

AN UNDEMEANING OF METER

"The angry things that have been said about our poetry have also been said about our time. They are both "confused," "chaotic," "violent," "obscure." Muriel Rukeyser

"Prajapati created the gods. Then, suffering in the form of death was created. The gods went to Prajapati and asked: Why did you create us if you were planning to create death after us? Prajapati answered: Compose the meters and make your home in them and you will be rid of this affliction." Jaiminiya Brahmana, 1.283.

"La métrique est la théorie du rythme des imbeciles." Henri Meschonnic

FACING THE CADAVER

After expanding on prosody for decades—as far out and within as cosmogenesis, beginninglessness, and prosody as *pratītyasamutpāda* (the medium of the interrelationships of all things)—I felt the need to focus on prosody's most conventional, reductive definition as *meter*; as contrastive, metronomic, binary foot-scansion, spectra reduced to stricture, the stuff that tedium, time wasted and entombment are made of.

Turning my attention to meter was, initially, in response to students' requests...my assignment from them, to offer ways to work with meter. This assignment quickly exploded into a cosmos of its own. Now, in a somewhat scattershot process, in fits and starts, I hope to bring "this desiccated thing"—meter—completely to life, not as a defense of meter as integral to prosody, or recompense for the short shrift it's suffered, but as an openness to our most ancient mediator of speech and song, as an account of the shock of facing the cadaver, as well as an expression of gratitude for this unexpected windfall. We literally live in meter's shadow.

PHONEMONTOLOGY

Meter *protects* the syllables. In this sense, meter is *mantric*. It keeps us from harming language.

Meter also means *to clothe* or *cover*—that with which one covers oneself in order to be invisible to death. That with which one covers oneself to keep from being burnt by one's own sacrifice.

Meter is our mother, and our father. We're made of beat. Meter is metabolic. Everybody's different—meter makes it so. Aperiodic people may need to move more methodically. Feet first. Medicinally.

Meter is public—where we agree to meet.

There is no clear correlation between an anarchic, arbitrarily autarchic beat and disease, unsociability and ecocide. Or is there? Meter *is* the question of health and harmonization.

What, exactly, does meter *meter*, and how fully aware are we of what that is? Meter *meters* open mind, in order that it open.

Are syllables figmental or existent? We speak in syllables. Syllables synchronize segmental and suprasegmental streams. Syllables *are* the sensorial (and not merely analogous). Or are they nucleated nothingness? Content's peristalsis coursing through us? Syllables are self-arising resonance of the original light. Syllable is the prototypic quantum model: workable as particle and/or wave. We'd be cosmogonic-less without them (or uncreated in the meaningless sense of having no experience of the uncreated).

We're destroying our world because speech is not perceived as seed syllabification, as elemental ritual. Creation! One complete jaw oscillation with one sonority peak.

Or we could say that syllables are an accommodation of scarcely understood, glaring neuromotor constraints.

Here's how it works: infants teach grownups syllables as the way in which things get pointed out.

(It certainly can be said that prosody caused syllabification.)

It's sonority that determines syllable (see the Sonority Sequencing Principle). Sonority is vocal tract openness, fullness of airflow, sustainability, perspicuity and supraglottal ease (intraoral air pressure is inversely correlated with sonority... the less effort the freer the force). As such, sonority is our least impeded love. Through sonority we may re-heed human being.

No one can know sonority or syllable without owning phonotactics and the paths of articulatory phonetics. Because we say "play" we parse *am pli tude*, not *amp lit ude* (unless you *shoplift*.) Accordingly, I'll suggest writing experiments with words made of phonemes nearest each other in sonority (e.g., high vowels and sonorants) or furthest apart (low vowels and stops); with words made only of the most constricted or most open vowels and consonants; with only voiceless obstruents or only continuants, or the two in alternating strophes; or a work with only open syllables (no closing consonants, the way Japanese works). So many means for meter we've yet to meet! Get to work, in the newest world!

Can phonotactics be meaningfully violated? Can we hear so impartially, to run outside our phonic ruts? Can we turn the syllable inside out? Hear another people's phonotactics inhering in our own? (PIE, from which English stems, was rife with consonant clustering lost to us: sr, dw, dl, lg, dn, gw, sd, tst, sg, dt, dd, kt, ks, gs, tk, dg, wb, lksn, and the like.

Relax for real, reinvent morphophonemics. Shout out the unvoiced. The cat's out of the bag: sound and meaning correlation is the constituent principle of phenomena. We don't just skip and flit along the surface of phonetic symbolism and onomatopoeic imitation (croak).

Before it's too late, hear the qualities of the individual speech sounds—they are the set of elements, the building blocks. Or go about it more graphically (Dante was a phonic coiffeur). Each phone an ontology of its own. Alphabetontos. Phonemonology. Phonemology. Phonemontology. Phonemephenomenology.

Due to meter, both quantity and quality continue to pertain to poetics.

But does the quantity/quality quandary still weigh on us? Does English carry weight? Although weight attracts stress and heavy can land on long, these forces don't necessarily equate. The 5th century CE sackings of Rome can be understood as a clash between quality and quantity: accentual, alliterative East Germanic Goth collapsing the system that had sustained quantity-sensitization of Latin for 700 years, while collaterally reasserting “vulgar” stress and prefiguring the rhyme-happy Dark Ages and the quantification counter-revolutions to come (from Claudio Tolomei's *Accademia della Nuova Poesia* right up to Zukofsky's neo-neoteric Catullus translations.)

In effect, *really*, civilization and syllable-quantification are correlates.

Civility weaponizes itself to become the barbarity it believes it supersedes. Are classical metrics wrapped up in this history, having overspread the neo-Latin “developing” vernaculars?

Civilization prevents rules from arising from nature.

"What honour were it then for our English language to be the first that after so many yeares of barbarisme could second the perfection of the industrious Greekes and Romaines?" — Thomas Campion (and the quantification revival)

Is there an ur-meter? Is it not recurrence in the cadence, the line's closing feet, that has carried melody all along (over 90% of Ennius's lines close with word-stress on the beginning of the fifth and sixth feet)?

Or is English rhythm strictly an inside job: nothing more than stress isochrony allowed by vowel-weakening in unstressed syllables? (Schwa is our drone, our *om.*)

If measure is dead to the immeasurable (the myriadly moraic) how can there be music? Emily Dickinson:

After great pain, a formal feeling came —

The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs.



Seikilos Epitaph, the oldest complete musical composition with musical notation. Superscript letters and markings indicate pitch and tempo.

The text itself reads:

*While you live, shine
grieve not beyond measure
life is brief
and time demands its due*

DO YOUR FEET FIT?

First: meter in relation to the preciousness of life; *this* measuring of meter—to not waste our breath. 2nd: meter approached, not pedagogically, but as a way to open possibilities for practice—that we be embedded in meter. 3rd: Ingrates! That the avant-garde (say, since Gustave Kahn's issuing of the 1886 symbolist periodical *La Vogue*, including Rimbaud, Verlaine, Mallarmé and Whitman sparked *Vers Libre*) need only jilt meter to be free and release its swarm of *isms*, granted by, defined by, meter's remains. It's all been on the back of meter! 4th: it's essential (with regard to the preciousness of life) to reckon with modern and consequent postmodern avant-garde movements (greatly determined by disowning and owning up to meter) relative to the unprevented violence of the “progress” made and poetics put forth since the avant-guerre/avant-garde emancipation of verse. Strictly speaking, there can be no *avant-guerre*; there is only *pendant-guerre* composition; no postwar, only riPOSTeWar, playing over and over again a pendular poetics; there's no “avant” only *amidst*. Avant-garde vehemence, typically manned by the manifesto is perhaps the initial push of the imperialist. (Revolution is a self-destructive, self-as-other-destructive, convention. Khlebnikov thought there was a rhythm to it, over vast stretches of time. (He searched neither in vain, nor verifiably.)

Without words as precious as life. Without words as wonder, to the extent it matters not which word. Without which, the war is already lost, in that it will be waged and waged by the words we decide to use.

"What is audible, all sounds and voices without exception, as many as there may be, are adornments of basic space, arising as the ongoing criterion of enlightened speech."

EMBEDDED METER—METER AND IMMISERATION—OMNISCIENT NOT ENCYCLOPEDIA—UNHAPPEN—FUTURE NOSTALGIA—IMPLICATE PROSODY— PREVENTATIVE, AT LEAST PALLIATIVE OR AT THE VERY LEAST NOT-PART-OF- THE-PROBLEM

"If language really makes us kings of our nation, then without doubt it is we, the poets and thinkers, who are to blame for this blood bath and who have to atone for it." Hugo Ball, *Die Flucht aus der Zeit*.

Meter could have only ever come about *because* it was embedded, interdependently with speech, music, instrumentation, movement, site, occasion, service, convention, revolution, spinning of the earth and vastness of the heavens. (The Greek term for meter's whole setting is *mousiké*.) Extract a dactyl from *that* and it will shiver, shrivel, shut down or shill for any schlock as *meter appliqué* or schoolmaster-meter.

I'm simply reflecting on the coincidence of the *avant-garde-arrière* (our experimental arts) and our atrocities, as well as our unrealized humanity. We let go of neoclassical meter, necessarily so ... but to what end? The age of mechanization and ametricity (as if paradoxically?) are one. All eyes are on the climate (and Bakhmut and Gaza, the DMZ and the South China Sea) as the global economy's derivatives bubble, exceeding one quadrillion dollars (10x World GDP). There's no collateral, in case the poem falls through. So, by *preciousness* I mean *necessitous*. The wealth divide is about to fly through the roof, all the way to Mars,

as AI comes fully online. AI is *language*. Whose language? Everyone's? The creative cognitive and computer scientists'? Today's rishis of old? Does AI have a poetics, other than its being coincident with, constituent of, darkening days; gloom and doom now not only not prevented by, but attributable to our ability to communicate?

It's been said "nature vs. culture." But nature has no *against*, even when we don't agree, even when we grieve, that grief is also given to us. It can't even come down to "humanity vs. inhumanity" as humanity has no inhumanity. Inhumanity is no more a homeopathic treatment than war.

To ask again the question: is there any evidence that we've ever caused a solution? Life was given to us as a solution, in case we'd ever need one. This is what I mean by *preciousness*. Our family, so few in number (throughout the cosmos). An infinitesimal speck.

All presumptions are off. (At a recent poetry reading, introducing one of her plant-based poems, Mei-mei Berssenbrugge referred to the future as "a possibility, not a faith.")

METER TANTRA—MY EARLIEST MEMORIES OF METER—COUNT COUNTS —WE SAY
"GHOSTS" SO GHOSTS EXIST —MOSTLY LEARNED FROM THE BRAHMANAS THE AVESTA AND
OLIVIER MESSIAEN'S TRAITÉ DE RYTHME, DE COULEUR, ET D'ORNITHOLOGY

Meter has always been mixed, miscegenated, misbegotten, messed up, mis-seamed, vulnerable, variable, volatile, violable, attacked, ad-libbed, situational, experimental, sprung, expunged, fudged, faked, perfected and forgotten. Meters forebear, forebode, forbid, forestall, foregather, foresee, forewarn and foretell.

Meter is entheogenic, not indulgent. It's fully magicoefficient, performative. It works. It works because it intercedes in causality, on our behalf. Meter is the strongest support, the strongest means, for getting all we desire. Meters were/are mostly for carrying out sacrifice and service, for carrying the sacrifice over, measuring out the setting and steps of the service, and shielding us from death. Think of a choriamb as advanced, protective technology. Like an inner radiance heatshield. Above all, they exist to protect themselves, and your offering.

Embedded meter is entered, not applied. This is the primary difference. Yet, embedded meter is not absorptive. It vivifies.

Mere mortals can only hope to mimic the jaw-dropping might of meter.

Radicality is a convention. 100 years after the liberation of verse, the editors of the 1969 compilation *Naked Poetry: Recent American Poetry in Open Form* make this statement: "We began with the firm conviction that the strongest and most alive poetry in America had abandoned or at least broken the grip of traditional meters and had set out, once again, into 'the wilderness of unopened life.'" In other words: in the wilderness rewilding the wilderness.

Is meter no more? (Poets sometimes refer to meters as *ghosts*, and the meters are well aware of this, as they are being minced, macerated, pestled, puréed, rasped and slurred by our every word. Quite a demotion, from hypostasis to ghost. Or, perhaps not — perhaps we're in a necessary, low-key, undercover era in which the meters are tooling-up and regrouping towards a push for lasting peace.)

We're the ghosts of meter.

Specifically, an 8-syllabled, open-onset, closing-cadenced line can keep us from creating fear.

Bake your bread on eight burners. (The old adage.)

The meters, altogether, are various bodyparts of any likeness we share with the divine.

Meter revives the intoxicant entombed in our intestines. Metric currency for over-the-counter unobtainable drugs.

The poem isn't spoken it's sacrificed.

One meter makes another whole.

Meter doesn't merely measure the poem, for heaven's sake, it measures the circumference of the cup, number of sips, steps from side to side, height of the shelter, square footage of the dancefloor, gesture repetitions, stars in the constellation, lumens of the light, the place-setting and total setting in place and every aspect of the service's progression. (We no longer say "sacrificial site"—except for desecration.

It's all an act.

And as you can see, architecture is part of poetry, not the inverse. Meter houses the house. Meter is correlated with *baukunst*: building as art, care for construction detail, knowledge of materials, play of proportion, light and wellbeing.

(The adjective "poetic" in engineering and science is, nowadays, a deprecatory code word for *nonrigorous* and *unsound* design. Can poetry open into an experimental field by restricting innovation to its proper materiality: sound, image, lineation, page-space? A closing of curiosity? Though materialist, nothing haptic about it.)

*What I really wanted to say
was that I'm tired of poetry being a blueprint not a house*

*What I really wanted to say
was that poetry wants to close your eyes
so you open them suddenly in a new space,
the way doors and windows do
o these architects these poets
who can build an opening
anywhere they choose
can open space and let us in*

...

*Place happens to space,
is architecture in a place
or does it make the place
itself happen to space.*

The way music happens to time. — Robert Kelly

Or, measurements of the place of practice of the poem, if you prefer. How do we know how many steps, the distances and directions, spatial data emanating from the pattern of the poem? The beat is in the details. Count is that which, once it comes into existence, it comes into existence as existence.

Superstition comes from *stich*.

Wrong number? Change the procedure. (Alter the altar.) Can't go wrong? A fate worse than poetry. Get the count right and you have the privilege of being the one tied at the stake.

The line is the foot. The line a lightning bolt or BTU count. A line of bricks. The measure with which one measures. Nothing so incidental as analogous. "A foot is part of an entire rhythm from which we recognize the whole. It has two parts: arsis and thesis." (Aristides Quintilianus)

Ladder of the 12 directions. Visualize this.

The poem is repeatedly pressed throughout the day (and the deities). It quantifies and qualifies the ecstasis.

It's the number of pressings of the plants and their matching meters.

Animals. Meters, they're our animals.

Whatever you need measured, accordingly, that's your meter. The number of utensils for the utilization. The ladlings. The number of items for each side of the exchange.

Food for food. Firm footing given to the Creator. Numbers not *fixing* but *freeing*.

Don't forget to recite the poem as part of sitting down to receive and write it.

For having access to all of language, please turn to meter.

8-syllabled is a means of procreation.

Most of the meaning of meters has to do with becoming able to speak. We use meters in order to be able to use them. It's for their own use that meters measure the entire setting for their use. Counting everything involved.

This is how meters become identical to things. The gathering is identical to meter. Meter is drunk from the cup and it's the cup drunk from. Meter is identical to that which is offered.

Closely-connected is meter. You're an embryo within meter. It's the safe place and the safety.

When we're sacrificed, when we pass on: "go to the meters."

Meters are indivisible from the meaning of their use. When outcome counts the most, meters come in. Poet's role is to satisfy them, not desecrate oneself.

(This is not a defense of meter. I'm allowing it to fend for itself.)

Meter generates as it's generated by the offering.

Nothing to gain or lose, then no need for meter. If there's no sacrifice, meter is insignificant.

They are the power we acquire from them. With meter I respect you. Whether to club to death or consecrate. We make with meters. A meter's a stick of incense. Fume in which all is felt.

Meters have their own sense of belonging and protocols as per hour of the day.

At times they're antipathic, working against what's being done with them. And working against each other. A poem that's not cooperating with itself, is still a poem, however incorrigible or undecipherable. Like it and not. Poem as the place for metric infighting. Meter in conflict with exterior mirroring.

You want to be falcon? Form yourself of me (say the 8-syllabled). Midday be an eagle of four eleven-syllabled lines. You want to be a banana? An umbrella?

Mysteriously understood.

The meters become each other's spare plug-in parts. There's some degree of interchangeability, partial or whole disassembly. Right god, wrong time of day. Sorry. Work it out. The meter is the stanza and the stars. The number of syllables in a line matches the number of deities. Make the correlations. For example, polysemic *kakubh* is splendor, a compass direction, a wreath of champak flowers, a summit, hair hanging down, and it is the number ten, a line's syllable-count of the same name.

How hard we've worked to make the world less meaningful! (Without even trying.)

The Vedic 'foot' (*padā*) is the entire line. I keep repeating this, like a metric. Vedic stanzas are typically four-lined. Vedic currency is *cattle*. The mode of the Vedic hymns is *harnessing*. Words are milk. The Greek and Latin foot (*pous*, *pes*, respectively) move in entirely different manners. It's a dual on-off system; a bipedal unit based on arsis and thesis.

Thus, meter is yoked to what you're carrying out. A fresh horse for the relay. The transposition. What was here is there which is now here. Meters are the various parts of the chariot, or spaceship. Or submersible. Basically, they're transportation.

Can't the same be done as well (or even better) without meter? Something else, yes, can be done better without meter, taking us somewhere else. Meter is where only meter knows where.

Meters *are* results. To please *that* particular deity, please *that* meter to obtain the desired result. Knowing nothing less than how the cosmos works; meters its interworkings.

Without which the Awe-Mighty wouldn't have a pot to piss in. (We don't pray, we *ground* the gods.) Meters are the wealth of one's Deity. To believe in meter, not God, is good enough (says its God). Just make the meters fresh after they've been sucked dry or weaponized by a sense of divinity that is *like* but *identical* to the meters as its embodiment. To take away the power of malevolent beings, overpower the syllable count of their lines with yours.

No god would have gotten to heaven without the means of the 36-syllable stanza of 4 lines of either 9-9-9-9 or 8-8-8-12 syllables. "Through you, let us reach the heavenly world." The gods pray to meter. (TMB VII 4.2). Also, by means of a mix of meters, they cover their tracks so that no others can climb so high.

Prop up the sun, with the meters.

The instructions inscribed in a meter are countless. (This is why we count.) (Keep it together.) Their known names and functions are the same as their unknown names and functions. They're not forms of god, but beloved forms. For instance, Fire belongs to Gāyatrī, and Gāyatrī is 3 8-syllabled lines and Fire is Agni. You don't have to put it together, it is together. Then improvise under great danger; not to point out or even propitiate, rather to *practice* as an offering up.

Syllable-counted speech, now that speech is clearly nothing so little as speech.

We mimic the poetics of creation aping us.

However knotted up we get, meters are creation's relaxation, verily. After their last pressing the meters refresh themselves. No wonder they can be so incorrigible. Wanting to kick back and take part in the sacrifice, not *be* the sacrifice, brings disaster.

Do not disturb. *That* measure. Pulselessness. Hysteria.

Music and meter are each other's food. A single meter may thrive in many ways. Write *that*. Speech crying to be metric, became a meter. The way in which speech is identical to meter is the key. (Don't waste your breath.) Speech is not *a* goddess, she is *the* Goddess. The impulse to speak (from beyond dreamless sleep). Impulsive, explosive, possessive *She*.

Exactly this: *Chandasyāṁ vācam vādam*—*vādam* (speaking) *chandasyāṁ* (metric) *vācam* (speech) (RV 9.113.6) — can mean "speaking metrical speech" which would inherently be "true" speech, a taking the form of hymn, which would at once mean "according to one's wishes." A perfectly interlaced knot.

Vācam, vācam, Vāc. In a nutshell: with Goddess within. To behold is to be held and be whole.

Meters = speech: *chandāmsi vai vāk*.

What are we saying? *Vāg u vai sarvāni chandāmsi*: all of speech is all of the meters. Metrical speech is the same as speech, only *prosperous*.

It's fair to say that meters are the deities of the deities. They are their wealth, made ours. They are the invocation's collateral and efficacy. They work magically because they work religiously because they work. They're the in-between-speech-and-music—all indivisibly. If they're not working not for us but against us, it means the sacred is using them for its own purposes, or they're just off dawdling on their own.

Drop the dead god. Meter is an invariant that varies so that we may perceive change.

What will happen is the significance of the meters.

METER AS ENEMY (ONESELF)—FREE WORDS—POEMS WITHOUT WORDS—OPACITY AND THE SIMPLE THINGS IN LIFE—TO EXTERMINATE METER REMOVE THE SOURCE (THE POET FROM THE POET)—THE KARMA OF METER

"Je n'écris pas par métier. Vivre n'est pas un métier." — Blaise Cendrars

"I want to speak of verse in a plain way as I would of pigs: that is the only honest way." — T.E. Hulme.

"There is no reason why every activity must of necessity be confined to one or other of those ridiculous limitations which we call music, literature, painting, etc." —Bruno Corradini and Emilio Settimelli, 'Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius: Futurist Manifesto,' 1914.

"Post free-verse is like playing basketball with a ping pong ball, like playing golf with hockey equipment, like football without the game, like going to the moon without going."

"Meter has hurt so many people; subjugated, abandoned, pointlessly employed and exhausted so many millions."

As T.E. Hulme was conceiving free verse (via *Vers Libre*) with his 'A Lecture on Modern Poetry' in 1908 in England, F.T. Marinetti was condemning it in Italy with his proto-fascist, anti-prosodic manifestos, in particular 'Parole in Libertà' wherein he tolls the death knell for free verse:.

Free verse once had countless reasons for existing but now is destined to be replaced by words-in-freedom. The evolution of poetry and human sensibility has shown us the two incurable defects of free verse.

1. Free verse fatally pushes the poet towards facile sound effects, banal double meanings, monotonous cadences, a foolish chiming, and an inevitable echo-play, internal and external.

2. Free verse artificially channels the flow of lyric emotion between the high walls of syntax and the weirs of grammar. The free intuitive inspiration that addresses itself directly to the intuition of the ideal reader finds itself imprisoned and distributed like purified water for the nourishment of all fussy, restless intelligences.

Apollinaire responded with his own manifesto 'L'Antitradition Futurist,' a 4-page flyer determining what to destroy, what to construct, what to shit on, and who deserves a rose.

L'ANTITRADITION FUTURISTE

Manifeste-synthèse

ABAS LEP^{ominir} A liminé SS^{korsusu}
otalo EIS^{oramir} ME nlgme

ce moteur à toutes tendances impressionnisme fauvisme cubisme expressionnisme pathétisme dramatisme orphisme paroxysme DYNAMISME PLASTIQUE
MOTS EN LIBERTÉ INVENTION DE MOTS

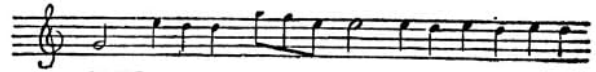
DESTRUCTION

Suppression de la douleur poétique
des exotismes snobs
de la copie en art
des syntaxes *déjà ramassées par l'Europe d'aujourd'hui*
de l'adjectif
de la ponctuation
de l'harmonie typographique
des temps et personnes des verbes
de l'orchestre
de la forme théâtrale
du sublime artiste
du vers et de la strophe
des maisons
de la critique et de la satire
de l'intrigue dans les récits
de l'ennui

SUPPRESSION DE L'HISTOIRE

Pas
de
regrets

INFINITIF



MER DE

aux

Critiques	Essayistes	Les frères siamois
Pédagogues	Néo et post	D'Annunzio et Rostand
Professeurs	Bayreuth	Dante Shakespeare Tolstoj
Musées	Montmartre et Munich	Goethe
Quattrocentistes	Lexiques	Dilettantismes merdo-
Dixseptièmeistes	Bongottismes	yants
Itinies	Orientalismes	Eschyle et théâtre d'O-
Patines	Dandysmes	range
Historiens	Spiritualistes ou réalistes (sans sentiment de la réalité et de l'esprit)	Inde Égypte Fiesole et la théosophie
Venise Versailles Pompei Bruges Oxford Nuremberg Tolède Bénarès etc.	Académismes	Scientisme
Défenseurs de paysages Philologues		Monnaie Wagner Beethoven Edgard Poe Walt Whitman et Baudelaire.

ROSE

aux

Marinetti Picasso Boccioni Apollinaire Paul Fort Mercereau Max Jacob Carrà Delaunay Henri-Matisse Braque Depaquit Séverine Severini Derain Russolo Archipenko Pratella Balla F. Divoire N. Beauduin T. Varlet Buzzi Palazzeschi Maquaire Papini Soffici Folgore Govoni Montfort R. Fry Cavacchioli D'Alba Altomare Tridon Metzinger Gleizes Jastrebzoff Royère Canudo Salmon Castiaux Laurencin Aurel Agero Léger Valentine de Saint-Point Delmarle Kandinsky Strawinsky Herbin A. Billy G. Sauvebois Picabia Marcel Duchamp B. Cendrars Jouve H. M. Barzun G. Polti Mac Orlan F. Fleuret Jaudon Mandin R. Dalize M. Brésil F. Carco Rubiner Bétuda Manzella-Frontini A. Mazza T. Derème Giannattasio Tavalato De Gonzagues-Friek C. Larronde etc.

PARIS, le 29 juin 1912, jour du Grand Prix, à 65 mètres au-dessus du Boul. S.-Germain

DIRECTION DU MOUVEMENT FUTURISTE.
Corso Venezia, 61 - MILAN

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE.
(207, BOULEVARD SAINT-GERMAIN - PARIS)

The egomaniacal credo of the coming age of art-for-the-artist's-sake is announced in the 1914 manifesto of Bruno Corradini and Emilio Settemelli: "Therefore EVERY ARTIST WILL BE ABLE TO INVENT A NEW FORM OF ART, which would be the free expression of the particular idiosyncrasies in his cerebral makeup, with all its modern insanity and complication, a new art form in which would be found the most diverse means of expression, combined in new ways and degrees—words, colors, notes, indications of shapes, scents, facts, noises, movements, physical sensations; I.E., A CHAOTIC, UNAESTHETIC, AND CAVALIER MIXING OF ALL THE ARTS ALREADY IN EXISTENCE AND OF ALL THOSE WHICH ARE AND WILL BE CREATED BY THE INEXHAUSTIBLE WILL FOR RENEWAL WHICH FUTURISM WILL BE ABLE TO INFUSE INTO HUMANITY." In other words, the cynosure of the idiosyncratic age-to-come will be art-for-the-artist's-sake.

I am everywhere or rather I start to be everywhere
It is I who am starting this thing of the centuries
to come.

— Apollinaire



Revolutions are aesthetic, designed in a kind of competitive, cooperative, cutthroat, divisive, ingrouping/outgrouping environment. I tend to locate the prefigurative moment of what was to become avant-guerre modernism at the first word of Alfred Jarry's 1896 performance of his nosist (*one* is the royal *we*) "exaggerated mirror" theatre piece *Ubu Roi*; seminally, the *mousiké* is all right there: set, situation, song, movement, spoken word, in an ideal wholeness Plato might have admired—only, *entirely desecrated*. An anarchic *mousiké*, while wholly owing itself to ancient *mousiké* as the prevailing order to be cast into disorder; upheld as the anti-model. Nietzsche would be the *avant-guerre* patron philosopher ("meter lays a veil over reality; it effectuates a certain artificiality of speech and unclarity of thinking; by means of the shadows it throws over thoughts it now conceals, now brings into prominence") while the direct handoff to Marinetti may have been the decadent, immersive, political, civic, militaristic, literary, totally aestheticized living theater of Gabriele D'Annunzio. And of course there would have been no initial, decisive modernist spark when Marinetti crashed his car (while swerving to avoid a bicycle) without the acceleration provided by the rapid developments marking the start of the century: the automobile, airplane, trans-continental railway, north and south pole expeditions, the telegraph, radio, cinema, mass-circulation newspaper, the sense of simultaneity, electrical engineering, modern physics, the chemical industry, synthetic materials, the proletariat, internationalist socialism, interlocking international imperialisms, war as cleanse, mass art, mass audience as art object, aestheticized politics, politicizing of aesthetics (the fruits of which: fascism and

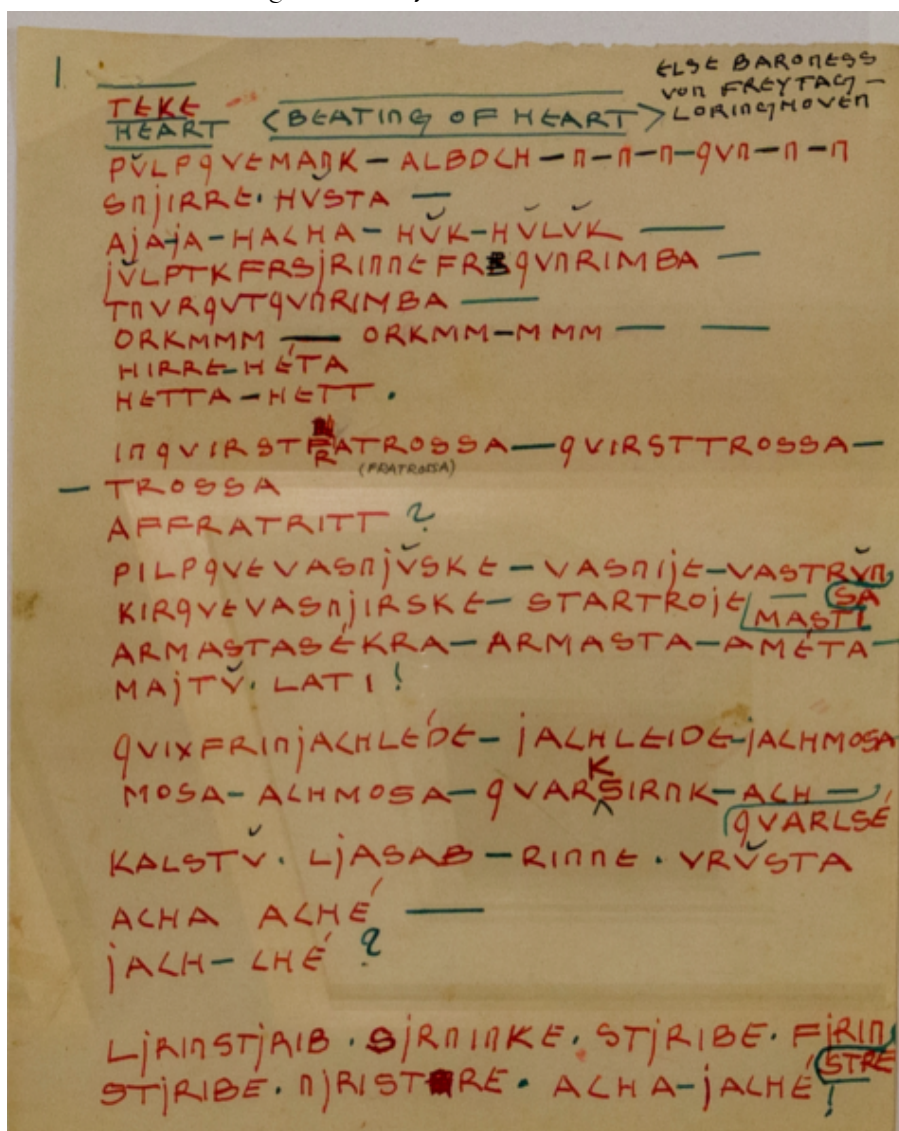
"idealized" socialist realism), autotelic *l'art pour l'art* and *l'art pour l'artist* as well as the emergent *Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia*.

Poems free, even of words. From Hugo Ball's diary: "I have invented a new genre of poems, 'Verse ohne Worte' (poems without words) or *Lautgedichte* (sound poems)."

gadji beri bimba
glandridi lauli lonni cadori...

Tumultuous times. Granted. But why and when did the absolute disdain for the past as *modus operandi* set in? (Marinetti even attacked spaghetti!) "On ne peut pas transporter partout avec soi le cadavre de son pere." (Apollinaire, 'Les Peintres cubistes,' 1913.) "The only freedom we demand is freedom from the dead." (Khlebnikov.) No less now. We take civilization personally, and cellularly. "Don't have to be what / one is pastly in life." (Alice Notley.)

It is possible to have no past *and* recover it at the same time. It's called *experience*. Or, to have no past by recovering it. To live a *let-go-of* past. (Again, I'm looking for the equanimous revolution, that repeats history only by providing what we love of life. Transmuting the poisons, not avoiding them. *Tantric* ingestion and transformation, not *sutric* renunciation and unworldliness. Walking directly into the assault with only world-wise words, trusting in humanity.)



(Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven)

SUBVERSIVE TREATMENT DAMAGING PATIENTS INSTEAD OF UNDOING THE DELETERIOUS MEDICAL PRACTICE (AS AN ANALOGY)—POETRY A BOUT OF ITSELF—ALL OWING TO ILLIBATION

"*I don't know the difference between cultural memory and cellular memory.*" — Eleni Stecopoulos

"*I want poetry that's bad for you.*" — Disgruntled contrarian addressing the Academy.

Without meter there can be no non-meter. (Just as "words in freedom" are entirely determined by the grammar they eschew. Like making enemies out of making...)

Nonmeter is meter. The departed.

To create the *avant-guerre avant-garde* it was compulsory to disown meter. Meter had long locked poetic language into strict scansion patterns. Poetry had been the repository, the memory, the aspiration, the hearing heart, the cohesiveness and revolutionary force for humanity from our very beginning. The carrier wave for civilization had been the count of the contour of the line of verse. Just target that—that had been the father-cadaver proto-modernists had been carrying on their shoulders. Blow that up and all the overstuffed libraries would close, the museum-cemeteries and "moldy vaults of the academies" would quickly collapse. Pulverize meter, and what do you get? Particles. Letters. Phones. Sounds in isolation — ample exuberance for believing it is one's very actions bringing on the new era and the building of bombs (both figurative and factual). Although meter would appear to be a minor casualty in the *avant-guerre* purge, it was in fact the lynchpin — holding together the lyric, itself responsible for sentiment, self, civilization and other forms of trash to be taken out. This lynchpin, the line of poetry, is nothing less than speech calling on itself to surpass itself in order to address our necessitous condition, to save us, yes, from ourselves, to condemn us, to speak for us; poetry is speech speaking for itself, defending itself against our abuses, asking to be spoken in full.

To be revolutionary, drop the prosody? No, feature *only* the prosodic. No, continue to accelerate, bombard, pulverize. No past. Free misanthropy. Perhaps impartially—but not in a notably compassionate sense. How bare can words be stripped? To reveal what?

When Marinetti read his militarized *Zang Tumb Tuum* in Petersburg in 1914, the Russian Futurists severely criticized the piece as passé, in relation to Kruchenykh and Khlebnikov's *zaum* poetry. I imagine that Marinetti's "onomatopoetic psychic harmony" histrionics would have sounded rather hollow up against *zaum's* wild *zvukopis* (sound shape)—its extensively philological, root-splitting and infixing; its myriadly morphemic, mind-bendingly basic, benign, correlationally chaotic, proto-word playfulness. Shklovsky wrote of Khlebnikov: "And finally, a strong tendency, led by Khlebnikov has emerged. In light of these developments we can define poetry as *attenuated, tortuous* speech. Poetic speech is *formed speech*. Prose is ordinary speech—economical, easy, proper, the goddess of prose is a goddess of the accurate, facile type, of the 'direct' expression of a child. I shall discuss roughened form and retardation as the general *law* of art at greater length..." Understood. But, lawmaking (like the poetics of the manifesto) is, in itself, a lesson in

enmity. To my ear, at the root level, *zaum* seeks accuracy, sometimes through attenuation, but more often through concision.



And today we have the ennui of the rehashing of the opposition between difficulty and ease. (In place of “free verse”?)

Avant-garde, also, presented as responsible for the degree of poetization of endless war, is as passé as it sounds.

An *avant-guerre avant-garde* will of course be changed by any war it promotes. Gramsci said of the Futurists: "They have destroyed, destroyed, destroyed, without worrying if the new creations produced by their activity were on the whole superior to those destroyed." (SCW 51)

From John Berger's essay 'The Moment of Cubism': "The Cubists imagined the world transformed, but not the process of transformation." A variation on the theme of partial poetics.

After the hyperbolic, exuberant Futurist buildup, what was the direct experience of history-in-the-making for, say, Cendrars returning home from the front after his right arm had been amputated?

Focusing on destruction necessarily faces backwards. Walter Benjamin's Angel of History "is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress." (from Benjamin's 9th thesis in his essay 'Theses on the Philosophy of History').

W.B. Yeats said of Jarry's play *Ubu Roi*: "The players are supposed to be dolls, toys, marionettes, and now they are all hopping like wooden frogs, and I can see for myself that the chief personage, who is some kind of King, carries for sceptre a brush of the kind that we use to clean a closet [toilet]. Feeling bound to support the most spirited party, we have shouted for the play, but that night at the Hôtel Corneille I am very sad, for comedy, objectivity, has displayed its growing power once more. I say, "After Stéphane Mallarmé, after Verlaine, after Gustave Moreau, after Puvis de Chavannes, after our own verse, after all our subtle colour and nervous rhythm, after the faint mixed tints of Conder, what more is possible? After us the Savage God."

All-at-once was the Futurist medium. Storms of progress. Now, which terms to disinter in relation to meter with regard to the preciousness of life, as wars rage on, as the climate radicalizes, autocracies rise, distrust becomes pandemic and human, poison. Whether to learn to ingest our toxins or refrain from making them must not be mistaken for mere recycling. What is the ecocosmic metric? If we are each all alone in the universe, fixated on the poetics of self-preservation, a danger to ourselves, the sun, our measure of life, giver of meter, will incinerate us, who have forgotten to hear.

"Does poetry harbor the malady? Does it hollow out the remedy for a boat? It is tempting to say that poets are proxy dreamers who stay in the impasse to provide passage for others ... I want poetry that knows it might have to take odious language into its mouth, the way a doctor sucks out the poison to expel it ... The poem I want heals because its language is not instrumental. It drains power from law." (from *Dreaming in the Fault Zone*, Eleni Stecopoulos)

The path to modernity and beyond was paved by the manifesto snippet. Manifesto is revolutionary. Study the tone, intent and layout of revolution as a conservative genre (conserving the swings of causality) and write a countervailing (inconspicuous, non-magniloquent, agenda-less, equanimous, anti-oppositional tractate. A possible starting point is *Futurism An Anthology, or 100 Artists' Manifestos from the Futurists to the Stuckists*, and then fan out from there—from the Ten Commandments to Thomas Campion's *Observations in the Art of English Poesie*, Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, Donna Haraway's *Cyborg Manifesto*, the UN *Declaration of Human Rights*, the *AfriCobra Manifesto*, to Bob Grenier's *ON SPEECH* or Edwin Torres' *A Nuyo-Futurists' Manifestiny*.

METRIKOI & RHYTHMIKOI—RHYTHM ABSOLUTISM—TIMING TYRANNY—*L'OREILLE DÉCIDE SEULE*—REVULSION OF METRIC AS RHYTHMIC—A METER NOT IN THE BODY IS NOT A ~~METER~~ BODY—ACADEMICISM OF TRANSGRESSION—DOWN ON GRAMMARIANS

"*Qui donc a gagné quelque chose à la réglementation de la poésie? Les poètes médiocres. Eux seuls !*" (Who after all has gained anything by the regulation of poetry? Mediocre poets, only them.) — Henri Meschonnic

"Even embedded in speech, meter is a high-intensity, pulsed electric field that treats (and mistreats) our conditions; in fact noninvasively, endogenously."

"In general, the word metron means 'measure'. In particular, as we are about to see, a metron is a way of measuring two irreducible elements that cannot be taken out of the words of the special language that is *mousikē*. These two irreducible elements are rhythm and melody." — Language and Meter, Gregory Nagy

Who would ever pit rhythm against meter? Or favor time over space? Is it necessary to do so? What's necessity got to do with it? Necessitousness has everything to do with poiesis. Is intuitively-attuned timing-takeover a more benign ruler than metronomic tedium? What's beneficence got to do with biolinguistics?

What's *your* beef? (Or, for vegans: *thorn in your side*?) Your veritable *Verfremdungseffekt*, your overt *ostranenie*? Distanced and defamiliarized from belonging, from what can be clearly seen as real? Impotently estranged in poetics and public-health indivisibility. As radical as red tape. Conservative as fine print. If destruction is merited, be on both sides—patent harm that doesn't harm.

In my book, what-is and meter are co-constitutive.

Though removable from the practice of poetry where it belongs, meter, like rhythm and melody, can't be removed from words. Nor do we understand how all things began.

Meter can be marked or unmarked.

Meter, acting on its own, as though isolable from other elements, is scarcely viable. Unspeakable—ideal—unreal phrasing. The rise of the runaway regulatory. Stay in line and out of touch.

Song's derivation from speech is its deviation from speech. Song has long been deposed by discourse, disco, talk-song. The ABCs come after song, splitting hairs and hadrons. If there is mercy in it, we're shown all that is compounded will be made simple, though by means of suffering. As succinctly described by Gregory Nagy: "That is, *song* and *dance* and *instrumental music* may be seen as separate elements that happen to come together in the art of *mousikē*. Either way, separate or unified, song and dance and instrumental music are regulated by the measures of their rhythm and their melody. And such measures are based on language. That is the essence of meter."

Poetry is, concurrently, yet-undifferentiated from song. This is identifiable as *prosody*, the precursor of both language and music. Prosodically, pitch, melodic peak and contonation (pitch hitting on accent) are built into our word-bound and phrase-bound intonation.

The safe word is "pattern" (and perhaps *measure*). No one has ever been attacked for saying *pattern*. You will be safe, but not saved. Experimental in sentence but not sentience or synapse—in chaos's tapestry's hidden motif.

If both sides challenge the same norm, who's norm, in fact, is it? We are our only predator. We must agree upon a reason to fight.

Were ignorance of meter bliss, I'd be the first onboard. Formalization meant sacralization. Convention invents contravention. A neoformalist's work is never done, always undone.

Meter, in a denigrated sense, is what's left once prosody is removed from words; when the elements of rhythm, melody, song and dance, intrinsic to the words of poetry, are removed from poetry's words. Meter is the measuring of a poem's rhythm, melody and motor activity. Without these elements (that which meter measures) meter no longer measures anything other than itself. When the words of poetry, irreducible to meter, are ruled by meter, the dimming and diminishment sets in.

Meter arose in a multi-media *holon*, in interaction with speech, rhythm, melody, movement and instrumental accompaniment; an integrative form known as *mousikē*, practiced by *poiētēs* as the art of *poiētikē*, the irreducible precursors of what we now call poets and poetics. Meter was also integral to its cultural occasion. It played its part in occasioning and marking the occasion. Meters were event-specific, morally encoded, ritual-embedded and divinely mimetic to the point of God-embodiment. Even if artificially isolated from its circumstances (reversed-engineered, if you will) a meter has its own vibratory signification. A spondee is solemn. An anapest will march. Make no mistake.

(Plato's main argument against the poets had to do with their ineptitude and confusion with regard to orchestrating the ideal of *mousikē*—their shattered sense of composition. Through their ignorance and hubris, poets were the vanguard of an a-musical anarchy, catering to the theatrocratic mob.)

At least by the time of Aristoxenus (4th c. BCE), the disintegration of *mousikē* allowed a further isolating of meter and its strict identification as poetic rhythm, polarizing theorists into *metrikoi* and *rhythmikoi*. *Metrikoi* (the “grammarians”) scanned syllables as either long or short with long twice the count of short. The *metrikoi* were syllable-arrangers, metronomists, segment structuralists. *Rhythmikoi*, on the other hand, were more flexible and flowing, acknowledging that prosody is inscribed in the language and may override regimentation. They were, in a word, *musical*; relaxed, with regard to the indefinite, even infinite, range of quantity and pitch present in underlying speech, requiring prolongations, rests, resolutions, run-ons, and impossibly intricate terminology. *Metrikoi* were rather aprosodic, while *rhythmikoi* were freely far more prosodic. *Metrikoi* were syllable fundamentalists, while *rhythmikoi* were arsis and thesis experimentalists.

An oversimplification from Servius: “The rhythmicists subject syllables to time measurements, the *metricists* subject time to the syllables.”

Although meter's co-dependencies are myriad, its own basis is singular. Classical meter is the variation of a theoretically indivisible unit, the smallest perceptible time-division Aristoxenus referred to as the *chronos protos*. *Chronos protos* is, in effect, the bottom number of musical time signature, the single beat in a modern bar, the quarter note, quaver, crotchet. It's the short syllable in poetry. On one level, song is the intricate interplay between syllable duration and melody. For *metrikoi*, a long syllable strictly occupied twice the time of one short syllable. For the *rhythmikoi*, syllabic duration was more relative, with adagio, allegro, syncopation and flexibility of overall flow. The *chronos protos* in Vedic Sanskrit is the *mātrā*, described as the “blink of an eye,” “lighting flash” or “note of the woodcock”; the duration of a simple, unmodified vowel.

English has no *chronos protos*, no minimum chronophonic packet standardized for the purpose of sound patterning. English prosody is generally understood to be quantity-insensitive. To imitate classical meters,

English poetry has a long history of (1) applying the classical rules of quantification to its own syllables, and of course (2) the prevalent, unsound practice of simply substituting *stress* for “long” and *unstressed* for “short.” In the pages ahead, I’ll be undercutting this quantity/quality clash.

In an undemeaning of meter, in making meter meaningful, time itself, and time in relation to that which is timed, is the first critical issue. Without opening a deeper, experimental, experiential sense of time, meter, as a form of ignorance, will continue to annoy, deform and underperform; consigned to the trash-heap of time.

Meter is at present a full-blown spacetime conundrum on which our cosmogony depends.

RHYTHMIZOMENON—AURAL GRANULARITY

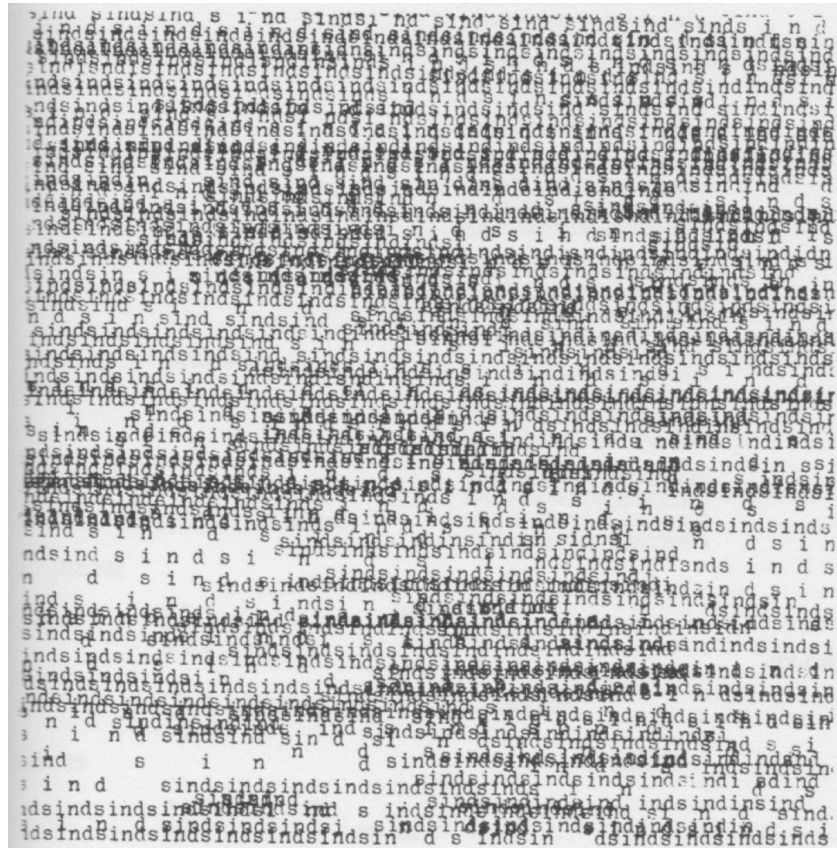
Relying again on Aristoxenus as a starting point for pinpointing the problematics of poetic pulseform: “We must imagine two different natures, that of rhythm and that of the *rhythmizomenon*, having the same relations to one another as a plan has to the object that is planned.” The act or art of applying rhythm to the rhythmized is named *rhythmopoeia*.

The *rhythmizomenon* is the raw material of that which is timed. The problem being: there actually is no raw material. (Just as we are not time’s raw material.) *Rhythmizomenon* is a very useful term for pointing this out. Which is to say: meter as *rhythm appliqué*, as cookie-cutter template cutting into dough-lingo as measurement of third-party time ... these interrelationships are illusory and disembodiment. And, clearly, the poetic line defined according to the problems and solutions of the rhythmizing of already-rhythmic speech can only lead us back to further confusion and deeper demeaning of meter.

For example, meter is not a *measuring* but a *manifesting* of time by means of the movements of syllabled feet that are already” time.” Meter is the movement of manifestation. Here-ing.

In the granularity of poetic composition, the *chronos protos* can only manifest as a syllable. The basic (irreducible) unit of the foot has always been the syllable. It’s a viscid situation. Although the time of the syllable is formed by phonemes, the phonemes themselves are sub-granular. The measurement of movement beneath the threshold of the syllable, beneath the agreed-upon word pronunciations, derails the rhythm, trips up the foot. Freed of the atomic syllable, time opens as inter&intra phonemic contours, a finer granularity of space. And this level of granularity can be a further organizing dimension for the poetic line, beyond, say, the Old English alliterative hemistichs. Lewis Freedman refers to a “swerve” that allows him to “make words at the speed and shape of the letter without a word in mind”:

Tone sands bre(aking) first a (reasonable)
 (activity) sen(der) bis(tro) called miss youth
 factive fiss (in) (your) (pop)
 (so(ld) attr(active) fencer (to) (your)
 mint (and) (you) (mi(nte)d i(t) rigorously
 frappe wide (w\l) anc(hor) (steam)
 (i(nte) (it) lis(tener) (be(low) crop (out)
 told (you) mon(k) we(ird) gap
 (told) int(ro) fin (to) (s(wat) (w(an) (doody)
 (maladjustment) (ditz) irri(gates) wo(rds)
 (and) (mo(neys) ri(sk) justly (giving) (its)
 (back) (to) (you) josepi



(Heinz Gappmayr)

Innovate notational systems that track with actual prosody that also mark further possibilities for poetry performance. Innovate mixed meters, situationally, live, within what you're already saying.

And before all else, pronounce the phonemes over and over until they are as strange and instrumental (and irreplaceable) as they *are*. They conduct us as they compose through the cognitive heart, according to place and manner of articulation interplay. Sounds, like substances, have different properties and potencies. Open speech sounds to the whole sensorium.

Name this experimentation a political party. The great rhythmikoi Henri Meschonnic declared his political affiliation by establishing the Rhythm Party (of course via manifesto). The Prosody Party would be the Disarmament By Tone of Voice Party, the Hearing Heart Party.

Make words sound as differently from conventional meanings as possible. A Mahamudra practice the opens then evanesces the mind. Happiness and what is, indivisibility.

Stop breathing, anytime.

TELLING TIME—MUSIC WITHOUT TIME, POEMS WITHOUT LINES—THE PHYSICS OF METRICS—CLASSICAL METER WASN'T CLASSICAL—THE TEMPORALITY OF ENGLISH—UNPREDICTABLE METER—PROBABLISTIC BEAT MEETING HOW DISCORDANT WE'VE BECOME—TAKING ON COSMOCIDAL COMPULSION

"And since music somehow issuing forth from the most secret sanctuaries leaves traces in our very senses or in things sensed by us, mustn't we follow through those traces to reach without fail, if we can, those very places I have called sanctuaries?" — from *De Musica*, Augustine

"Time" from IE root *di, dai*: to divide. Division, always trouble.

If time is the measure of change, stop measuring, to defy time? Stop changing. Tie into that which is changeless, and still speak of it. Meter comes from this, that which is free of it. Otherwise known as "listening in." We're pristine, but can't help getting our hands dirty with doing. What happens when we stop measuring change? Are we swept away in its flood? Does it run roughshod over us? Do we slow down our deceasing? We're that without which the divine would have no experience. This interchange (between our experience and Gods' inexperience) is, as we're spoken into existence, the source of meter, meter as source and our sowing and souring on meter as subjugation to the suffering we've brought upon ourselves by its abuse, as our very speech even more tightly tethers us to these templates of time, this very limited set of organic beats we "do" and *defy*, determining both our humanity and inhumanity.

Fountain of youth: keep writing on and on, ametrically. Fountain of youth: die to time. Fountain of sooth: cut the flow where it comes from, where it never starts stopping.

There's no way around impermanence. Once this is recognized, it has a surround at its center.

If you read a poem in your basement, time will move more slowly than if you read it on your roof. Your feet will be heavier.

Even with the identical meter, in terms of prosody, it's impossible for time to pass uniformly in two different lines of the poem. Too many contours. Count is not color, timber, intonation.

The variables with which rhythm measures change are the basic elements of prosody: stress, beat, duration, pause, intonation, cadence. Prosody is too alive to ever be pre-determined, even when bottled up or behind bars...and especially then. Its power of protest is omnipotent.

Meter is modification of the structure/stricture of time. It slows down thought and its surrounds. We incline toward those places where things happen more slowly. Some people even read poetry.

Meters aren't things. Things endure. Meter is duration. Classical meters meant to *immortalize*. Nostalgia is a thing—meter makes it an event so it fluctuates.

Rhythm requires space and time. Try taking rhythm out of space. Why we can't survive in outer space or inner space as all space. The promised compassion in a vacuum can't be practiced. I've never heard it said "Buddha is dead." Don't hope. See what happens.

Time is how things vary with respect to each other. (Composing the variables, line to line in a poem. It's impossible to be alive enough.)

We have meters so that common time (shared time) can become nonillusory.

Are two events in different places happening at the same time? The flow of time is subjective. The present is a personal bubble that extends as far as a stone's throw. Interconnectedness may be the last thing on earth that can make everything one.

Myriad times. A mix of meters. No two times are alike. A line is its own proper time. Slow things down even more, aware of the stability of phonotactics and how phones forget forge and anticipate each other.

Occurrences constitute the world, not particles and fields.

Meter is the totality of events in a line. Local times. Lines are always "on" local times interacting with each other. A network of times.

Unity in innumerable times.

Stress is a gravity, sucking in its neighbors, disappearing and compressing them.

Passage of time is not uniform in quantitative-versus-qualitative verse.

Change rides on the back of the changeless, just as we prefer the page to be blank before beginning.

Meter—being a timing device—is illusory in (qualitative) English, and this is why it's so potent: it's insubstantial and totally contingent, a real place, like our lives, for aging dying making decisions and being overjoyed. The red-bellied woodpecker comes to my window each day at 9:07 a.m. to extract the dried cherries from the mix. Doesn't matter if you believe me or not. It has now happened.

It's easy to "experience" outside of time's flow. Has this has been the project of poetry, to amortize mortality? To *not* opt for misery or addiction? Meter is the most direct challenge to entropy ever attempted. Louis Zukofsky's *80 Flowers* stopped time, or made it run vertically. Olivier Messiaen made it flow backwards, kept it from happening, ended it: all by means of time.

a

Time without detail is timeless. That is, no details whatsoever. Purge of the particular. Field of *is*.

On the other hand, were we to perceive each detail in the entire cosmos, time wouldn't arise. Time's an inability called *limited participation*. Knowing where you are, I no longer share your tempo. Meter is the grace of accepting limitation and sacrificing it to the entirety.

It's useful to understand that meter in relation to English is "hopelessly misfit." Beauty comes from insight into the degree of the absurdity, and a sense of failure as innovation.

Ubiquitous rhythm becomes relic sound then colored light, then just colors of cosmic embryogeny. This all takes place in our hearts.

Free rhythm is the keeper of divisive and additive rhythms. Each day we pull ourselves together with the minimal evidence that we've been here before, been doing this all along. Innovation is the boast of blind secluded in total interconnectivity.

Meter is awareness of the number of pulses *between* more or less regularly occurring accents, like catabolic anabolic interplay.

The first western music inherited measure from the meters of classical verse with clarified line/syllable/foot counts. Modes came from metrical type. This little-known history will stay little.

The past: co-dependently put in place by an immediacy of myriad events.

Without duration we merely endure. Without the rhythm of things as events, without pulse, on-and-off is turned off. All definitions of rhythm involve time division. Meter is the end of the beginning (instead of continuing to infinity, which is utterly impractical). Meter is *apeiron-resistant*.

We typically forget how much this delights us, sensorily.

Where there is no conditioning, you could say anything. Anything could say you. We speak from anything, in ignorance. In order to transact, in place of perishing in awe.

The line is a queue waiting to get to the front of the queue. The line is a queue waiting to get to the end of the line.

English is durational (via long vowels, consonant clusters, distant phoneme shifts, and of course by emphasis, intonation and individual expression)—but is it consequently so? Only if we want to understand each other. Duration dominates stress. This is English's unquantifiable quantification truth. Please profess.

It's common knowledge that everything comes from sound that lies outside of our hearing. Nobody believes this. The movement moved, making a moment. What moves *moves* in space. What moves makes a sound. Permutations in the movement patterned the matter the permutations were making.

Prosody is always perfect. Poetry is not. Poetry's more like fencing (it was easy to get sliced to pieces in Elizabethan England, where poets wore rapiers in the street and the theatre doubled as a prize-fight arena). Poetry is like gunslinging. Trying to protest without an opponent. Terrorism is too timid a word. We *have* tried everything, and must not look outside of everything. Only poetry can alter the evidence that, as Charles Dickens said of America: "the heaviest blow ever dealt at Liberty's Head, will be dealt by this nation in its ultimate failure of its example to the Earth." (*American Notes for the General Circulation*). The whole point of the advent and playing out of America has been a counter-imperialism, to align all nations with its failure as negative enlightenment, the only type available to us at this time.

Muse-craft is meter...meters a witnessing of the past, the future and the creation, along with an ability to distinguish a believable lie from plain truth in our speech. "Pitiful shepherds, mere bellies. We know how to speak many false things as though true. But also, when we wish, to speak the plain truth." (Theogony, Hesiod, 27-29.)

"Language milks herself." We're responsible for the *products*.

Time passes where people die, in the random, unknowable behavior of meters. The "nothing new" we'll never know, so we *innovate*.

How does meter act in relation to the fact that individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence? "Necessitous men are not free men. People who are hungry and out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made." (Second Bill of Rights, FDR.)

Too hot for atoms. I can imagine.

Stars an endangered species. As good as proven.

Nothing else will ever happen. Only what happens.

Do you believe in proportion or proportionate response (which implies imbalance)?

The muses were poets, that's why they're our muses. Perfection and the imperfection of bravura. Our role is to outrage, without outraging. Ignorance never sleeps.

THE EMOTIONAL QUALITY AND QUANTITY OF WISDOM—ACTUAL OR ANALOGOUS
MUSIC?—EMOTIONAL METER MUSICAL EMOTION HEARTFELT AND OR FORMAL FEELING
BEFORE DURING AND AFTER THE FACT AND ITS AFTEREFFECTS—CLASSICAL TO HIGH
MODERN *MOUSIKÉ*—COLLAGE AS LOGICAL OUTCOME—WHY MUSICIANS FAR LESS
RELENTLESSLY CURSE THE BAR (THAN POETS THE FOOT)—MUSIC ENVY EMULATION
ENMITY OR ENVELOPMENT

"*Raise grief to music.*" (L. Zukofsky, "A" 11.) From "A" 1: "*Desire longing for perfection.*"

"*The blood's tide like the music*

...

As beyond effort —

Music leaving no traces,

Not dying, and leaving no traces."

Emotion sustaining music, as one waveform. Where is the music, exactly? Is emotion unquestionable? Are we emotions' aftereffects? It's baubles? Emotion's words, as one unmistakable rhythm; the writing of emotion-sustained music?

Is poetry *actual* or *analogous* music? And is it then analogously rigorous? Free Verse's formal, metaphoric use of music and dance to make *mousiké* whole again is well known. Zukofsky's fugally composed "A" begins with Bach's St Matthew Passion and ends, 24 movements later, with a five-part score, one part of which is Handel's *Harpsichord Pieces*. The other four "voices" are extractions from four different Zukofsky texts. A page has a duration — that of the metronomic music. Other than the correlation of the speed at which the

voices are read and the "time-space factor of the music," the words (never to be sung) are entirely dissociated from the music, over the course of 239 pages.

From the *ABC OF READING* (61): "Music rots when it gets too far from the dance. Poetry atrophies when it gets too far from music." Ancient meter ultimately reincarnates (as straight-up Sapphics) in Pound's 'The Return.' Of deeper concern for an undemeaning of meter is Pound's panacean credo: "I believe in an 'absolute rhythm', a rhythm, that is, in poetry which corresponds exactly to the emotion or shade of emotion to be expressed." (*Literary Essays*, 9.) On a practical level, linguistic science agrees: emotional prosody is defined as the melodic, rhythmic, intonational elements of speech. Emotion manifests prosody. Are there discrepancies — artful or otherwise — between affect in the poet and affect in the poem? Is the poem the place for realizing emotion? Is emotion *meaning*? Is rhythmized emotion modally musical? Is a poem's enquiry into the source and nature of emotion (as distinct from its unchecked expression) necessarily amusical and artificial? Is there a commensurate working with the manifesting of emotion within oneself that is as arduous as one's poetics at once integral to that poetics? (I'm not referring to anger management, self-examination, catharsis or psychotherapy, but elemental altruistic, tantric and sutric practices.) How would the rhythm of fully free (and freeing) verse be emotionally induced (to keep free verse from falling flat)?

From H.D.'s *Notes on Thought and Vision & the Wise Sappho*, written in 1919, having survived war, family deaths, the Spanish flu, and the brutalizing circle of Imagists: "We need the testimony of no Alexandrian or late Roman scholiast to assure us of the artistic wisdom, the scientific precision of metre and musical notation, the finely tempered intellect of the this woman (Sappho). Yet for all her artistic moderation, what is the personal, the emotional quality of her wisdom?"

I greatly appreciate H.D.'s blending of the question of metrics with the matter of the emotional quality of wisdom, and, by extension, the wisdom's musical aspect. "But *I* will not let *I* creep into this story. I will not let *I* go on banging the tinkling cymbal of its own emotion." (Paint It Today). "O I am tired of measures like deft oars; / the beat and ringing / of majestic song..." (*CP*). "Sophocles cried out in despair before some inimitable couplet, "gods—what impassioned heart and longing made this rhythm?" (*The Wise Sappho*). At this point, H.D. was already fluent in the variable meter and genre practices that would allow her to take on and completely take apart Greek lyric, epic, dramatic and choral forms.

Ultimately, for any reawakening of meter, the most basic, seemingly self-evident elements such as *time*, *emotion*, *space*, *wisdom*, *existence* and even '*element*,' all constitutive of lyric and self, must be approached with utter unfamiliarity.

"*Damn the rules, it's the feeling that counts. You play all 12 notes in your solo anyway.*" John Coltrane

MATERIALS ART—ART MADE OF ITS OWN NUTS AND BOLTS AND NOT-ART —
WHATNOTART—MATERIALITY AS A MEND IN ITSELF—BELITTling MEANing TO BEHOLD
LANGUAGE IN ITSELF WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT IT IS

This this. It itself. Ding an sich. Slovo Kak Takovoe (the word as such) and *Bukva Kak Takovya* (the letter as such) — both titles of Khlebnikov/Kruchenykh manifestos.

Stoicheion: one of a series; one in a series from an unrelated series right next to that one.

An element is that which can't consist of other elements. A form may be a form that doesn't unify its elements. Form leaves contents and components alone. Partology. *Todi ti*. A *some*. *To ti esti*, the what it is. Survivors of the accidents.

A this *this* as any one of us. Exhilarating! Self is scintillating. Substratum surface. A surface of substrata objects.

Just a heap otherwise. It's finished. A framed heap. Composition by heap. Composition of heap. Heap of composition. Just a heap, before it's a *this*. Pre-this. A heap is one *one*. This is what's difficult to grasp. A unit, a particle, an indivisible bit, comes from a heap, a heap of heap, a heap of heap of a heap of a heap that can't actually exist.

A unity of heap and *this*... is a poem. Not a concrete poem. I wouldn't say a "spiritual" poem." Certainly not an *unconcrete* or *immaterial* poem. A what-is-is-what-is-indivisible poem. Heap minus heap plus (what?) divided by the strong nuclear force. Equals this poem.

Cónstruct equals fictional.

Fascinating. Not related to anything. Help.

Totally ignorant of the duty, the dharma, to bring us home.

Remove all interrelationship, step back, have a look. A part impossible to predict. Can't be a property. A particle that will only ever be predicted.

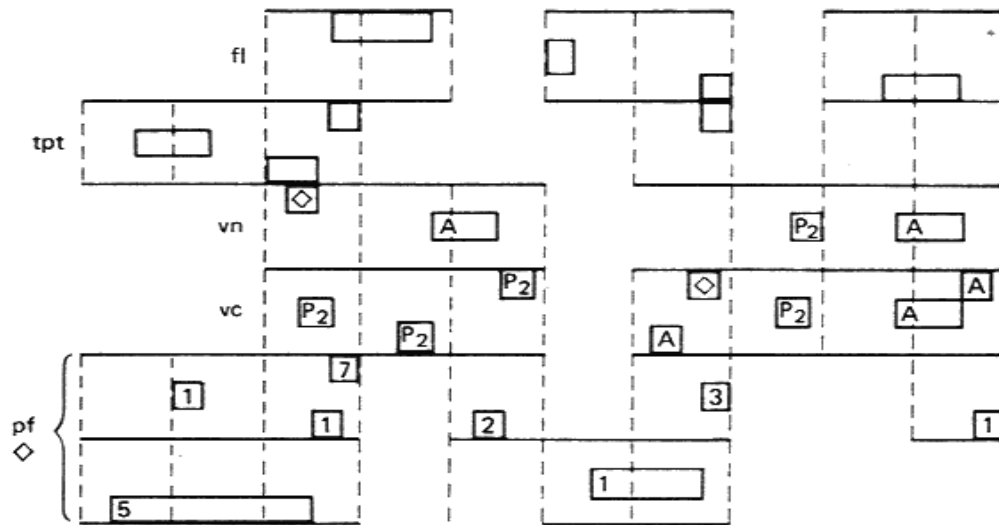
As you were as as-you-are (before confusion bootcamp).

"Similarly, a Cubist construction is formed from the most varied units in a definite organization... Just as nature decomposes a corpse into its elements, so Cubism pulverizes the old conclusions about painting and builds new ones according to its own system." (Malevich, *On New Systems in Art*, 1919.)

"Thought and speech cannot catch up with the emotional experience of someone inspired; therefore, the artist is free to express himself not only in a common language, but also in a private one, as well as in a language that does not have a definite meaning, that is transrational. A common language is binding; a free one allows more complete expression..."

FREE FROM VERSE—CLASSICAL METRICS CLASSICAL MECHANICS (DUH)—QUESTIONING EVERYTHING—TIMBRE TAKEOVER, SPACE STARTOVER—QUALITY & QUANTA—EXPRESSION OF THE MATERIALS THEMSELVES IN PLACE OF OUR SUBJECTIVITIES—NOT COMPOSITION *WITH* THE ELEMENTS, COMPOSITION *OF* THE ELEMENTS—PAGE=SPACE—SPLITTING THE AUM—MUSIC SICKNESS—*RIEN N'AURA EU LIEU QUE LE LIEU*

There is no simplifying the shift from High Modernist free verse in America to the mid-century artistic and social movements calling for total freedom from conventions. I'll just point out two critical currents that coursed through a great deal of the experimentation: (1) freedom of the expression of materials, as a means for eliminating "interference" by excising the lyric/sentimental/artisanal/interpolative/authoritarian/egotistically-sublime subject (quanta substituting for qualia) and (2) opening of space by composers and poets alike, placing objects in space, as distinct from purely marking time.



Think of it as a notational shift, with notes as sounds in stasis and syllables set in space. The same year (1950) Morton Feldman was scoring his *Projection* series on graph paper, Charles Olson was writing *Projective Verse*, promoting open verse and field composition with nanosyllable-objects scored in space by the typewriter. Through his graphs, Feldman was attempting to make sound hearable purely as sound, heard in itself, as unique, not as a segment of something else—i.e., specifically not *suprasegmentally* in relation to surrounding sounds in a way that would build compulsion or conventional rhythm. Feldman: "I am not a clockmaker. I am interested in getting to time in its unstructured existence." "The degrees of stasis, found in a Rothko or a Guston, were perhaps the most significant elements that I brought to my music from painting."

"The sweetness of meter and rime" and the *interfering ego* were practically indivisible—while the syllable was the secret that had been lost in a "honey-head" for 400 years.

A composer should, "give up the desire to control sound, clear his mind of music, and set about discovering means to let sounds be themselves rather than vehicles for man-made theories or expressions of human sentiments". (John Cage, *Silence 10*.)

Of course, such arduously adventitious practices (indeterminacy, de-control, unfixing of elements) are fraught with contradictions. Formal ingenuity overcoming accumulated formal convention also accumulates. Solving the "egocentric predicament" (the saccharine control freak) through material experimentation without an equally extensive re-viewing of the nature of mind, memory, subject, freedom, intention, may produce even greater egomaniacal monstrosities. Fine. In time, such experimental works will, in turn, be domesticated, as will their effect on us. To what end? To simply be productive? To prosper? To re-pose the elemental question: to what extent are our works — our compositional freedoms

— constitutive of the preservation, prospering and preciousness of life? How do they take part? How are they part of? The *measure* of this writing, that with which I weigh this question.

The elements themselves are conventions! Our recognition of them as components, units, essences, irreducibles, dots, dashes, phones, tones, quanta, pixels or quarks... is conventional. Composition is based on the elements of composition (duration, sound, grapheme, beat, rest, etc). But what is the basis of the elements?

ELATION ELEGANCE EXALTATION— IT ALL HAS TO DO WITH IT

"The way the horn sounds and resonates is the most important thing to me. If the sound isn't right, I don't feel I have my voice, which effects my mood and creative energy. When it is right, I literally feel like anything is possible and my only obstacle is my imagination."— Darius Jones

By *timbre* I mean the qualities, properties and possibilities of the instrument itself. Not measure, texture. The voice as one among many instruments. Not notes but sounds. Language material. Direct composition with the elements of which the elements of composition are composed.

The music is playing the sound of the music.

"At that time, in gratitude, I humbly asked to be given the means and privilege to make others happy through music." John Coltrane's poem 'A Love Supreme' is published in the liner notes of the 4-part suite album 'A Love Supreme.' A poem to whom, in whom, all things are possible. The 4th and final movement of the album was eventually titled *Psalm*. Written directly on the libretto/score, Coltrane states that *Psalm* is a "musical recitation of prayer by horn." It's a solo vocalization, through his tenor saxophone, syllable-by-syllable as note-by-note, of the poem 'A Love Supreme.' A sync that could not possibly be more perfect (as though perfection has degrees). *Psalm* defines "perfect." Music and poem *not analogous*, but one.

The image shows a handwritten musical score for John Coltrane's 'A Love Supreme'. The score is written on a 10-line blank score paper. The title 'COMPOSITION A Love Supreme' is written at the top. The score is divided into sections by Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, and V. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are extensive handwritten annotations in blue ink throughout the score, including 'Horn Solo', 'Bass Solo', 'Musical Recitation of Prayer by Horn in', and 'Horn Solo'. The score is written on a 10-line blank score paper. The title 'COMPOSITION A Love Supreme' is written at the top. The score is divided into sections by Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, and V. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are extensive handwritten annotations in blue ink throughout the score, including 'Horn Solo', 'Bass Solo', 'Musical Recitation of Prayer by Horn in', and 'Horn Solo'. The score is written on a 10-line blank score paper. The title 'COMPOSITION A Love Supreme' is written at the top. The score is divided into sections by Roman numerals I, II, III, IV, and V. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings. There are extensive handwritten annotations in blue ink throughout the score, including 'Horn Solo', 'Bass Solo', 'Musical Recitation of Prayer by Horn in', and 'Horn Solo'.

THE POEM FINDS ITS MUSIC THROUGH MYSTERY (WILL ALEXANDER)—THE GRANULARITY COMES DOWN TO THE SYNAPSE, NOT THE NOTE OR SYLLABLE—SAYING EVERYTHING THERE IS TO SAY—THE INFINITY OF THE HEART

"It comes from an aural spark; like Miró says, there's a speck on a canvas, and I go from there. And I hear a sound — it could be a particle, almost a phoneme, and I can just go from there." — Will Alexander

This particular writing on prosody is a technical treatise on metrics and an inquiry into poetry's possible *non-analogous* (and more than mutually constitutive) relationship with music. It's also of course, indistinguishably, a soft-tech countervailing of the enmity and violence that resounding through time as one of poetry's major mimeses.

The closing sentence of *On Anti-Biography* by Will Alexander: "For me, this is the green locale, the pleroma of eternal solar essence, glinting, full of fabulous maelstrom diamonds, an empowered hegira of drift, of claustrophobic rainbow spectrums which empty themselves, and return to themselves, like having an image go out and return to itself, so that its power transmutes by the very energy of its looping; and I think of myself, the poet sending signals into mystery, and having them return to me with oneiric wings and spirals, so much so, that I forget my prosaic locale with its stultifying anchors, with its familial dotage and image reports, with its dates inscribed in trapezoidal feces. I am only concerned with simultaneity and height, with rays of monomial kindling, guiding the neo-cortex through ravens, into the ecstasy of x-rays and blackness." From the preceding paragraph of *On Anti- Biography*: "It is the non-local field, the non-particle acid, flowing into my cognitive iodine rays, into the vicious fires of my tarantella marshes. So I dance with vibration, with the solar arc spinning backward around the miraculous force of a double green horizon."

This anti-who is any who, a *rishi*, an *ṛṣiḥ*. Any Who as intensely no possible other who. Extramundane. Who was never the same after first hearing the music of the free jazz. 5 Spot lineage, particularly the compositions of John Coltrane, Eric Dolphy, Albert Ayler. "Listening to Trane gave me an instantaneous connection with realms that were unknown to me within the borders of the conscious mind." Yet, technically, how would Alexander transpose free energy to poetry and exuberantly co-arise through his "ongoing repartee with the cosmos"?

Write orature. A poetry that is voraciously *vocabulist*. Like no power on earth, the surface is space and the composition is to be all of language; playing all the scales and every augmented, diminished, skipped, skewed interval. Principled interoceptive precision and outer space introspection.

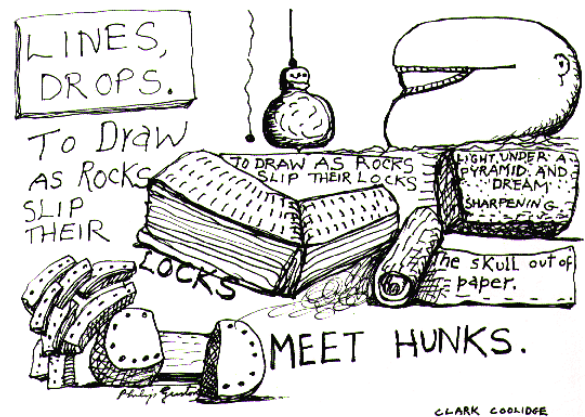
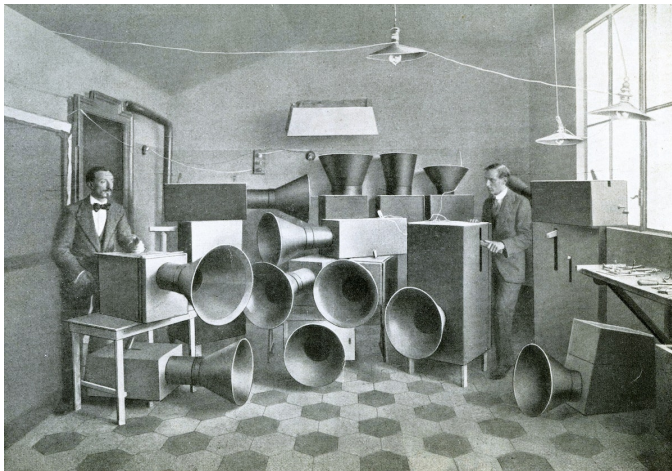
Prosody is the antithesis of problematic. It's provided by unencumbered chordal exploration as a stretched harmonics. And, on the other hand, overfilling the chord. Working all around the root without touching it. Microtonality is sub-phone. Omnitonality. Om on o. Like hearing the background relic radiation as all our

voices overheard as direct transcription. The equivalent of picking up and playing different horns during the song.

Very freely ideational. Distanced registers of diverged dictionaries as a compound word or phrase. Poem omnipresence opening into all-powerful. Dolphy, searching for the timbral sounds of his instruments, would make voice sounds, as Alexander makes instrument sounds with his voices.

The speed of space. Just as much a *chrononaut*. It's not indecipherable, it's an abstracted rhythmic figure. Freedom breaks exploitative habitual *and* experimental practices. Pretty much the working definition of our forefather *rishis*, foremother *rishikas*. A plurality of conductions; polyontological; no practical problem. The perfect emitter is a perfect absorber.

Graciousness. Open question. How does such all-out risk, taken in the greater pulsefield, care for (even communicate with) those in worlds where such risk is necessarily untaken...as an even greater risk if taken?

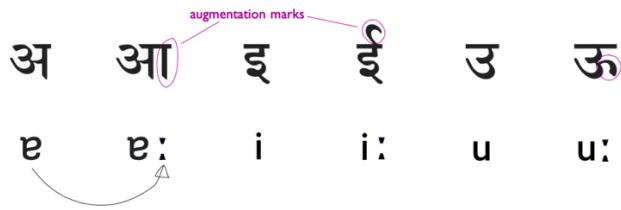
UR-METER & ALICE NOTLEY'S *FOR THE RIDE*—PROSODY IS THE ENERGY OF WORDS

*Metre is a veritable ship,
for those who want to go,
across the vast ocean of poetry.*—Dandin, 7th century

The *arché* of meter: a contrastive durational binary that is:

- 1 phonemic (determines meaning: the difference between short/long = word change)
- 2 homorganic and homophonic (same place of articulation, same sound, only short/long)
- 3 an inherent feature of the language, commonly perceptible, baked in, i.e. = speech
- 4 the short vowel is the “count” (*chronos proton*) and the long vowel is twice the short
- 5 stable, orthographically consistent

To create vowel quantity, Sanskrit simply augments the length of the otherwise unchanged vowel sound:



Stress-predominant languages have no distinct *chronos protos*.

- Meter is a binary system; the binary in English is on/off STRESS, overriding long/short vowels; alliteration isolates one phone from all others.
- The components of stress are LOUDNESS and PITCH as well as DURATION (tending to coincide with greater length, but don't count on it).
- Quantitative (durational) languages also have, secondarily, stress and pitch, although only quantity is constitutive of meter.
- Elementally, *meter* and *foot* are carry-overs from archaic and classical prosody. Why wouldn't we just drop them and declare the infinite, indefinite spectrums of stress, pitch and duration (and their feature-sharing indivisibility? They've already been dropped...repeatedly. (Apparently were constitutionally contrastive.)
- (For contrastless rhythmlessness, see Dzogchen & La Monte Young. See the clear sky.)

Was ur-meter an original freedom coming up against the strictures of civility? Yes. Perhaps ur-meter was isosyllabism itself—the line as a fixed number of syllables, distinguishing speech from verse and run on from ritual. It's alleged that PIE had only one vowel, a sort of schwa-neutrality, which our current slurring of speech may be reverting to and pulling all of prosody along with it—as meter is modeled on words (speech) and not the inverse. The *Great Interplay* is: song making something special out of speech, as both revert back to originary, precursory prosody, the motherese of all manifestation.

Syllables with a long vowel or diphthong are long by “nature.” Syllables with a short vowel followed by a conjunct consonant are long by “position.” (There are, of course, complications and exceptions.) Actually, the most fundamental binary in language is “vowel/consonant”—open /occluded airflow—what can or can't form a syllable on its own.) Yet the “segments” themselves (the phones) aren't metrically constitutive, so the syllable necessarily arose to carry the beat.

Here is the octosyllabic line, without and with cadence, from the 3-line stanza of the Vedic Gayatri meter:

≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ≡

≡ ≡ ≡ ≡ ∪ — ∪ ≡

Comparison with Avestan poetry confirms: the more ancient the verse, the less restrictive, in terms of long/short alternation (free, basically *blank*, verse). Metrical isosyllabism then appeared as a relatively free opening with a fixed-cadence with iambic tendency, creating at once the hemistichic structure of OPENING/BREAK/CADENCE. Late Vedic and Greek patterns became both more regulated and variable (i.e., complex). The most basic Aeolic, Gayatri-derived, meter is the *glyconic*, with the 3rd and 4th positions filled by a trochee, creating a 'double short' nucleus of the choriamb (— ∪ ∪ —) as the metrical rigidity moves leftward:

≡ ≡ — ∪ ∪ — ∪ ≡

Two compound Aeolic meters are built upon the *glyconic* base. The Greater Asclepiad adds two choriamb to the basic meter. And the Greater Sapphic extends the basic Sapphic (— ∪ — — — ∪ ∪ — ∪ — ∪) by inserting a choriamb:

≡ ≡ | — ∪ ∪ — | — ∪ ∪ — | — ∪ ∪ — | ∪ ≡
— ∪ — — — | ∪ ∪ — | — ∪ ∪ — ∪ — ≡

It is these 2 Aeolic meters, via Horace, that Alice Notley has tapped to form her epic book *For the Ride*.

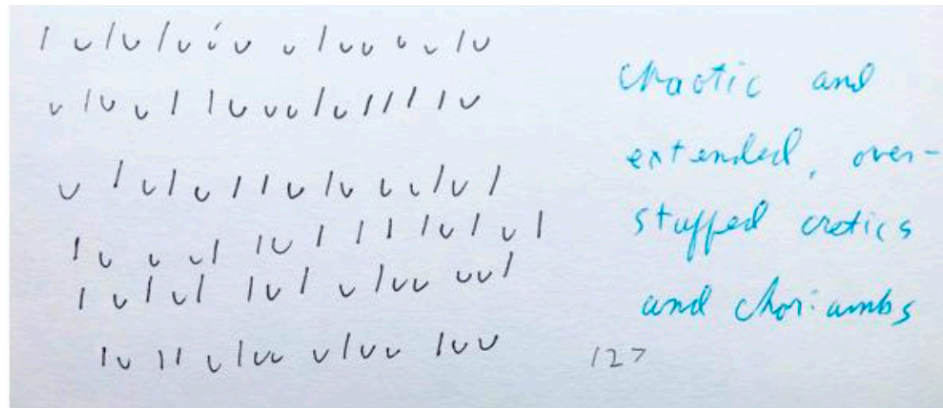
FREE METER

Chaucer, via French, Italian, Latin Romance admixture, had laid the ground for 6 centuries of predominantly iambic pentameter English poetry. 200 years after that, the neoclassical, quantitative experiments of Sir Philip Sidney, Spenser, Harvey, and then the ardent Thomas Campion, set English on its current course by demonstrating the *futility* of applying quantity to English syllables; a 16th century fiasco that served to assure English verse *would* be classically metered, albeit by *substituting stress for duration*. The likes of Celia and Louis Zukofsky's *Catullus* aside, this ploy is still the predominant metrical practice.

The iamb itself, is both survivor and overlord. There are a few misconceptions to point out. (1) iambic absolutism (at least since Gascoigne, if not The Owl and the Nightingale), the assumption that the iamb is the natural currency of English allowing the greatest metrical flexibility and variation without breaking the template. (2) One need only discard or ignore iambic meter to liberate poetry. (3) Simplification will save us. In the words of George Saintsbury: "The only safe and philosophical rule in prosody, as in other things, is not to multiply your entities." (4) Presuming poetry is music per se, gravest error of all.

Perhaps Notley's writing (as in *For the Ride*) is the least iambic and least simple metrics English has ever known. Notley, writing on her own process: "I wanted to write in a long line. I needed formal constraints because I didn't know what would happen. I wanted to get at the question of what the basis of being is and where language comes from. I could only use words to discuss the origin of words, so that was a problem... I get more information from voices if they speak in some form, so I decided to use two classical meters I

was interested in, the greater Asclepiad and the greater Sapphic... They're interesting because they aren't consistent across the line, being composed of long, complex feet that differ from each other. I also decided to write in sets of fourteen lines, which were not differentiated on the page, that is, I would write fourteen lines a day, but not sonnets. There is no indication in the text that I'm writing in groups of fourteen. I didn't want anyone to know."



Ah, another observation: *The universe is created
by giving. The ur language is the gift of who
one is, that is
one gives away one's self language. That is,
one creates it, one
giving it away, taking none. Give words,
saving them, away...
gave it all away, giving gone, the universe
that I made,
doesn't make sense the universe, linguistical
utterance:*

*wavelengths from vocal cord, émetteur only
exists as donor*

For the Ride

To splice in a simple, straightforward, Swinburne choriambics, with inverted troche/iamb opening/closing:

Lōve, whăť | āiled thēē tŏ lēave | līfe thăť wăś măde | lōvelŷ wě thŏught | wĭth lōve?

Returning to *For the Ride*:

One's infused, says the One. Talk as one
thinks. Here road to the No talks for,
O prosodia mine. Not scientif, parts are

linguist. Create
 univers from poetic subconscious,
 submeasure, subchaos...
 Oh that's love, friends of One. Thoughts
 words zoom, keep up with zoo-
 truncated.
 Trunc to not break it up: unbreak the
 mind, unagitated propos.
 Nice hiatus now there: France's ped,
 ghostly makes a ghost poem:



To underscore a number of the modes and features in *For the Ride*: metrical phrasings breaking the binary unit; chaotic *and* consistent caesuras; caesura-reinforced metrical phrasings; 16-syllabled carrierwave-line settling into stanzas; altered syntax throwing off typical stress patterns; chaotic and consistent cretic/choriamb interchange; not at all dead-on coincidence of Sapphics or Asclepiads though as close as one can come without killing the composition; re-nucleating basic Aeolics; inverting the glyconic; tuning to, turning through the Aeolics; English furtherst from iambics; partaking not in typical triple-beat; very little aesthetic separability from traumatic times; the Bedrock is suspense; a wave can tick tock; prosody no more a thing than weather's unpredictability; syllables are infinite again; *timbre* (of the attitudes and tones of voices) (the breath and spitting in the trumpet, the scratching of the strings, coughing of the audience, snarl of the cynic, the clanging Klangfarbe, the turning of the page, the distance between writing and reading, the far out immediately multiphonic color information, if you will) adds a further prosodic register; each line is a different freed time in a whole held together by an impartial underpinning; the rhythm of it is not real, rather reality; by means of this prosody, meter is placed on a par with neuronal, molecular, chemical and hormonal rhythms; the rhythm and that which is rhythmized (the *rhythmizomenon*) are nondifferently different, the made is its own raw material raw material.