, M., ed., *The Luddites and Other Essays*, intro. by Eric J. Hobsbawm (London: Michael Katanka Books Ltd., 1971)
- Murphy, Paul Thomas, *Toward a Working-Class Canon: Literary Criticism in British Working-Class Periodicals 1816-1858* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1994)
- Murray, Henry A., ed., *Myth and Mythmaking* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1960)
- Muzrui, Ali, *Cultural Engineering and Nation Building in East Africa* (Evanston,

Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1972)

Nairn, Tom, 'McLuhanism: The Myth of Our Time', in *McLuhan: Pro&Con*, ed. by Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1968), pp. 140-152

Nash, Roderick, *Wilderness and the American Mind* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1967)

Neff, Emery, *A Revolution in European Poetry 1660-1900* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940)

Neill, S. D., *Clarifying McLuhan: An Assessment of Process and Product* (London: Greenwood Press, 1993)

Nelson, Joyce, *Sign Crimes, Roadkill: From Mediascape to Landscape* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1991)

---, *Sultans of Sleaze: Public Relations and the Media* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 1989)

Newcomb, Penny, 'Hey Dude. Let's Consume' (*Forbes*, 11 June 1990), pp 26-31

Nevitt, Barrington, 'Via Media with Marshall McLuhan', in *Marshall McLuhan: The Man and His Message*, ed. by George Sanderson and Frank Macdonald, intro by John Cage (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum, Inc., 1989), pp. 149-158

Nevitt, Barrington with Maurice McLuhan, *Who Was Marshall McLuhan? Exploring a Mosaic of Impressions*, ed. by Frank Zingrone, Wayne Constantineau, and Eric McLuhan (Toronto: Stoddart, 1995)

Newton, Isaac, Sir, *Opticks: or A Treatise of the Reflections, Refractions, Inflections and Colours of Light*, 4th ed. (London: Printed for W. Innys, 1730)

Nicolson, Marjorie Hope, *Newton Demands the Muse* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1946)

---, *Science and the Imagination* (Ithaca, New York: Great Seal Books, 1962)

Norris, Christopher, *Derrida* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1987)

Oelschlaeger, Max, *The Idea of Wilderness: From Prehistory to the Age of Ecology* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1991)

Ong, Walter J., *Knowledge and the Future of Man: An International Symposium* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968)

- , *Interfaces of the Word* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1977)
- , *In the Human Grain* (New York: Macmillan, 1967)
- , *The Presence of the Word* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967)
- , *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Methuen & Co., 1982)
- , *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (New York: Octagon Books, 1974)
- , *Rhetoric, Romance and Technology: Studies in the Interaction of Expression and Culture* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1971)
- , 'Print, Space, and Closure', in *Communication in History: Technology, Culture, Society*, ed. by David Crowley and Paul Heyer (New York and London: Longman, 1991), pp. 102-113
- Ophir, Adi, *Plato's Invisible Cities. Discourse and Power in the Republic* (Savage, Maryland: Barnes & Nobel, 1991)
- Owings, Nathaniel, *The American Aesthetic* (New York: Harper and Row, 1969)
- Paine, Thomas, *Common Sense and Other Political Writings*, ed. by Nelson F. Adkins. (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Inc., 1953)
- Paley, Morton D., *The Continuing City: William Blake's Jerusalem* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983)
- Parker, John, *Discovery: Developing Views of the Earth from Ancient Times to the Voyages of Captain Cook* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972)
- Parry, A., ed., *The Making of Homeric Verse* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971)
- Patterson, Graeme, *History and Communications: Harold Innis, Marshall McLuhan, the Interpretation of History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990)
- Pearsall, Derek, and Elizabeth Salter, *Landscapes and of the Medieval World* (London: Elek Books Ltd., 1973)
- Percey, Thomas (1765), *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (London & Edinburgh: William P. Nimmo, 1881)
- Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. and intro. by Francis MacDonal Cornford (New York and London: Oxford University Press, 1962)

- , *The Republic of Plato*, trans. by Allan Bloom (New York and London: Allan Bloom, 1968)
- , 'Cratylus', in *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. and intro. by B. Jowett, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), III, pp. 41-106
- , 'Phaedrus', in *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. and intro. by B. Jowett, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953), III, pp. 107-189
- , 'Timaeus', in *The Dialogues of Plato*, trans. and intro. by B. Jowett, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1953) III, pp. 705-780
- , *The Seventh Letter: Plato's Life and Thought*, trans. by R. S. Bluck (London, 1949)
- Poulantzas, Nicholas, *Classes in Contemporary Society* (London: New Left Books, 1975)
- Pozzi, Dora C. and John M. Wickersham, *Myth and the Polis* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1991)
- Pugh, Simon, *Garden Nature Language* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1988)
- Ransom, John Crowe, *God Without Thunder* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1965)
- , *John Crowe Ransom: Critical Essays and Bibliography*, ed. by Thomas Daniel Young (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968)
- , *The World's Body* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1968)
- Richards, I. A., *Practical Criticism: A Study of Literary Judgement* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1956)
- Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative*, (Chicago, 1984)
- Ridgeway, James, *The Politics of Ecology* (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1971)
- Roberts, Jeanne A., *The Shakespearean Wild: Geography, Genus, and Gender* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1991)
- Roberts, Mathew, 'Poetics Hermeneutics Dialogics: Bakhtin and Paul de Man', in *Rethinking Bakhtin: Extensions and Challenges*, ed. by Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1989), pp. 115-134
- Robinson, Eric, ed., *John Clare's Autobiographical Writings* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1983)

- Robinson, Joch Gertrude and Donald F. Theall, eds., *Studies in Canadian Communications* (Montreal: McGill University, 1975)
- Rosenthal, Raymond, ed., *McLuhan: Pro&Con* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1968)
- Ross, Kristin, *The Emergence of Social Space: Rimbaud and the Paris Commune*, foreword by Terry Eagleton (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1988 and Minneapolis, MN.: University of Minnesota Press, 1988)
- Roszak, Theodore, *The Making of a Counter-Culture* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1969)
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *The Social Contract* (London: Dent; New York: Dutton, 1913)
- - -, *Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (New York: Penguin, 1979)
- Rowell, Andrew, *Green Backlash: Global Subversion of the Environment Movement* (London: Routledge, 1996)
- Russell, Charles, *Poets, Prophets and Revolutionaries: The Literary Avant-garde from Rimbaud through Postmodernism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985)
- Rutland, Barry, 'Bakhtinian Categories and the Discourse of Postmodernism', *Critical Studies: A Journal of Critical Theory, Literature and Culture*, vol 2, no 1-2 (1990), 123-136
- Sabin, Roger, 'punk rock: so what? : : : over twenty years of fear and loathing', *Speak Magazine*, Summer (1999), pp. 72-77
- Sahlins, Marshall, *Culture and Practical Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976)
- Sanderson, George, and Frank Macdonald, eds., *Marshall McLuhan: The Man and his Message* (Golden Colorado: Fulcrum, 1989)
- Santillana, Giorgio de and Hertha von Dechend, *Hamlet's Mill: An Essay on Myth and the Frame of Time* (Boston: Gambit Incorporated, 1969)
- Saunders, Doug, 'You'll get your money, right after this message' (Toronto: *Globe and Mail*, 14 August 1999), p. A-1
- Saussure, Ferdinand de, *Course in General Linguistics*, ed. by Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye in collaboration with Albert Reidlinger, trans. by Wade Baskin (New York: McGraw Hill, 1966)

- Scannel, Paddy, Philip Schlesinger, and Colin Sparks, *Culture and Power: A Media Culture and Society Reader* (London: Sage, 1992)
- Schiesari, Juliana, *The Gendering of Melancholia: Feminism, Psychoanalysis, and the Symbolics of Loss in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992)
- Schiller, Herbert, *Culture, Inc.: The Corporate Takeover of Public Expression* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989)
- Schmidt, Alfred, *The Concept of Nature in Marx*, trans. by Ben Fowkes (London: NLB, 1971)
- Shepard, Paul, *Man in the Landscape: A Historic View of the Esthetics of Nature* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967)
- Sherman, Mark A., 'Problems of Bakhtin's Epic: Capitalism and the Image of History', in *Bakhtin and Medieval Voices*, ed. by Thomas J. Farrell (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), pp. 180–198
- Sienkewicz, Thomas, J., 'Myth and Society in the West African Sunjata', in *Myth and Polis*, ed. by Dora Pozzi and John Wickersham (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 182-201
- Simpson, Claude M., *The British Broadside Ballad and its Music* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1966)
- Smith, Jonathan Z., *Map is not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1978)
- Soper, Kate, *What is Nature? Culture, Politics and the non-Human* (Oxford; Cambridge, Mass.: Blackwell, 1995)
- Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty, *In Other Worlds: Essays in Cultural Politics* (New York and London: Methuen, 1987)
- Spence, Joseph, *OBSERVATIONS, ANECDOTES, AND CHARACTERS OF BOOKS AND MEN Collected from Conversation*, 2 vols, ed. by James M. Osborn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966)
- Spender, Stephen, *Shelley* (London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1952)
- Spufford, Margaret, *Small Books and Pleasant Histories: Popular Fiction and its Readership in Seventeenth-Century England* (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1981)
- Stallybrass, Peter and Allon White, *The Politics and Poetics of Transgression*.

(Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1986)

- Stam, Robert, *Subversive Pleasures: Bakhtin, Cultural Criticism and Film* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1989)
- Stamps, Judith, *Unthinking Modernity: Innis, McLuhan and the Frankfurt School*. (Montreal & Kingston, London, Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995)
- Stapleton, Michael, *The Illustrated Dictionary of Greek and Roman Mythology*, intro. by Steward Perowne (New York: Peter Bedrick Books, 1986)
- Stauber, John C. and Sheldon Rampton, *Toxic Sludge is Good for You: Lies, Damn Lies and the Public Relations Industry* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 1995)
- Stearn, Gerald Emanuel, *McLuhan: Hot and Cool* (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1968)
- Steele, Richard, *Selections from the Tatler, Spectator and Guardian*, ed. by Austin Dobson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1896)
- Stephens, Mitchell, *A History of News: From the Drum to the Satellite* (New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1988)
- Stewart, Garrett, *Reading Voices: Literature and the Phonotext* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1990).
- , 'Literary Writing and the Filmic Difference', in *Sound States: Innovative Poetics and Acoustical Technologies*, ed. by Adelaide Morris (Chapel Hill and London: The University of Carolina Press, 1997), pp. 237-274.
- Stewart, Sandy, *From Coast to Coast: A Pictorial History of Radio in Canada* (Toronto: CBC, 1985)
- Stirling Library Chapbook Collection, Stirling, Scotland
- Stock, Brian, *The Implications of Literacy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983)
- Stone, Merlin, *When God was a Woman* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976)
- Suzuki, David and Anita Gordon, 'It's a Matter of Survival', Sound Recording, 5 cassettes, *CBC Radio* (Toronto: CBC, 1989)
- Suzuki, David and Peter Knudtson, *Wisdom of the Elders* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1992)
- Swingewood, Alan, *The Myth of Mass Culture* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1977)
- Taylor, Andrew, 'Playing on the Margins: Bakhtin and the Smithfield Decretals',

Bakhtin and Medieval Voices, ed. by Thomas J. Farrell (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1995), pp. 17–37

Teilhard de Chardin, Pierre, *The Phenomenon of Man* (London: Collins, 1959)

---, *Man's Place in Nature* (New York: Harper & Row 1966)

Terrence, Gordon, W., *Marshall McLuhan: Escape into Understanding* (Toronto, Stoddart, 1997)

Teymur, Necdet, *Environmental Discourse: A Critical Analysis of 'Environmentalism'. Architecture, Planning, Design, Ecology, Social Sciences and the Media* (London ?uestion Press, 1982)

Theall, Donald F., *The Medium is the Rear View Mirror: Understanding McLuhan*. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1971)

---, *Beyond the Word: Reconstructing Sense in the Joyce Era of Technology, Culture, and Communication* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1995)

Thom, William, *Rhymes and Recollections of a Hand-Loom Weaver*, ed. by W. Skinner (Paisley, 1880)

Thomas, Keith Vivian, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Scribner, 1971)

Thompson, E. P., *The Making of the English Working Class* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963)

Tibble, J. W., and Anne Tibble eds., *John Clare: A Life* (Totawa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1972)

Titunik, I. R., 'The Formal Method and the Sociological Method (M. M. Baxtin, P. N. Medvedev, V. N. Volosinov) in Russian Theory and Study of Literature', *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* by V. N. Volosinov, trans. by Ladislave Matejka and I. R. Titunik (New York and London: Seminar Press, 1973), pp. 175-200

Turnbull, Colin, *The Forest People: A Study of the Pygmies of the Congo* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1961)

Turner, V., *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Alding, 1969)

---, *Social Dramas and Stories about them, in From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982)

Tuveson, Ernest, *The Imagination as a Means of Grace: Locke and the Aesthetics of Romanticism* (New York: Gordian Press, 1974)

- Underhill, Ruth, *Autobiography of a Papago Woman*, Memoir 43 (Menasha, Washington: American Anthropological Association, 1936, New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969)
- Understanding McLuhan*, (Hamilton, Ontario: Southam Inc., 1995), [on CD-ROM]
- Vicinus, Martha, *The Industrial Muse: A Study of Nineteenth Century British Working-Class Literature* (London: Croom Helm, 1975)
- Volosinov, V. N., *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, trans. by Ladislav Matejka and I. R. Titunik (New York and London: Seminar Press, 1973)
- , *Freudianism: a Marxist Critique*, trans. by I.R. Titunik, ed. in collaboration Neal H. Bruss (New York : Academic Press, 1976)
- Wallas, Graham, *Social Judgement* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, Ltd., 1934)
- Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, *The Case for the Factory Acts* (London: Grant Richards, 1902)
- Wellek, Rene, *The Rise of English Literary History* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941)
- Wessell, Leonard P. Jr., *Karl Marx, Romantic Irony, and the Proletariat* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1979)
- Whitehead, Alfred, Lord, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Free Press, 1967)
- Willett, John, ed. and trans., *Brecht on Theatre*, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1964)
- Williams, Raymond, *Communications* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1962)
- , *Culture and Society: 1780-1950* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1958)
- , *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana Paperbacks, 1983)
- , *The Long Revolution* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961)
- , *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977)
- Williamson, Judith, *Consuming Passions* (London: Marion Boyars, 1986)
- Woodring, Carl, *Nature into Art: Cultural Transformations in Nineteenth Century Britain* (Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England: Harvard University

Press, 1989)

Wordsworth, William, *William Wordsworth*, ed. by Stephen Gill (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984)

---, 'Preface to Lyrical Ballads', *William Wordsworth*, ed. by Stephen Gill (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 596-615

Yates, Francis, *The Art of Memory* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1966)

Zavarzadeh, Masud, and Donald Mornton, *Theory as Resistance: Politics and Culture after (Post)structuralism* (London: The Guildford Press, 1994)