

## **Ethnopoetics, Oral-Formulaic Theory, and Editing Texts**

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John Miles Foley (1992) has opened up a consideration of the connections between oral-formulaic theory and work that has come to be called “ethnopoetics.” This is much to be desired, for until recently the two have seemed to occupy different worlds, yet a general view of oral poetry requires both. Foley focuses on a major thrust of folklore today, the interaction between performance and tradition. Here I want to focus on two older concerns, the structure of texts and manuscript sources.

### **Constraints within and among lines**

Oral-formulaic theory and ethnopoetics are both concerned with composition in the course of performance, and with constraints that must be met in doing so. In the epics and other poetry studied in terms of oral-formulaic theory, the constraint is a metrical line, commonly a sung metrical line. In oral narratives the constraint is commonly a relation among lines.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sung epic poetry is famous for oral formulae, which have been taken as enabling a narrator to meet the constraint of the metrical line in the midst of performing. (I realize that there is more to oral formulae than that). The narratives with which I have worked, not having metrical lines, do not have the same performance constraint. One does sometimes find evidence of fulfilling the constraint of a patterned sequence in an ad hoc way. Among Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest, formulae seem to have two roles. Prayers and exhortations at ceremonies may be full of them, not to meet formal constraint, but to invoke tradition. Narratives employ them at major junctures, such as openings and closings, and there are classes of words to be expected as markers. All these could be said to be required by a genre. There are also words expectable for characteristic actions in the course of a type of scene or story. The choice, position, and frequency of these words is particular to a

When constraint is internal to the line, we do not hesitate to speak of poetry. In the oral narratives of many Native American peoples and many speakers of English, perhaps universally, there is a constraint external to the line. It has to do with relations among lines that count as “verses.” A “verse” is usually easily recognized in speech. It is marked by one of the main intonational contours of the language. Such verses form sequences, and do so in terms of a small set of alternatives. There appear to be two fundamental principles. The usual (unmarked) alternatives may be sequences of two or four. Many Native American communities (such as those of the Kwakiutl, Takelma, Zuni, Hopi, and Navajo) make use of such sequences. Many others (such as those of the lower Columbia and Willamette Rivers), and many speakers of American English, so far as is known, connect verses in sequences of three and five.<sup>2</sup>

Narrators are not restricted to just these alternatives. Some command both principles, and may adopt one or the other for a particular story or situation, or part of a story, or level of organization (cf. Hymes 1990-94, 1993b, 1994b).

If organization in lines is a general definition of poetry, then these narratives are poetry. In one kind of poetry what counts first of all is a relation within the line, a relation among syllables, stresses, alliterations, tones, conventional feet. In another kind what counts first of all are relations among lines (more properly, verses) themselves. If the first kind is metrical, the second kind can be called “measured.” It is sometimes called “measured verse,” and its analysis, “verse analysis.”<sup>3</sup>

Such analysis depends upon three principles. One is that just discussed. It implies that narratives transcribed and published as prose paragraphs are in fact organized in lines. The second principle is one Roman Jakobson considered basic to poetry, and called *equivalence* (1960). Sequences however diverse may count as equivalent in the organization of a

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given narrator and performance. They seem to give shape as much as to fulfill it.

<sup>2</sup> African American narratives collected in New York City by William Labov can be more accurately appreciated when seen to be poetry in this sense. Labov’s much-used analysis of stories in terms of a set of universal functions misses their shape. The stories are not a linear sequence of temporal events, intersected by non-temporal effects, but successive arcs of arousing and realizing expectation. See Hymes 1991, 1994a.

<sup>3</sup> There is also of course “free verse,” much of which actually has recurrences and relations of various kinds.

narrative, if some recurrent feature marks them as such. As already noted, intonation contours are usually such a mark. Sometimes intonation contours appear not to be such a mark, and verses are signalled by a grammatical feature, such as the quotative, or a combination of grammatical elements and patterning itself (cf. Hymes 1982 on Zuni, 1994c on Hopi). For texts for which we do not know the intonation contours, there still are indications of equivalence. Sometimes a certain word or words mark the beginning of units. Turns at talk seem always to count as verses. Other forms of repetition and parallelism occur.

The principle of equivalence implies a text that is a sequence of units. In addition to equivalent units (and repetition and parallelism), there is *succession*. Succession is not a matter simply of linear sequence, of counting. Successive units give shape to action.<sup>4</sup> In particular, patterns of succession can be ways of coming to an ending point. As suggested, one common way is by sequences of two and four, the other by sequences of three and five.

Sequences of two tend to give to action an implicit rhythm of this, then that. Pairs of pairs may have the same relation (although other internal relations may obtain). Sequences of three tend to give an implicit rhythm of onset, ongoing, outcome. A development of this last, found as far apart as the Columbia River, Philadelphia, and Finland, integrates two sequences of three within a sequence of five. It is possible (not necessary) to have the third unit a pivot, completing one succession of three and beginning another.<sup>5</sup> I call this “interlocking.” There are other possibilities of rhythm within each type of sequence, and their representation on the page calls for a variety of solutions, and a willingness to experiment (see Hymes 1992).

The principle involved in succession became clear to me in rereading a remarkable essay by Kenneth Burke, “Psychology and Form” (1968 [1925]). Let me summarize its theme as “the recurrent arousal and satisfying of expectation.” Not a straight line, but a series of arcs. What

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<sup>4</sup> Rhyme and stanza-forms are analogues, especially in a narrative poem. The difference is that larger units of oral narratives of the sort considered here do not have to be constant in number of lines or other parts. Narrators need not fill a fixed form. Rather, they match two sequences as they proceed, one of incident with one of formal options. The matching can differ from telling to telling. This (re-)generative competence needs to be taken into account in discussion of “entextualization” (Bauman and Briggs 1990).

<sup>5</sup> Examples are given below.

Burke writes of works accepted as literature is pervasively true of oral narrative, and often enough deserves the connotations of his other term for it, “eloquence” (34-35, 44).

*Interlocking in Philadelphia and Yakima (3 and 5).* Here are two examples of interlocking which illustrate the arousal and satisfying of expectation, and the difference that verse analysis can make. The first is from Philadelphia. It is from one of a number of narratives collected by Nessa Wolfson in a study of the use of the historical present. The narrative has five scenes. Their foci, successively, are a situation [i], the seizing of an opportunity [ii], acceptance of a bid [iii], acceptance of a demand for certificates [iv], acceptance of a settlement date [v]. The first three scenes show an initial condition, development of it, and a proximate outcome. The series could be taken as complete. The third scene, however, turns out to be the first of a second series of three, concerned with stages of acceptance. The two series of scenes interlock at the level of the narrative as a whole. (The narrative is discussed in Hymes 1993a, but the text itself is not included).

Interlocking also obtains within two of the scenes ([iii] and [iv]). In each there are five pairs of verses. The first four are turns at talk between the realtor and the narrator’s wife. The fifth relates an outcome, acceptance. In each series the third pair of verses has the couple’s offer. It is outcome to what has preceded, and at the same time an onset to what follows (she won’t accept, she does accept).

Wolfson presented the text in one block paragraph. The lines of the relevant scenes are shown below between brackets, within part of the paragraph.

“She’s a Widow”

...So he says, “That you have to do in any house.” So she says, “Yes, we have to lay down new floors, the rugs are no good (the rugs happen to be in good shape), we have to—there’s too much shrubbery, we have to tear out some of the shrubs.” (The shrubbery around the house is magnificent if it’s done right, if it’s done right.) So really we made up everything. [So he says to my wife, he says, “Well, what would you bid?” So she says, “It’s stupid for me to talk,” she says, “You got a bid for thirty-three, thirty-four,” she says. “Why should I even talk to you? It ain’t gonna be anywheres near.” So he says to her, he says, “Well,” he says, “the person at thirty-four backed out.” So she says, “Oh yeah?” He says, “Yeah,” he says, “What would you bid?” So she says, “Twenty-eight.” He

says, "Oh," he says, "No, that she'll never go for." So she says, "Okay, that's my bid, Mr. Smith. You want it, fine; you don't, fine." Got a call that afternoon. It was accepted! So I go to see the house—I go to sign the contract, I look at the contract and I says, "I ain't signing this." He says, "Why?" I says, "I want a plumbing certificate, I want an air conditioning certificate, I want a heating certificate, and I want a roof certificate!" So he says, "Really, we won't guarantee..." I says, "I don't want guarantee, I want certificates, from certified people that it's in good shape, and I want the right to bring in any of my guys." So he says, "She won't go for it... this, that..." So I says, "Aah, don't be silly," I says, "Look, you just take it to her." So I get a call back about a day later, "Okay, she's accepted."] So then I get a—now what I do is, I pick up this thing, I take it to my cousin, he goes to someone, he says, "Settlement's no good. She's got us for forty-five days." In October she wanted to settle....

Here is how the bracketed passage appears when displayed in terms of lines, verses, stanzas, and scenes.

[iii] [bid accepted]

- So he says to my wife, he says, (A) 60  
 "Well, what would you bid?"
- So she says,  
 "It's stupid for me to talk," she says,  
 "You got a bid for thirty-three, thirty-four," she says,  
 "Why should I even talk to you? 65  
 "It ain't gonna be anywheres near."
- So he says to her, he says, (B)  
 "Well," he says,  
 "the person at thirty-four backed out."  
 So she says, "Oh yeah?" 70
- He says, (C)  
 "Yeah," he says,  
 "What would you bid?"  
 So she says, "Twenty-eight."
- He says, "Oh," he says, (D) 75  
 "No, that she'll never go for."  
 So she says,  
 "Okay, that's my bid, Mr. Smith.  
 "You want it,

- fine. 80  
 “You don’t,  
 fine.”
- Got a call that afternoon. (E)  
 It was accepted!
- [iv] [certificates accepted]
- So I go to see the house— (A) 85  
 I go to sign the contract,  
 I look at the contract  
 and I says, “I ain’t signing this.”
- He says, “Why?” (B)  
 I says, “I want a plumbing certificate. 90  
 “I want an air conditioning certificate,  
 “I want a heating certificate,  
 “and I want a roof certificate.”
- So he says, “Really, we won’t guarantee...” (C)  
 I says, “I don’t want guarantee, 95  
 “I want certificates,  
 from certified people that it’s in good shape,  
 “and I want the right to bring in any of my guys.”
- So he says, “She won’t go for it... this, that...” (D)  
 So I says, “Aah, don’t be silly,” I says, 100  
 “Look, you just take it to her.”
- So I get a call back about a day later, (E)  
 “Okay, she’s accepted.”

The same relations open a narrative told to Edward Sapir in Wishram Chinook by Louis Simpson at Yakima, Washington the summer of 1905. Here are the lines as published in prose paragraphs (Sapir 1909:139ff.)

#### The Deserted Boy

Some time long ago the (people) said to the boy: “Now let us go for reeds.” The boy was (considered) bad. So then they said: “Now you people shall take him along (when you go for) reeds.” And then they said

to them: “You shall abandon him there.” So then the people all went across the river. They went on and arrived where the reeds were. And then they cut off the reeds and said (to them): “If the boy says, ‘Are you people still there?’ you shall answer him, ‘Ú uu’.”

And then they all ran off; straight home they ran, went right across the river. No person at all (was left) on this side; they were all on the Úother side. And then that boy said: “Now let us all go home!”—“Uuu,” said the reeds to him. He looked about long, but in vain; there was nobody. And then he too started to go home, he too went following behind them; he ran until he arrived (at the river), but there were no people to be seen. So then the boy cried. And then he heard (something)....

Here is the opening in terms of lines, verses, and stanzas:

Now then they told a boy,	(A)
“Now let us go for reeds.”	
Long ago the boy was mean.	
Now then they said,	
“Now you will take him for reeds.”	5
Now then they told them,	
“You shall abandon him there.”	
Now then the people all went across the river,	(B)
they went on,	
they came to the reeds.	10
Now then they cut them off.	
Now then they said,	
“If the boy should say,	
‘Are you there?’,	
you shall answer,	15
‘Uuu’.”	
Now then they ran off,	(C)
straight home they ran,	
straight across they went,	
not a person on this side,	20
all on that side.	
Now then the boy, too, said,	(D)
“Now let’s go home.”	
“Uuu,”	
went the reeds.	25
In <i>vain</i> he searched about:	
no person.	
Now then he too started home,	(E)

he too followed behind them;  
 he arrived running:  
 now, no people.

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Stanzas (ABC) tell of the people deserting the boy. These stanzas are linked by having the people, “they” as agents throughout.

Stanzas (CDE) tell of the boy finding himself deserted. These stanzas are linked by their endings:

not a person on this side, / all on that side.  
 no person  
 now, no people

Stanza C is the pivot. The preceding stanzas (A, B) are linked by the plan to abandon the boy, first by instructions to take him for reeds, then by instructions to the reeds as to how to deceive and delay him. The following stanzas (DE) are linked by the boy’s search for the others. (C) is outcome to the first pair and the onset for the second. It realizes the plan and provides the condition for the discovery of absence.

Around (C) indeed there is a chiasmus-like symmetry. The immediately adjacent stanzas (B, D) involve the instructions to the reeds, their being given (B) and their being carried out (D).<sup>6</sup> The outer stanzas

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<sup>6</sup> Stanza (D) is a brief form of what can be a full scene. It often occurs in version of the story-type “Bear and Deer.” Bear has killed Deer while the two are away from home. Deer’s children retaliate by killing Bear’s children, and flee before Bear returns. Bear, finding her children dead, pursues them, but first asks a dog the direction they have gone. The dog has been instructed to bark in turn in directions other than the one in which the children actually go. Sapir did not record the myth from Louis Simpson (Sapir 1909), but Victoria Howard dictated it in Clackamas to Melville Jacobs (the incident is in M. Jacobs 1958:149-50), with both women bears, Grizzly and Black Bear. Charles Cultee told it to Franz Boas in Kathlamet (the incident is in Boas 1901:122), with neither woman a bear. I suspect that the doubling in Mrs. Howard’s version, and the diminution in that from Mr. Cultee (to Robin [Thrush] and Salmonberry) reflects tension about the figure of a bear as a way of exploring the nature of women.

In Louis Simpson’s “The Deserted Boy” presumably the reeds answer, first from one direction, then from another, so that the boy searches everywhere but in the direction the people have actually gone, to the river. We are to understand that they have taken the only canoe. The boy is left on a low marshy bit of land (where reeds would grow), too far from either side of the river for him to get back. Mr. Simpson assumes an audience would understand this, and subordinates explanation, or elaboration, to severity of form, in which

have to do with the state of abandonment, its initiation by the people (A) and its realization by the boy (E).<sup>7</sup>

*Interlocking in Alaska and Cochiti (3 and 4).* Native American narratives taken down in English can display native form. In the summer of 1924 Ruth Benedict took down a number of tales from interpreters from the Cochiti Pueblo in New Mexico. In pursuit of a type of story involving Coyote, birds, water, and songs and names imperfectly mastered, I analyzed one titled by Benedict “Coyote imitates Crow” (Benedict 1931:149; cf. Hymes 1994c). The sequence in terms of actions, verses, and scenes seems clear, probably because it was carefully translated.<sup>8</sup> The story has one of the two examples known to me of interlocking within four-part relations.

For a five-part sequence to contain two interlocking sequences of three seems possible wherever three and five-part relations are used. Until early 1993 I knew of but one example with two and four-part relations. Early in this century the missionary John W. Chapman recorded some sixteen narratives in the language of those he served (the language has since been referred to as “Ingalik,” and now, “Deg Hit’ana”). The texts have

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the next stage, an analogue of a successful guardian spirit quest, is expeditiously reached.

<sup>7</sup> This scene has several instances of the elementary three-step relation as well. The three spoken statements in (A) can be taken as three steps (onset, ongoing, outcome) of the initial plan. First the boy is addressed (with the transitive verb-stem *-lxam*); then the people are spoken to generally, broadcast (with the intransitive stem *-kim*): then some, not all, are addressed, as indicated by *-lxam* instead of *-kim*, presumably excluding the boy. After the first stanza, which has everyone in place, three stanzas each have changes of location with the onset, ongoing, outcome pattern. The people cross, go on, arrive at the reeds (8, 9, 10); they run off, go straight home, none are left (17, 18-19, 20-21); the boy starts, follows, arrives running (28, 29, 30). Such a three-step change of location constitutes all of (C) and (E). (B) and (D) overall have three-step sequences, but not of movement as such. Reach the reeds, cut them, instruct them (B), boy calls to go home, reeds answer, boy searches in vain (D).

The entire translation is given as an appendix below, because it will figure in other parts of this essay as well. This version replaces that in chapter 4 of Hymes 1981.

<sup>8</sup> Benedict herself remarks of the tales she recorded: “They give the literary style to which all the stories in Cochiti conform but which can never be completely reproduced without recording the text” (xiii). Her relative confidence about style probably was based on the fact that Franz Boas recorded a number of tales in the language itself, and published a characterization of it (Boas 1928). The translations of the stories he recorded in text are included in her monograph.

been re-elicited (Kari 1981:1-15). One is the widely known story of Raven obtaining the light of the sun (Chapman 1914:22-26, 109-15).

The patterning of verses and scenes uses relations of two and four, and the story as a whole has four acts. The four acts integrate two distinct plots. Each involves three acts (Hymes 1990-94).

In the first plot, Act I establishes that no young man can marry a certain woman, Act II has Raven succeed in entering her, Act III has her discovered to be pregnant and Raven born as her child. The woman who would not marry has been overcome.

In the second plot, Act II introduces Raven, who flies in darkness, Act III has him born to the daughter of the man who controls the light, Act IV has him make off with the light. The world has been set right.

In the narrative as a whole, Act I involves the young woman, but not Raven. Act IV involves Raven, but not the young woman. Each is in three acts, and they share the central acts II and III.

In the Cochiti narrative, there are two scenes. The first is about Coyote's attempt to imitate a bird, the second about what happens after he fails. Both scenes involve interplay of relations of three and five with relations of four, but differ in internal form.

The first scene has three stanzas, the second four. In the first scene the first and third stanzas each have four verses. The first elaborates pairing in each verse in terms of opposition between what is high (a bank of paper bread) and what is low (a pond of sweet-corn milk). The first pair of verses have to do with what is there, the second with what Crow does (sing, then bite and fly down to drink). The third stanza also has two pairs. Coyote eats and wishes to drink in one, prepares to jump and jumps (to his death) in the other. The middle stanza has five verses. They interlock with Crow's song as pivot. Coyote comes along and asks for the song, Crow agrees, Crow sings. The outcome of one three-step sequence is onset to a second: Crow sings, Coyote listens and learns, says he is ready to start.

Only after long consideration of this first scene did I realize that it is analogous to the second, if the two interlocking sequences are counted together with the stanzas on either side. In the first stanza there is only Crow, in the last stanza only Coyote. In the two interlocking sequences there are both Coyote and Crow. Three for Crow, then, and three for Coyote, in a series of four.

This interplay of three and four complements an obvious interplay in the four stanzas of the second scene. Crow takes Coyote's eyes herself, then

summons those who use fur, then those who eat meat. Finally an old man comes and takes the bones for soup for his wife. The first three stanzas show Crow in charge, the last three are about the use of Coyote's body. The first stands apart from the practical uses of the rest, because Crow simply plays with the eyes, shaking them so that they sound like bells. (An audience would recognize a popular incident, often the frame of an entire story, in which a bird takes Coyote's eyes.) The last stands apart because the old man comes without reference to Crow. The second and third stanzas belong to both sequences, involving both Crow and usefulness.

The story's two scenes are alike in beginning with Crow and ending with Coyote, each having a three-step sequence that overlaps the sequence of the other. They differ in expressive shape in ways that further analysis of Cochiti may clarify. It may be accidental that these two instances of interlocking sequences of three in a set of four—one from Alaska, one from New Mexico—are the only ones known. The device may not be as rare as it now seems.

### **Ethnopoetics and Editing**

If organization in groups of lines is pervasive in oral narrative, then the editing of oral narratives for publication should take that into account.<sup>9</sup> Indeed, any presentation of a narrative on the page implies a hypothesis as to its form (cf. Hymes 1987). Yet it is still possible to encounter oral narratives presented as block paragraphs (see "She's a widow" above). Often, to be sure, oral narratives are presented as sequences of lines, carefully transcribed and edited (Tedlock 1972, Wiget 1987, Parks 1991), but the possibility of organized relations among the lines is not considered. Even when verses are identified, relations among them may not be (Kroskrity 1985).<sup>10</sup> In general, we should realize that complex artistry in

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<sup>9</sup> The communities from which come the South Slavic epic poetry studied by Lord and Foley very likely also tell unsung stories that make use of ethnopoetic patterning; see Foley 1995. L.D. Perkowski (1993) has shown its presence in a series of recently collected Bulgarian narratives.

<sup>10</sup> For the organization of lines in a Zuni text published by Tedlock, see Hymes 1980, 1982. Tedlock's response (1983:56-61) seems not to allow for the possibility of relations not auditorily perceptible. For rhetorical relations among verses, stanzas, and

the organization of lines may be natural to users of language, and flourish wherever language does.

Presentation in terms of lines and verses makes visible the shaping artistry of narrators, “all that complex wealth of minutiae which in their line-for-line aspect we call style and in their broader outlines we call form” (Burke 1968:38). The reading is slowed, which makes it far more possible to perceive repetition, parallelism, and succession in the particular text, and what is constant and variable among texts (cf. Hymes 1981:ch. 6; 1985). Such analysis contributes to a general theory of the competence and practices involved in oral narrative itself.

### **Verse Analysis and Manuscripts Interact**

Relations among verses interact with the details of manuscript sources. Manuscript evidence may clarify what is otherwise puzzling about such relations. The presence of such relations may indicate the integrity of an original source, and the failings of a published one. It is fair to say that all the published sources for Native American narratives need to be examined, and re-edited, in the light of the original manuscripts and verse analysis for the choices and changes that have been made.

“*The Deserted Boy.*” This text, dictated to Edward Sapir in 1905, has three instances. The third leads to a discovery in the one text that is remarkable for poetics comparatively. (As indicated above, the story is given in full in an appendix, because of its importance to more than one part of the paper).

(1) The first lines of the story were published as follows (using the published translation at this point):

Some time long ago the (people) said to the boy:  
     “Now let us go for reeds.”  
 The boy was considered bad.  
 So then they said....

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scenes, disclosed by quotative particles in a Hopi performance, see Hymes 1994c. I have sketched the verses and stanzas of the first text in Parks 1991, Alfred Morsette’s “How Summer Came to the North Country,” and have prepared an account of the stanzas and scenes in Dewey Healing’s “Bird Story” (Arizona Tewa) presented by Kroskirty 1985 (cf. Kroskirty 1993).

The field notebook shows that “Some time long ago” does not actually start the story. The story starts with “Now then” (*aGa kwapt*). The word rendered “Some time long ago” (*GanGadix*) precedes “The boy was bad (mean).” Nor is that fact accidental.<sup>11</sup>

The second statement in a Chinookan myth often enough describes the character of one of the actors. Usually this is done through a characteristic activity, understood to be virtuous or not. An actor characterized as virtuous will not come to harm at the end. Here the boy is characterized as bad, but the badness is displaced: “long ago.”

Another of Simpson’s texts, one about “Clothing” in the section on customs (Sapir 1909:182), does begin with this time expression, translated there “In olden times.” A second paragraph in the same text (but about tools) begins the same way. Perhaps this is why Sapir thought the expression should be first in this story, and of course it seems right there, given our familiar “Once upon a time.” In “The Deserted Boy,” however, “long ago” has structural work to do. The boy will not end badly, but as a wealthy hero, taking revenge. His meanness is a once, but not a future, thing. Louis Simpson keeps faith with the convention of a statement of character in second place, letting a hearer know that what follows upon it in this case is the immediate action, not the final outcome.

As always, one has to take seriously the exact detail of what was said. Formal analysis need not displace the manuscript, but may underscore its integrity. The two together provide as sure as possible a basis for interpretation.

(2) A second instance also has to do with a formal anomaly. The narrator, Louis Simpson, marks verses regularly with an initial pair of particles, translatable as “Now then” (*aGa kwapt*), as we have seen. The common alternatives are regular too: a second sequence may have another pair, “Now again” (*aGa wít’a*) instead of “Now then.”<sup>12</sup> A turn at talk is

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<sup>11</sup> This example was intended to form section 5 of the original article (Hymes 1976), but was omitted from both it and Hymes 1981. Cf. 1981:163, line 15. For the symbol G, note 12 below.

<sup>12</sup> In Wishram words C is used for voiceless affricate (English “ch”), E is used for schwa (like the vowel in English “but”), G is used for a voiced velar stop, L for a voiceless lateral fricative, S for a voiceless “shibilant” (English “sh”), x for a voiceless velar fricative such as in German *Ich*, X for a voiceless velar fricative such as in German *ach*. A

always a verse, however begun. Simpson builds stanzas and scenes again and again with sets of such verses. At one point in “The Deserted Boy,” however, this regularity fails. Nor can it be taken to have expressive point. Where there ought to be a third pair, there is just one particle, “then.” Some narrators do use this single particle as a marker of verses, but not Louis Simpson.

Sapir’s field notebook III, pp. 94-97, shows that at this point of formal irregularity there is an irregularity in transcription. The words of one line are inserted above the words of a line that follows. Either the inserted words were initially missed by Sapir, who went back to write them, or they were retroactively supplied by Simpson. The latter seems more likely. The verse with a single particle completes an expected sequence of three; the discrepancy suggests recovery in the midst of distraction. (Hymes [1991:156-58] indicates what the content and context suggest was intended.)

(3) The third example involves recognition of conventions of patterning that had been missed. In the final act, the published text has the following five lines (published, of course, as prose):

Now snow, lightly, lightly.  
 There is no food among the people,  
 the people are hungry.  
 Now then the people said,  
 “Let us go to the boy.”

That is a reasonable sequence. The field notebook, however, shows that for publication Sapir changed the order of the lines. If the order in the notebook is identified as *abcde*, then the printed lines are in the order *ecdab*. The change appears to be an interpretation. The field notebook shows no insertions. What it does show are carets and parentheses. These indicate transposition in two steps. This fact, and the fact that the translation remains continuous in the original order, suggest a result of editorial attention, not of interaction with a narrator.<sup>13</sup>

When the relevant lines are considered in the order in which they were written down, and presumably spoken, they lead to reconsideration of the organization of the act as a whole. One gains a richer sense of the ways in which initial particles are used, of their motivation and consistency, a

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consonant followed by ’ is glottalized.

<sup>13</sup> See Hymes 1981:161 for details.

further confirmation of “traditional referentiality” and the premise that “poetic meaning depends fundamentally on poetic structure” (Foley 1991:6, 14).

Here is the notebook order:

Now then the people said,  
     “Let us go to the boy.”  
 There is no food among the people,  
 the people are hungry.  
     Now snow, lightly, lightly.

Notice that the published order puts the last line at the beginning. This may be because it has initial “now.” A single initial “now” (*aGa*) is sometimes used by Louis Simpson. Indeed it is used in each act of this narrative, but the circumstances are different and revealing.

(a) The last line (30) of the first act is “Now, no people.” That sums up the outcome of the desertion of the act, and the condition of the act to follow. (This “now,” however, does not mark a new verse. It does not begin a predication, but completes one. See note 18 below).

(b) The first scene of the second act ends with lines each beginning with a single “now,” two of them. These lines conclude the fifth of a strict sequence of verses. The boy fishes five times. Four times we are told that he has caught one (two, three, four) fish, eaten half of what he has caught, and saved half for the morning. The first time begins with “Now then,” the four that follow with “Now again.” The fifth time we are not told what he has caught; rather:

“Now five times the boy had fished.  
 Now he had become a grown man.”

A sequence of five is a standard pattern that arouses expectation of completion, but the expected completion—what he has caught—is held over for a scene of its own, an extravaganza in which the boy, discovering that a being in the river has given him, not fish, but prepared winter food, sings and waves a feathered cloak. Three of the verses indeed begin with the emphatic particle *quStíaxa* “behold! indeed!”

The lines at the end of the fishing scene sum up what has occurred (he has fished five times), and what will be the condition of what follows (he has become a grown man).

(c) The third scene of the second act ends with five lines (116-20) that each begin with a single “now.” Lacking a following “then,” the onward push of the narrative is suspended. There is a moment of lyric unity between the boy and the woman who comes to him. (Such moments for a man and woman occur, variously marked, in a Clackamas narrative from Virginia Howard and one Kathlamet from Charles Cultee). The lines culminate and sum up the reward of what the boy has done (food, a wife, power). The food and power are a condition of what is to follow. (In Victoria Howard’s Clackamas version, so is the wife).

(d) The last line (167) of the story is “Now only the two old women remained.” It sums up the outcome of revenge.

(e) In the notebook order of the five lines in question, “Now snow, lightly, lightly” occurs at the end of a stanza (III (B)). It does not sum up a state of affairs, but it anticipates what is to follow. Perhaps in this respect it complements the other instance in Act III. The uses of a single “Now” at the end of a unit in Act I (31) and Act II (78, 79; 116-20) both sum up and anticipate. In Act II one anticipates (31), the other sums up (167).

Another pattern intersects this one. There are three mentions of “snow” in the narrative. In each of the others “snow” is the third element in a sequence of three lines.

Then now he raised the east wind,  
                   the east wind became strong,  
                   and it snowed  
 Now again he treated them this way,  
                   a strong east wind blew,  
                   moreover now there was snow.<sup>14</sup>

It seems reasonable to take the first mention of “snow” as participating in that pattern. The people who abandoned the boy twice drown in the midst of wind and snow. Here the condition of that outcome, snow, has begun.

(4) *Couplets: Act III.* Notice that the two lines preceding the first mention of snow (141-42) are odd in terms of Chinookan patterns of verse marking. What precedes is marked as a verse by initial “Now then” and a turn at talk (139-40). What follows is marked as a verse by initial “Now.”

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<sup>14</sup> Lines 152-55, and 162-64. Line 153 is an English explanation that is not part of the narrative proper.

What intervenes has no initial particle, no turn at talk, yet it seems to have the position of a verse.

One might think of the lines “There is no food among the people, / the people are hungry” as part of a preceding verse, “Now then the people said, / ‘Let us go to the boy’.” But Chinookan quoted speech always is the end of the verse of which it is a part. If the two lines in question are to be a verse, they ought to begin with a marker. Instead they begin, literally “No-thing food people-at.”

It has taken me twenty years to notice that the two lines are a couplet, a semantic couplet. Each says much the same thing:

There is no food among the people,  
the people are hungry.

With this recognition it was a matter of a moment to consider two other lines about people as a couplet as well:

All died in the water,  
the people were drowned. (156-57).

So to consider these lines was to provide an answer to longstanding dissatisfaction with the form of the act. The way I had published it, after much wrestling, had never seemed quite right, and I had tinkered with it in the interval. Lines that should be structurally parallel were not. Now they could be. Indeed, now the recognition of lines 156-57 as a couplet, *and thereby a single unit*, seems inescapable.

The context is this. Line 144 is strongly marked as an onset, beginning as it does with three particles in a row, “Now then again....” A few lines later “Then now” is strongly marked as an onset, as an inversion of the usual sequence, “Now then.” If each is the beginning of a stanza, then each also ends in parallel fashion. At the end of each the boy recalls of the people, “they abandoned me.” Such coming round to the same point is an important device in the tradition. These two sets of lines, then, make perfect sense as stanzas, with strongly marked beginnings, parallel endings essential to the theme, series of verses, five and three, fulfilling a pattern number—if and only if “All died in the water, / the people were drowned,”

the “people couplet” in the second of the two (156-57), is a structural element.

As with the preceding couplet, these lines express a common theme in varied form, and stand apart from what precedes and follows. What follows counts as a separate verse because it is a turn at talk (and thematically parallel with the ending of the preceding stanza). What precedes is itself formed on a model repeated in the stanza that follows: he did this, a strong east wind, snow (162-64). (I set the lines apart in the earlier analysis, but did not reach the point of counting them as a verse).

Act III, then, has three instances of a three-step sequence ending with snow, and three instances of a psalm-like pair of lines involving people (141-42, 156-57, 165-66). Recognition of these patterns makes possible a coherent, pointed shape for the act as a whole.<sup>15</sup>

As said, I missed this shape in my published article on the story. (To be sure, it was one of the first texts I analyzed in terms of verse patterning). To discover the original order of the lines involving “Now snow,” as I had done, was not enough. I was not intimate enough with Louis Simpson’s style, not sure enough of its constants and those of other Chinookan narrators. Not recognizing the structural role of these two patterns (a triad ending with snow, couplets), I could not reconcile the different kinds of repetition and marking in the act with an overall expectation of three- and five-step sequences.<sup>16</sup>

Now a clear working out of implicit narrative logic, explicitly marked, can be seen. The first five verses form a stanza with interlocking. The third verse, the grandmothers crossing to the boy, is outcome of the preceding two, and onset of the two that follow. The next verses can be seen as a sequence of three pairs of verses. Such sequences are common enough in Chinookan narrative. The implicit rhythm of expectation within each pair is “this, then that.” The first pair of verses (131-32, 133) have to do with the two old women: they go across, they are there a long time. The second pair (134-38, 139-40) have to do with the news and what is said: there is much food at the boy’s, let us go across. The third pair juxtapose

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<sup>15</sup> For all the features of the act, please see the appendix, which replaces the text presented in Hymes 1976 and 1981:ch. 4.

<sup>16</sup> See Hymes 1981:159-64, for the earlier consideration. These pages and others cited above are captioned “Structural philology (a)” and “Structural philology (b)”.

the couplet: the people are hungry, and now there is snow. A rhythm of “this, then that” joins irresistible motivation (no food) to incipient danger.<sup>17</sup>

The third stanza is the peripety: the grandmothers come, they get close to the boy’s house, other people start across. The boy turns, looks, sees. Doing so, he echoes the triplet in which he discovered the fire his grandmothers left him, and remembers his abandonment. By implication, he resolves how to act.

This memory is doubled (stanzas C, D), and so is the drowning of the people (D, E). All this is part of an interlocking relation among the five stanzas. The first two stanzas (A, B) have the presence of food at the boy’s discovery. The last two stanzas (D, E) have the people who come for it destroyed. The middle stanza (C) has the people start across and the boy resolve. That is the outcome of one three-step sequence (discovery, wider discovery, confrontation) and the onset of another (confrontation, outcome, further outcome).

The texture of the scene includes other three-part relations as well. The grandmothers cross three times (A, B, C). Snow comes three times (B, D, E). There are three couplets about the people (B, D, E). Each of the last three stanzas (C, D, E) actually ends with the theme of the abandonment, two with memory of those who did abandon, the third with the safety of the grandmothers who did not.

(5) *Couplets: Act I, II.* Such couplets occur in each act. In Act I they have to do with the people’s abandonment of the boy:

straight across they ran,  
straight across they went (18-19)

not a person on this side,  
all on that side (20-21).<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> It is possible to take the stanza as five interlocking verses, since the first three verses make sense as a three-step progression of onset, ongoing, outcome (with traditional reference to other versions in which how the news gets out is spelled out). The third step, becoming news, might in turn be the onset of another three-step progression (there is food at the boy’s, let us go, now snow). But that would ignore the lines of the couplet, which have no normal place in any of the five verses.

<sup>18</sup> Lines 30-31 “he arrived running: / Now, no people” might seem a couplet from the standpoint of counting lines. To take it as a unit would give the stanza three elements. What we have here, however, is the conjunction of two other narrative patterns: the first

The parallelism of the lines was readily seen and expressed from the start, and the organization of the act is not affected by counting the pairs as single units.

In Act II, on the other hand, the recognition of couplets forces recognition of relations that had been ignored. The fifth stanza of the first scene is clearly strictly patterned in terms of going to fish five times, so much so that presenting it as just that seemed obvious. But if the last two lines are a couplet, and hence a unit with the status of a verse, matters are different. If lines 77 and 78-79 are a pair of verses, what precedes them does not fit in a consistent pattern with them, unless also consisting of pairs. And of course it does.

In any other narrative sequence of successive days, the occurrence of “morning,” let alone “again morning,” that is, of initial markers for recurrence and a new point in time, would have automatically been seen as marking a new verse. Here the obvious sequence of five days induced a false security, and the lines about eating the next day were tucked in with the catching. Five days, five verses.

Now it is evident that the stanza is expressively elaborated with not five verses, but five pairs of verses. The first four pairs have fishing one morning and eating the remaining half the next. The fifth pair has going the fifth time, and a dramatic change of perspective in a concluding couplet, the sudden disclosure that all along the boy had been achieving adulthood (78-79).

I know no other instance of such narrative couplets in the region. Such may be found, but at present it is impossible to think in terms of diffusion. Perhaps the couplets are an indigenous development of the pairing that is widespread in the three- and five part-patterns of the region, often to highlight a focus of action. They can be seen as an intensification of it. I have no hypothesis as to why they occur only here in what is known of Louis Simpson's narratives. They may be a sign of how much it meant to him to etch with decisive strokes, as a triumphant guardian spirit quest, the story of an abandoned boy.

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three lines are an example of the common three-step pattern of action (onset, ongoing, outcome): he started home, he followed behind, he arrived running. The third and fourth lines are an example of an action coupled with an object of perception: he arrived running; now, no people.

### Significance of what is missing: Salmon's Myth

Manuscripts may show a published text to be missing a line or two, and restoration of the missing line(s) may show the structure of the narrative to be different (cf. Hymes 1985:406-7, Hymes 1994b). In one case missing lines reinforce interpretation by the fact of being missing where they are.

In the last decade of the last century Franz Boas searched for speakers of the Chinookan languages spoken near the mouth of the Columbia River. He found Charles Cultee, with whom he intended to stay a day or two, but whose intelligence and ability caused him to return several times. Cultee was the only person from whom Boas could obtain connected texts in either Kathlamet or Chinook proper (which I call "Shoawalter" to distinguish it). Wanting to check the accuracy of Cultee's command of Kathlamet, Boas asked him in 1894 to tell again two stories he had told in 1891. With one, "War of the Ghosts," he got a variant about people on the other side of the river. With the "Salmon's myth," he got a version elaborated in the service of a theme.

Both versions have two parts. In one Salmon returns up river in spring, and is hailed five times by plants along the bank. They insult him and assert that (in his winter absence) the people would have starved if not for them:

"At last my brother's son arrives,  
the one with maggots in his buttocks.  
"If I were not a person,  
your people would have died."

Salmon shows no offense, but recognizes each plant as an aunt or uncle, gives it a gift, and places it where it will be in times to come.

In the second part Salmon and his company meet three people coming down the river toward them. They claim to have gone all the way upriver to the Cascades and be returning in a day. The leading person is a woman. Her spokesman implies the truth of the claim by speaking the upriver language, Wasco, and naming in Wasco (untranslated) a major woman's food, *camas*. Salmon takes umbrage at these, twists their necks, and denies their claim. It will take five days to reach the Cascades.

In this 1891 telling the first part begins somewhat leisurely; several lines explain the situation. The second part begins dramatically, with Salmon issuing directions three times in succession, and using ironic questions. It is accomplished in five stanzas, one scene. In the 1894 telling it is the second part that begins somewhat leisurely, as Salmon's company move on upriver. The verses are ordinary threes and fives; no dramatic pairs of Salmon's behests and responses to them, no ironic questions but questions in the passive at first ("they were asked"). There are three scenes, not one.<sup>19</sup> A second section deals with the three who have come downriver: Salmon pronounces what they will be. And the order in which they are dealt with is reversed, so that the last one is Flounder, whom Salmon tells to remain in the river in the winter.

Salmon is a contested figure in terms of gender. In other narratives he is shown as proud and peremptory with women. Victoria Howard transforms and ultimately excludes Salmon from a version of this very story (Hymes 1986). Here he is made to acknowledge the importance of women's food (plants) to the survival of the people. One can see his behavior in the second part as a result of suppressed anger at the insults he must suffer silently in the first part. In the 1891 telling the anger is overt. In the 1894 telling it is not. Evidently the reason is the further ending. By having Flounder be year round in the river, Salmon forever undercuts the claim of the plants to be the only winter source of food.

The field notebook makes a minor difference to the number of lines in the 1894 telling (one notebook line appears to have been missed in the printed text). What is telling for interpretation is the fact that each time Cultee skipped a line in the scene just before the second part. In the first telling he went right on. In the second telling, so the notebook shows, he remembered the omission and inserted it a moment later. What Cultee did is invisible in the printed text, because in editing Boas put the remembered line where it should have been.

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<sup>19</sup> The relations given in Hymes 1985 should be revised as follows:

[i] [Encounter]	(A)92, 93-94, 95
[ii] [Colloquy]	(A)(abc) 95-99, 100-1, 102 (B)(abc) 103, 104, 105-9 (C)(abc) (110-11, 112-17, 118-23)
[iii] [Outcomes]	(A)[Twisted] (abc) 124-26, 127-29, 130-31 (B)[Pronouncement] (a) 132-34 (C)[Thrown] (abc) 135, 136-38, 139-43

The notebook indicates that Cultee was quick to get to the second part in 1891, but not in a hurry in 1894. In both tellings, one can infer, he wanted the second part to offset the humiliation of Salmon in the first. In 1891 he hurried to the part in which Salmon can be in command, and dramatized that commanding role (a marked pattern of verses, ironic questions), letting go a line along the way. In 1894 he did not hurry, but paused to restore an omitted line; nor did he mark the new part expressively. He had Flounder up his sleeve.

The two tellings convey a common concern on Cultee's part. The notebooks underscore it. Differences in response to a slip in performance covary with different ways of accomplishing a purpose.

### **Editing and Value**

Discovering Cultee's handling of omissions, discovering Louis Simpson's ordering of lines, are examples of recovering intention (cf. Gorman 1989:194, discussing Parker 1984). One is concerned with what the narrator actually said, with authenticity. That has been a primary value for many.

In these cases the recovered intention supports a form of the text that has greater aesthetic value, if, as I believe is the case, there is aesthetic value in the shape the narrators have given what they say. But what gives value is not always obvious or agreed upon. Folklorists sometimes conflate versions, choosing what appears a better passage or wording from each (eclectic editing). If each version has its own shape, however, the result may be a mixture partly without shape. Suppression of a line may suppress indication of a verse; addition may add one. Either may distort a local configuration and produce puzzling irregularity. From the standpoint of verse analysis, such a practice is to be shunned.

To be sure, a particular performance may be both authentic and inferior. Here is where a value other than aesthetic enters. Verse analysis is analysis of language, and contributes to linguistics as well as to folklore, anthropology, and literature. Noam Chomsky has led many linguists to consider it their concern, at least in principle, to analyze, through language, the abilities that underlie it, competence. For abilities in a broad sense, beyond grammar, the term *communicative competence* has been adopted by

many (cf. Hymes 1974, 1984). Imperfect narrations may shed light on the competence that underlies narrative, on how it works.

Even with splendid narrations, aesthetic value and analysis can easily be at odds. Being unfamiliar with the conventions of another tradition, or unconscious of effects deployed in our own language, we may need to have what goes on called to our attention, pointed out, in order to see it. Where alternative interpretations of form are possible, the alternatives must be shown in order to be discussed. If analysis is to contribute to understanding of competence, it must be explicit. For all these reasons, narratives must be presented in a format that makes their analysis recoverable and clear.

I call this “showing the bones of the narrative.” There is analogy to an edition of *Gilgamesh* that presents precisely what is there on a certain set of tablets, as distinct from a translation that presents a continuously readable story (cf. Kovacs 1989, Sandars 1972). In some cases, it is clear that one is displaying relationships that, though marked, are not salient in the flow of words, what might be called the “flesh” (see Hymes 1994c).

At this stage of our knowledge of many traditions, such as those of Native Americans, “showing the bones” is required. When what is there is not yet publicly known, it must be presented first. After that, surrogates of all kinds, retellings, imitations, dramatizations can proceed. But bones come first. To do otherwise would be to regard Pope’s *Iliad* as Homer, Lamb’s *Tales* as Shakespeare, and Bible stories for children as Genesis, Job, and the Gospel according to John.<sup>20</sup>

### **Recovery of the Old**

This concern is linked to the notion of *repatriation*. The notion has come to the fore in connection with the recovery of burials and other objects taken from Native American communities. There is a textual parallel. For many Native American communities, texts in the traditional languages are no longer told. What remains is what has been written down. Important as it is that Native Americans speak for themselves, texts do not. The relations of form and meaning explored by verse analysis are like other

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<sup>20</sup> These considerations are an instance of the general issue raised by McGann (1983), that of the need to locate editing and literary production in their particular social nexus. Cf. Gorman 1989:194ff.

relations of form and meaning in language. Mostly we are not aware of them. Analysis is necessary to make them explicit. It is a kind of repatriation, then, for those of us fortunate enough to be able to do so to help recover in older texts their lineaments of shaping artistry.

This may go against the grain of a focus on performance and theory of a certain kind. When I spoke about such work some years ago at the Smithsonian, using a text from a now extinct language of Oregon, someone asked why work with such (limited) materials, why not work with materials in which one can hear and see the performance? The short answer is that I am from Oregon. It matters to me, and to people I know, to recognize the value of what textual record there is. From this standpoint, recovery of the old as such matters. A few scholars are pursuing this kind of work. Let me illustrate its value with a few examples.

*Multilingual source?* About a century ago Franz Boas recorded some stories from the now extinct Salish people known as Pentlatch. Some exist now in manuscript in Pentlatch, some in published translations in German, but not all in both. It is likely that some narrations in Chinook Jargon were translated directly into German. In any case, Kinkade (1992) is able to clarify the relation between the two kinds of source, comparing a manuscript text in Pentlatch and its published German translation with the help of verse analysis.

*Recovering verbal play.* Berman (1992) provides a notable example of recovering the value of a text. She notes that it is not the original texts in Kwakw'ala ("Kwakiutl"), but Boas' translations of them, that have become the primary source for generations of scholars. Berman observes (157):

Lévi-Strauss to the contrary, the meaning of a myth lies within the narrator's use of language, not outside it. Boas knew this, which is why he left us eleven volumes of Kwakw'ala texts. If Boas' translations to those texts are unreliable, I believe it is at least in part because he did not intend for them to be relied on. For Boas, the texts were in and of themselves the end products of ethnography, and the translations a necessary evil, an aid to those without fluency in Kwakw'ala.

Berman herself commands the language, and sources scattered over a number of years, so that she is able to reconstruct choices that Boas made, not only in translation, but also in composing a dictionary. She is able to

show that a text is couched in verbal play that escaped Boas and that has escaped everyone since.<sup>21</sup>

There is in general a need for anthropologists and folklorists to understand their field as philology—to return to manuscript sources, to discover what has been excluded, rearranged, normalized, misunderstood (cf. Foley 1992:276, 290). What can be known can be expanded in the archive as well as in the field.

*Performance register (1).* The manuscript sources of Boas' two volumes of Chinookan texts (Boas 1894, 1901) show an allegro style of dictation. Boas appears to have normalized elisions and published full forms. The easy style suggests that the narrator, Cultee, was not much affected by the process of dictation, and that something of a relatively spoken style can be recovered. That is the good news. The bad news is that the published texts can not be confidently relied upon until the uncorrected originals are studied. The sources of some titles and incidents, published in the language by Boas, have not yet been located in the notebooks. (There are also many supplementary verbal forms, never published, which I did not learn about until I had written a dissertation grammar on the basis of the published material alone).

*Performance register (2).* Even with narratives told in English, the English style of the narrator has probably been revised. Here is one scene from a narrative in Tillamook Salish which has attracted attention.<sup>22</sup> There are four stanzas, separated by space. Verses begin flush left. Closing

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<sup>21</sup> Berman does not actually indicate the verses in the text, only the two parts to each stanza. Verses can be recognized in terms of the initial element *lál'ai* "then" (pp. 130, 131-32) and turns at talk. Stanza (A) has two verbs of saying in its first part, "Then" twice initially in its second part. Stanza (B) appears to be marked by having four framing verbs of speaking, the first of each pair with initial "Then," but then a third initial *lál'ai* and a fifth framing verb (of singing). These lines (14-17) are the peripety and the only song. Stanzas (C) and (D) resume even-numbered patterning. (C) has initial "Then" and a turn at talk with a verb of saying, while (D) has twice initial "Then."

Carrying through the verse analysis, and showing it in translation, (as Berman does in other work) brings out the special status of stanza (C). The peripety is marked in form against the background of the rest.

<sup>22</sup> E. Jacobs 1990, with an appendix for this story by myself; the analysis into verses is slightly revised here. Cf. Hymes 1993b and Seaburg 1992. I am indebted to Seaburg for the notebook original.

braces indicate pairs of verses that go together in a pattern of three such pairs.

Later on his sister said to him,  
 "You are getting grown now,  
 you should hunt a woman for yourself.  
 You are old enough to get married.  
 Any old thing, a dead person, is perhaps better than no wife at all."  
 "Huh! I can do that all right, sister."  
 He went to look for a wife.

He returned late at night.  
 His sister was already in bed  
 and did not see him.  
 Presently she heard him say,  
 "Oh! My wife is sticking me with her scratcher."  
 His sister thought,  
 "Why, he must have a maiden bathing after her first menstruation."

Daylight came.  
 The sister arose  
 and built the fire.  
 Split-His-Own-Head got up,  
 he had no wife.  
 "Where is your wife?"  
 his sister asked. }  
 "In bed."  
 "Is she not going to get up?" }  
 He told her,  
 "No. You told me to obtain a dead person for a wife.  
 That is a dead woman I went and got."  
 She said to him,  
 "Now you take that dead body  
 and put it right back where you found it." }  
 He took it back.

Here are the words in the field notebook (in verse analysis):

Next, she told him,  
 "You're getting big enough now,  
 you can hunt yourself a woman,  
 you can get married.

Any old thing, a dead person.”  
 “Huh, I can do that, all right, sister.”  
 He went to look for a wife.

He came back in the night.  
 His sister was already in bed,  
 and didn’t see him come.  
 Presently she heard him say,  
 “Oh! My wife is sticking me with her scratcher.”  
 His sister thought,  
 “Oh he must have found a maiden  
 just bathing after her first mensis.”

Daylight came.  
 The sister arose  
 and built the fire.  
 He got up,  
 he had no wife.

“Where’s your wife?” }  
 “In bed.” }  
 “Isn’t she going to get up?” }  
 “No, you told me to get a dead person for a wife.  
 That’s a dead woman I went and got.” }  
 “Oh you take that dead body  
 and go put it back where you got it.” }

Most changes are the sort a teacher would make to dress up spoken style for appearance in print: eliminate contractions, substitute “returned” for “came back,” “obtain” and “found” for “get” and “got.” The expansions in the fourth and fifth lines, like substitution of proper name for pronoun in the third stanza, are evidently to make sure the reader does not miss the point. A third kind of change, found in another scene, eliminates direct naming of body parts and functions. Such changes are probably widespread in what one is invited to read as a native voice: written norms, explanations, propriety. But unedited wording has more the flavor of a told story, and sometimes shows a different number of lines and local shape.

*Order of narration.* Presumably fundamentalists and higher critics alike recognize that the order in which Paul’s letters appear in the New Testament is not an order he gave them, or the order in which they were written, but editorially determined by length, longest first, shortest last. Students of Native American collections may forget that the order in which

myths and tales appear is not likely to be the order in which they were told, and that inferences based on the published sequence are suspect. Recovering actual order can indicate something about style and interaction.

The order in which Victoria Howard dictated Clackamas texts to Melville Jacobs in 1929 and 1930 indicates two ways in which her style changed.<sup>23</sup> On the one hand, the earliest recorded narratives show a great deal of pairing of verses marked initially by “now” (*aGa*). That drops out to be replaced in favor of far less pairing and far less explicit marking of verses by any initial element. On the other hand, it is only a certain distance into the relationship that she begins to end a narrative with the formal close “Story, story” (*k’áni k’áni*). The first change seems to indicate that she was used to a style in which two- and four-part relations were very prominent, a style not otherwise known in Chinookan, and which she may have experienced in hearing Molale (which she knew) or some other language at multilingual Grande Ronde reservation, where she was born and grew up. The second change seems to reflect a growing confidence in her narratives as complete. (Various comments show awareness of some narratives as incomplete.) Both changes may reflect also a growing ease in her relationship with Melville Jacobs.<sup>24</sup>

*Coos Bay: Repeated tellings.* Let me end with a few lines from an obscure manuscript that are for me a sign of grace. I have been working on a collection to make visible to others the pervasiveness there of this kind of poetic structure in the words of Native Americans of the Northwest, and hit upon the title, “River Poets of Native Oregon.” Two years ago, just as my wife and I were setting out for the coast of Oregon, we picked up a forwarded letter from a man we did not know. He was director of cultural heritage for the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Siuslaw, and Lower Umpqua Indians, he knew we had visited such people many years before (the first summer of our marriage in fact), experience had taught him that linguists did not answer his letters, but how about it? We went, and found that he had patiently assembled every known bit of documentation of the

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<sup>23</sup> See M. Jacobs 1958, 1959 and the footnotes therein.

<sup>24</sup> The order of the published *Wishram Texts* (Sapir 1909) is not identical with the order of the notebooks. The Coyote cycle is interrupted by part of the Salmon Myth, and the moving observation printed at the end of the cycle does not occur there in the notebook. In *Clackamas Chinook Texts* the last section of a myth important for its performance sequence (Hymes 1986) is taken from a separate comment on a different notebook page.

languages, cultures, and histories of these people (including an old letter of mine). In the course of collaboration last summer he sent me a xerox of the field notes of Harry Hull St. Clair, 2d, who in 1903 had recorded texts in Coos that had later been published by another Boas associate who had worked with the same man (Frachtenberg 1913).

Scrutiny of the manuscript discloses that it contains two unpublished texts. Each is an earlier version of a text that was published. St. Clair recorded two versions of a text entitled “The Country of the Souls,” and Frachtenberg published the second (1913:no. 23). St. Clair recorded a version of “The Ascent to Heaven,” but Frachtenberg obtained a fuller version and published that (1913:no. 3). The unpublished versions have details not present in the versions published. As in many cases, so little of Coos tradition is known to us that details are precious. And in these cases there is the opportunity to compare tellings (performances) by the same narrator.<sup>25</sup> The opportunity has remained unknown throughout most of the century, and comes to light now through the efforts of a man of Coos descent who has made himself a scholar.

*Coos Bay: River Poets of Native Oregon.* But the special serendipity has to do with a notebook page preceding the narratives. On page 25, numbered lines 8-12, St. Clair wrote down a few sentences that seem to have been volunteered by Jim Buchanan, perhaps elaborating in answer to a question. The sentences are eight in number, and group in sets of four (as one would expect in Coos oral narrative). They seem a perfect epigraph for a collection conceived as representing river poets of native Oregon.<sup>26</sup>

That’s the only way they’ve been talking.  
 They didn’t come from any place.  
 That was their only place.  
 They didn’t know where they came from.

Every stream has people on it.  
 That’s how they all had a stream.

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<sup>25</sup> Sapir’s field notebooks for Wishram Chinook contain an unpublished version from the same narrator, Louis Simpson, of the first published myth. The degree to which there is something like formulaic recurrence could be established.

<sup>26</sup> Buchanan spoke in Coos and then provided a translation, written down by St. Clair word by word below the Coos. The last words of line 3 and line 8 are the same in Coos, “their land, earth, country, ground, place.”

That's the way they know themselves.  
All other tribes had their stream as their land.<sup>27</sup>

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## APPENDIX

## THE DESERTED BOY\*

Now then they told a boy, "Now let us go for reeds." Long ago the boy was mean.	[I] [The People and the Boy] (A)	
Now then they said, "Now you will take him for reeds."		5
Now then they told them, "You shall abandon him there."		
Now then the people all went across the river, they went on, they came to the reeds.	(B)	10
Now then they cut them off. Now then they said, "If the boy should say, 'Are you there?', you shall answer, 'Uu'."		15
Now then they ran off, straight home they ran, straight across they went, not a person on this side, all on that side.	(C)	20
Now then the boy, too, said, "Now let's go home." "Uu,"	(D)	

## \*Wishram words:

- 16 A repeated vowel symbol shows prolongation.
- 34 The sound of the fire is phonetically a glottalized voiceless lateral affricate; that is, t plus voiceless l plus glottal stop.
- 81 The name of a delicacy, a mixture of dried salmon and mashed huckleberries, has a- (feminine gender), ts, glottal stop, schwa (as in English "but"), and p.
- 96 A repeated vowel symbol shows prolongation.
- 110 The woman is the daughter of the spirit power who lives beneath a whirlpool. His name has i- (masculine gender), ch, glottal stop, schwa, palatal voiceless fricative (as in German *Ich*), and i, a, n.

- went the reeds. 25  
 In *vain* he searched about:  
 no person.
- Now then he too started home, (E)  
 he too followed behind them;  
 he arrived running: 30  
 now, no people.
- [II] [The Boy, Deserted]  
 [i] [He survives]
- Now then the boy wept. (A)  
 Now then he heard,  
 “TL’ TL’ TL’ .”
- Now then he turned his eyes, 35  
 he looked,  
 he dried his tears.
- Now then he saw a *very* little bit of flame in a shell. (B)  
 Now then he took that very same flame.  
 Now then he built up a fire. 40
- Now again he saw fiber, (C)  
 again a little bit of it,  
 straightway he took it.
- Now again he went to the cache,  
 he saw five wild potatoes. 45
- Now then he thought:  
 “My poor father’s mother saved me potatoes,  
 and fire was saved for me by my father’s mother,  
 and my mother’s mother saved me fiber.”
- Now then the boy made a small fish-line, (D) 50  
 and he made snares with string;  
 he set a trap for magpies.
- Now then he caught them.  
 Then he made a small cloak with magpie’s skin.  
 He just put it nicely around himself. 55
- Again he lay down to sleep,  
 Again he just wrapped himself nicely in it.
- Now then he fishes with hook and line; (E) (ab)

- he caught one sucker,  
     half he ate,  
         half he saves. 60  
 Again, morning, he ate half. }
- Now again he fishes, (cd)  
     he caught two,  
         one he ate, 65  
         one he saved.  
 Again, morning, he ate one. }
- Now again in the morning he fishes, (ef)  
     he caught three suckers,  
         he ate one and a half. 70  
 Again, morning, he ate one and a half.
- Now again he went to fish, (gh)  
     he caught four suckers,  
         two he ate,  
         two he saved. 75  
 Morning, now he ate all two. }
- Now again he goes to fish for the fifth time. (ij)  
     Now the boy had fished five times.  
     Now he had become a grown man. }
- [ii] [He sings]  
 (A) 80  
 Now then he examined his fish-line.  
 Indeed, *ats'E'pts'Ep* fills to the brim a cooking-trough.  
     He stood it up on the ground.  
 Now then the boy sang.  
 Now then all the people watched him.  
 Now then they said: 85  
     “What has he become?”
- Indeed! he became glad, (B)  
     he had caught *ats'E'pts'Ep*.  
 Thus he sang:  
     “Atséée, atséée, 90  
         “Ah, it waves freely over me,  
             “Ah, my feathered cloak.”  
     “Atséée, atséée,  
         “Ah, it waves freely over me,

- “Ah, my feathered cloak.” 95
- “Atsée, atsée,  
 “Ah, it waves freely over me,  
 “Ah, my feathered cloak.”
- Indeed! ICE´ xian’s daughter had given him food.
- Now then the boy had camped over four times; (C) 100  
 he camped over a fifth time.
- Now then he awoke,  
 a woman was sleeping with him,  
 a very beautiful woman:  
 her hair was long, 105  
 and bracelets right up to her on her arms,  
 and her fingers were full of rings,  
 and he saw a house all painted inside with designs,  
 and he saw a mountain-sheep blanket covering him, both him and his wife.
- Indeed! ICE´ xian’s very daughter had given him food, 110  
 and plenty of Chinook salmon,  
 and sturgeon,  
 and blueback salmon,  
 and eels,  
 plenty of everything she had brought. 115

[iii] [The two are together]

- Now he married her.  
 Now the woman made food.  
 Now, morning, it became daylight.  
 Now the two stayed together quietly that day.  
 Now the two stayed together a long time. 120

[III] [The boy and the people]

- Now then it became spring. (A)  
 Now then the people found out.  
 Now then his father’s mother and his mother’s mother went straight to his house.  
 Now then he thought:  
 “The two old women are poor. 125  
 “My father’s mother and my mother’s mother took pity on me in this way.”
- Now then he fed them,  
 he gave the two old women Chinook salmon  
 and he gave them sturgeon.

- Now then the two old women started home, (B) 130  
     they went across.  
 A long time they were there. }
- Now then it became news,  
     they said,  
     “Oh! there is much salmon at the boy’s, 135  
         and much sturgeon,  
         and eels,  
         and blueback salmon.”
- Now then the people said,  
     “Let us go to the boy.” } 140
- There is no food among the people,  
     the people are hungry.  
 Now snow, lightly, lightly. }
- Now then again first went his father’s mother, his mother’s mother. (C)  
 Now then they were close to the house. 145  
 Now then a great many people went across toward the boy.  
 Now then the boy turned,  
     he looked,  
         he saw many people coming across in a canoe.
- Now then he thought: 150  
     “It was not good the way they abandoned me.”
- Then now he raised the east wind (D)  
     (*there became a Walla Walla wind* ),  
     the east wind became strong,  
         and it snowed. 155
- All died in the water,  
     the people were drowned.  
 With a bad mind the boy thought:  
     “*This is the way they treated me,*  
     *they abandoned me.*” 160
- Now again others went across. (E)  
 Now again he treated them this way,  
     a strong east wind blew,  
         moreover now there was snow.
- Now again they died, 165  
     twice the people died.  
 Now only the two old women remained.  
     Thus the ways.