SECTION II

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GENERAL STUDIES OF ENGLISH VERSIFICATION

Studies of versification too general to be cited under any specific area are listed below, as are a number of essays on the question of the relations of poetry, verse, and prose. Generalization is of course a knife which cuts both ways; some of the work here will seem slight, because it is; on the other hand, though, one thinks of books such as W. J. Bate's on Keats (B7) or Robert Beum's on Yeats (B12), or the provocative essays by Kiparsky (B117) or Wimsatt (B233), as models of what, after all, is possible. Readers particularly interested in this section should pay close attention to its sibling, the General section of Appendix A on Global Versification.


Balliet, Conrad A. "The Verse Technique of Matthew Arnold." DA 22 (1962): 2382A (Cornell). Examines meter, rhyme, stanzas, syntax, diction, and rhetoric, but not imagery. Arnold wrote in a great variety of complex verseforms but said he preferred poetry that was simple, plain, and direct.


Barnes, Thomas. "On the Nature and Essential Characters of Poetry as Distinguished from Prose." Memoirs of the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, 1 (1785). Cited by Omond (A5, p. 300) as separately published and dated 1786, on the basis of an advertisement, but no copy is known to exist.

Bate, Walter Jackson. The Stylistic Development of Keats. New York: MLA, 1945; rpt New York: The Humanities Press, 1958, 1962. 214 pp. Rev: in MLN 61 (1946): 475–78; in JEGP 45 (1946): 468–69; in Saturday Review of Literature 29 (1946): 30. As prosodic studies of individual poets go, this full chronological examination of Keats's remarkably rapid and intense growth in the craftsmanship of verse is, excepting a lamentable repetitiousness of style (the book could have been shorter by a third without a loss), a model of method and accomplishment in the smooth synthesis of (1) detailed and precise description of changes in sound, meter, diction, syntax, and structure, (2) steady retention of the larger biographical and critical framework, and (3) a graceful and engaging style. In short, Bate is precise and informed without allowing either the analysis or the theory (or yet the biography) to become obtrusive. All the major poems receive separate treatment. Of particular note is section 1 of Part 2 on sound-patterning. Cf. Zillman (G149).


      A handbook of poetic forms compiled by a writer of popular poetry containing several hundred eccentric and novel forms, some invented by the author, such as "The Yeats," "Sweetbriar," and the like. She lists 22metrical feet; did the Greeks have this many?

      Perhaps no other contemporary writer working in versification writes more gracefully than Robert Beum; with a minimum of technical apparatus (3 degrees of stress--primary, secondary, and weak), but a maximum of perception, he examines Yeats's craft of meter, rhyme, and stanza-form in the major poetry after 1910. Pages 51–54 summarize Yeats's metrical development, and the following two chapters treat (respectively) his handling of the iambic and trochaic line. There is also a chapter on his habits of composition (5), and one on the verse and prose of the plays (11).

      In quest of "a distinct view of the whole range of Spenser's verse." Three periods may be discerned: (1) the early verse, terminating in the Shepheardes Calendar, is markedly experimental (the three forms of the mature period do not appear at all) and also markedly alliterative; (2) the mature period finds Spenser confining himself to but three forms--rime royal, ottava rima, and the Faerie Queene stanza of nines (this last form allows at once "an extraordinary smoothness and ceremoniousness of motion," a sustained evenness of sonority controlled by the rhymes); and (3) late work. The occasional poems with their elaborate versification represent special cases. Cf. B224.

      Provides separate phonetic, graphetic, phonemic, grammatical, lexical, and semantic analyses.

      Beyond some theorizing about the ontological status of poetry (a subject more important than any other in versification), based on the antinomies of point and wave in physics, Blissett argues that the movement of a line is more important (and more intuitively evident) than its sound or meanings, and that the "line-criticism" as a critical method has been entirely ignored.

      In the excellent symposium on "Experimental and Formal Verse," Bogan replies to the notions that "form binds" and "form is exhausted," tracing out an engaging history of changes in forms and concepts from the Greeks to Eliot, focused particularly on meter and rhyme. See also B230 and E1549.

      Argues that an adequate definition must be framed in terms not of the techniques of poetry but of its substance--language. His own definition emphasizes the high order of patterning of language in verse.


B20 Booth, Stephen. *An Essay on Shakespeare's Sonnets.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1969. Based on his dissertation, "The Structures of Shakespeare's Sonnets," at Harvard in 1964. Booth's general intent is to show that the sonnet presents, as the paradigm of poetic experience, multiple simultaneous orders, "multicity in unity," or the old concordia discors. To that end, the book explicates the phonetic, metrical, stanzaic-structural, rhetorical, imagistic, and thematic patterns in the Sonnets and so is of direct interest to the prosodist. But see, particularly, Section 2 of Chapter 3 ("Phonetic Structure"), Section 1 of Chapter 4 ("Phonetic Unity and Division"), and Notes 3, 5, and 8 in the Appendix (on sound patterns and the work of D. I. Masson).

B21 Bose, Amalendu. "Shakespeare's Word-Music." *Studies in Elizabethan Literature: Festschrift to Professor G. C. Bannerjee.* Ed. P. S. Sastri. New Delhi: S. Chand, 1972. pp. 57–63. He eschews any interest in "mere dexterity in the manipulation of vowels and consonants, sibilants and labials and liquids, spondees and pyrrhics, enjambment and weak-endings as constituting word-music at its highest" and tries to show instead (in seven pages) that "Shakespearean word-music goes deeper. It totally exploits the lexical value of words and further suggests worlds beyond worlds, glimmering vistas of thought and feelings beyond the zone of formulated thoughts and feelings, where the rest is silence but apprehension."


B23 Bourne, George. "Rhythm and Ryhme." *Magazine of Art* 61 (1896): 541-49. Also in *Living Age,* November 1906, pp. 200–5. An apology for both by the familiar strategy of substituting an alternative word in the line or as the rhyme and observing the difference in effect.


On "muscularity": "the primary fact [is] that our experience of words is an implicit muscular effort in the throat."


A full analysis and interpretation of the poem shows how aspects of form enhance, enact, and express meanings beyond the lexical-semantic reach of the words.

Auden's lifelong interest in the technical craft of poetry was based on his early realization of the freedom of constraint--the creative possibilities to be found in the necessities of strict metrical forms. The "dialectic of freedom and necessity" (in form and craft) thereafter became a major theme in the poetry, perhaps best exemplified in the elegies to Yeats and Freud.

Eliot used metrical variations in his early work: (1) to distinguish characters, dramatically, and (2) to mark changes in emotional mood or atmosphere. Metrical regularity serves as a "counterbalance to the emotional excitement" of the verse, even as Wordsworth believed. To the more attentive ear, Eliot's rhythms enact his homage to the Elizabethan dramatists. His rhymes convey ironic or comic undercutting, implicit judgment, delayed refrain, or "slightly frenetic over-emphasis"; unexpected absence of rhyme expresses a failure of resolution and creates the frustration of anticlimax. Varieties of formal expressiveness.

Generally follows the methods of Rickert (B182). Part I treats imagery, rhythm, sound-patterns, and typography; Part 2 is a minianthology of poems. There is a novel scansion marking system in Chapter 2 (as on pp. 26, 28, 36–37) for those who have graph paper available, but probably such persons will not be much interested in the technique presented here (pp. 10–11) of underlining color imagery in poems with crayons.

A long discursive bibliography and review article. Section 2.1.1 on Metrics (pp. 253–59) is especially thorough on Structural Metrics, as one might expect; 2.1.2 on Sound-Structures (pp. 259–64) surveys linguistic work on the meanings of sound-patterns; 2.2 on Grammar (pp. 264–70) surveys the work on poetic syntax and language. Long list of R references at the end. These short chronologically ordered surveys provide succinct and coherent views of the work done in the 1950s and '60s.

A review of twentieth-century work on the phonology, metrics, diction, syntax, performance, and semantics of poetry, mentioning several of the important studies in each area.
B34 Ciardi, John. "On Form As a Language." Saturday Review, 31 October 1964, pp. 16–18. On endings, a dictum: "form tends to conclude itself by some increase in formality."


B36 Clark, Arthur Melville. "Poetry And Verse." In his Studies in Literary Modes. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1946. pp. 82–104. Following a historical review, Clark confronts his essential question: can poetry be written without meter? He considers metered vs. free verse, and also meter vs. rhythm; citing Bridges, he concludes that meter is essential to poetry. The final ten pages explore the nature of rhythm in the composition of poetry and in its effects on readers.


B38 Coleman, Elliott. "Poetry and Prose: The Prose Poem." University of Dayton Review 4 (1967): 7–21. Shuffles after Croce in refusing to allow any distinction between prose and poetry to be based on "external elements" such as meter or rhyme.


B40 Corson, Hiram. A Primer of English Verse: chiefly in its aesthetic and organic character. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1892. 226 pp. Rev: by A. H. Tolman in MLN 8 (1893): 245–47 (discusses Milton's meters). We find here a truly Coleridgian thesis: in contrast to the analytical, divisive process of intellect, "when strong feeling is in any way objectified, a unifying process sets in." The Poetic Principle, then, is "some principle of harmony or fusion" or unity, and its agents are the poetic elements. "Rhythm is a succession and involution of unities, that is, unities within unities," the foot within the verse within the stanza. The elements of form are organic unities with the sense. The book takes five main topics: meter and metrical variation (conventional accentual basis); Tennyson's use of the Stanza; the Spenserian stanza; the Sonnet; and Blank Verse.

There are no separate chapters on matters of versification except for the chapter on Milton, which is mainly devoted to that topic.


Examines meter, diction, verseforms, imagery, and figuration. Gray had some interest in imitating Old Icelandic and Celtic verseforms but knew too little of their technic. He worked carefully and seldom achieved spontaneity (he drew from Milton and Dryden often), but his greatest strength lay in his supple meters.

Examination of Yeats's manuscripts reveals that poetic form was much more central to his composition than most critics believe. Denton reviews Yeats's published remarks on prosody and catalogues the poems by metrical/stanzaic form.


The segmentation of language in verse (i.e., across lines) yields additional contexts in which words can take on (and have qualified) meanings, producing polysemy. But verseforms may be either semantically expansive (rhymes which are different parts of speech multiply categories and levels of reference) or semantically constrictive (both sides of an ambiguity cannot be maintained together). Segmentation in verse foregrounds its units, establishes them as conceptual correlates, and exploits their successive realization by the reader. The poem also bends to its ends specifically poetic signals (not available in prose) and poetically intensified signals (available in prose but heightened in verse).

A catholic view of the elements of Prosody (counting of syllables and of accents, varieties of meters, adventitious sound patterning), Structure (lineforms, counterpoint, Sprung Rhythm, free verse, ballad meter), Forms (stanzas), and U sages (genres). Copious examples.

Brief remarks on rhythm and meter, pp. 34–38, but the preponderance falls on syntax and figuration.


B52 Eliot, T. S. "The Borderline of Prose." The New Statesman 9 (1917): 157–59. "After much reflection I conclude that the only absolute distinction to be drawn is that poetry is written in verse, and prose is written in prose: or, in other words, that there is prose rhythm and verse rhythm."

B53 -----.. "Prose and Verse." The Chapbook, no. 22 (April 1921), pp. 3–10. Cf. B1, B142. "Poetic content must be either the sort of thing that is usually, or the sort of thing that ought to be, expressed in verse," Eliot believes. Either of these alternatives will cause the "prose-poem" to fade out of existence. Moreover, whereas in form we have "verse" contrasted to "prose," in content, length, intensity and such we have no term to set against "poetry." Long prose passages are often in sum effect intense. "I object to the term 'prose-poetry' because it seems to imply a sharp distinction between 'poetry' and 'prose' which I do not admit, and if it does not imply this distinction, the term is meaningless and otiose. . . ."

B54 Ellis, Virginia R. "'Authentic Cadence': The Sacramental Method of Gerard Manley Hopkins." DAI 30 (1969): 2481A (Brandeis). Hopkins sought to evoke "certainty" and "mystery" simultaneously in his poetic texture as the exact correlate to his knowledge of God, an "incomprehensible certainty."

B55 Empson, William. "Rhythm and Imagery in English Poetry." British Journal of Aesthetics 2 (1962): 36–54. See pp. 38–45; provocative (because eccentric) suggestions by a non-theoretical yet very perceptive reader of poetry who is "in favour of rhyme and metre." Empson inquires into the origins of rhyme (he has not read Draper [L27–28]); speculates about tonal accent (pitch) in Chinese, English, and classical verse; argues (from Tennyson and Housman) that quantity is often important in English verse, especially since most of the major poets were taught Latin at school, so that much of their major verse uses "stress and quantity at once"; proposes "jammed stress," where several strong syllables in a line are "rolled together" as one stress in scansion; approves of four degrees of stress; emphasizes the paucity of our theories in the face of the instinctive, acute, unconscious human perception of rhythm; and bemoans the abandonment of the traditional stress-metric in vers libre, especially in W. C. Williams. Yet, "if the rhythms of English are loose, rich, and confused, as one can hardly deny, how far is poetry in English likely to gain from strict metres?"


The title is unfortunately rather apt: the article erects an immense edifice of generalizations without any close argumentation at all. Exceedingly discursive.


Applies Levin's theory of coupling (B129) to Shakespeare's Sonnet 138, a folk ballad, and a folk song. Not surprisingly, the sonnet shows the most couplings.


Constructs a precise, thorough, ordered methodology for describing the sonal patterning in a given poem. The procedure covers three steps: pre-prosodic analysis of six grades of pause and stress and three grades of duration, all the data being plotted on a Basic Chart; prosodic analysis, serially pre-metric then metric, wherein tone-color ("phoneme keys") and pitch-change ("tonality tunes") data are added on a pre-metric Position Chart, followed by reduction of the six grades of stress to the two in the traditional account of meter, plotted as a Metric Score, and notation of the duration, pitch, and loudness features on a DPL Strip; and an optional performance analysis, in which preferred values on the DPL are denoted on a Performance Strip.


Laudatory remarks on her Sword-blades and Poppy Seed, poems "printed as prose, or as prose and verse interspersed . . . . leaving the reader to determine the movement of the rhythm and the division into lines." He thinks traditional meters worn threadbare and vers libre barren of orchestral sound-quality.


A study of critical value judgments of artistic technique could mine some very useful source-material here. One recalls what John Crowe Ransom did to similar pieces.


A beginner's manual. The author has a penchant for French forms. Regrettably the paper the volume is printed on is of rather high quality.


This is a study, quite convoluted in its articulation, in interpretation theory, therefore poetic semantics. But the subject is form, and the cautious end of examining three broad types of interpretation strategies is that "it is essential to preserve a level of poetic organization that has nothing to do with meaning." See particularly the penultimate and antepenultimate paragraphs.


In support of the position that "formal description not only leads to, but is, a statement of meaning," Fowler gives detailed analyses of grammar, phonology (including meter), and lexis in a Cummings poem.

Examines meter, syntax, sound, and diction and concludes that the later poetry is superior to the earlier.


After the last word of the title should be added the words: "About Poetry." Frank identifies two types of poems about poetry, one describing an event and the other enacting "an event in language." And the medium for the dance, the mimetic enactment, is of course the body of the poem, its corporeal substance-its versification.


Integration of theme, tone, sound, grammar, and lexis.


"Grammar" is used in its widest possible sense here to mean all the manifold functions of words in poems. Practical suggestions on the pedagogical value of technical analysis.


See also s.v. "Polyphonic Prose" and "Prose Poem." A very cogent redaction of the material in The Well-Tempered Critic (below); Frye distinguishes three basic verbal rhythms-discursive, metrical, and associative.


Frye distinguishes three primary verbal rhythms: the rhythm of verse, the rhythm of prose (more complex), and the "associative rhythm"-fragmentary in logic and syntax--of ordinary speech. These three influence each other to produce six other hybrid forms: oratorical or rhetorical prose (prose influenced by verse) and euphuism (more extreme: prose influenced by association); couplets and blank verse (verse influenced by prose) and intentional doggerel (more extreme); tribal chants, college cheers, and free verse (associative rhythm influenced by verse); the lyric (verse influenced by the associative rhythm) and its more extreme form, here termed "echolalia"; "free prose" (associative rhythms influenced by prose); and aphoristic or wisdom writing (prose influenced by associative rhythms).


As a corrective to some recent work on figurative language in Dryden, this author reasserts Dryden's own priorities of poetic expressiveness-prosody and diction. Three aspects of prosody are distinguished: "harmony of numbers," mimetic rhythm, and the connections of meter and thought in syntax. Harmonious sounds were important to Dryden, and his praise of Virgil suggests some attention even to quantity in English verse. He also believed that a rhythm might carry its own weight of meaning, and hence that each poetic genre had its own appropriate prosody. In syntax, Dryden steadily moved away from the couplet form. Diction, however, he thought more important even than prosody. Words were to be selected which were "apt, significant, and sounding," and of these three, sonority of sound was easily the chief: beyond everything else, Dryden was concerned not with the referential or se-
mantic values of his words, but with the aesthetic.


B79 Giodano, Frank, Jr. "Rhythm and Rhyme in "Self-Dependence."" English Language Notes 13 (1975): 29–35. Shifts in meter and alternations of rhyme "create an undercurrent of disharmony and turmoil that reinforce the speaker's confusion; in contrast, the passages concerning Nature show firm regularity and orderly variety of form." "This confrontation of metrical patterns . . . rhythmically reproduces the speaker's effort to measure himself by Nature's standard and to emulate it." Arnold achieves sprezzatura.


B81 Gordon, Ralph. The Technique of Verse. New York: The City College Co-operative Store, 1933. 56 pp. A student's manual, with sections on "Meter and Rhythm," "Verse Forms," and "Tone Color." He admits only the four simple meters. For its class the book is solid, and a teacher may still find it useful to recommend to beginning students.


1) "Observations on English Metre,"
2) "The Measures of Verse,"
3) "Observations on the Pseudo-Rhythmus" [Rhyme],
On metrics Gray tenders his judgment that though the old manuscripts are corrupt, the fault lay with the scribes; the poets show by variance of orthography that they knew how to make the meter run smooth. Puttenham (E614) is chastised for misunderstanding "Riding Rhyme" and "Rhyme Dogrell," the former of which Gray takes to be iambic in meter but admitting any other foot in any position and with no regularity in length of line.

The second essay classifies fifty-nine meters by line-length, stanza-form, and rhyme-scheme.

Rhyme is traced back to the Germanic tribes, with Otfrid noticed, besides early examples in Hadrian and St. Augustine, and Gray thinks that the custom spread from the Franks to all the other European nations north and south (he follows Hickes closely on this); he denies the French learned rhyme from the Arabs, but rather proposes Church hymns and Latin verses by the monks as the source of rhyme in Provençal. This latter view is however renounced in the fourth essay, where Gray concludes the Saxons in England must have learned rhyme from the Britons across the Channel rather than from the Franks (though the Welsh versification had been very advanced from time immemorial) since we see rhyme copiously after the Conquest.

On Lydgate Gray offers extensive notes of literary history; the only prosodic matter is the discussion of the state of the language in Lydgate's day, when the great enlargement of foreign words still preserving their native pronunciations allowed a "great facility in rhyming" that was later and is now lost to us.

Irrelevant to verse theory: a collection of poems.

Gross conceives of prosody as the study of "rhythmic form in poetry," rhythm being "expressive" of "the curve of feeling, the shape and form of an emotion," "felt time." So much for critical rigor. The views here are derived (heavily) from Suzanne Langer.

Chapter six, "Form and Style" (pp. 106-19) discusses meter, speech-rhythms, sound devices, word-order, diction, archaisms, and imagery. Appendix A, "Bridges' Prosody" (pp. 269-84) briefly explores the work in four meters: Accentual-Syllabic, Accentual, Quantitative, and Syllabic. See also s.v. "Meter" in the Index. See also E86 and E211.

Along the continuum, "we cannot fix a precise borderline [that] does not impair the value of the distinction." The special virtue of verse-structure is to enhance a "contemplative" mood.

"Taken together, these repetitions of metrical lines, rhyme-words [only five words repeated throughout five stanzas], and stanza forms set up a series of visual and auditory reverberations which complement the theme of the poem . . . . Structurally the poem is a formal analogue" to its typological theme.

B89 Hartog, Sir P. J. "On the Relation of Poetry to Verse." English Association Pamphlet no. 64. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926. 27 pp. Traces out three positions which have been taken, historically, on the crucial question, "Why is poetry written in verse?": (1) "poetry" is synonymous with "verse"; (2) poetry is a certain kind of content, regardless of the form of the work, and (3) poetry embraces all those works with a certain kind of content and also written in verse. Lengthy Notes. A very astute and provocative essay.


B95 The great virtue of this linguistic explication is that it is completely self-conscious: Hill explains his principles and procedures even as he applies them to the Hopkins poem, justifying them, thereby, both pragmatically and formally. He works his way through the micro-structure of the text, sorting out alternative readings on the basis of the semantic implications of intonational patterns and also the substitution principle of information theory. But is there not an obvious logical circularity in the claim that "the quickest way to demonstrate the meaning [of an ambiguous phrase] is to give it the proper stress and juncture pattern by reading it aloud"?


Frequent remarks on meter, rhyme, and the melodic line, passim, especially in Chapter 7.

Pamphlet.

With Jonson matter preceded manner: he seems to have written out his poetry first as prose, then worked it into verse. He considered first what he wanted to say, how the idea had been treated by the classical authors, what notes he had at hand in his commonplace book--then turned to his versifying. He also relied heavily on short bits of translation.

Among many other technical features Hudson notes the crucial influences of the blues, gospel hymns, and folk ballads on the poet's meter.

Conceptual analysis. Hynes catches Brooks and Warren claiming that poetry denotes simply a relative degree of verbal compression, but that approach neglects Form. Definitions based on poetic language or diction are equally unhelpful. Solution: poetry is "a collective term for all poems"; a poem is "a discourse in the form of an arrangement of lines" of "more highly organized sound patterns." The relative value of poems, then, can be judged by their degree of "symbolic extension.

"License" is defined as "a certain range to a linguistic symbol in which it may be different without the difference becoming meaningful." The licenses in poetry may occur at the phonological, morphological, syntactic, graphic, or metalinguistic level, those on the phonological level being meter, rhyme, alliteration, and juncture.

"Doesn't the organic theory that a unique experience should generate an entirely new surface structure have the poetic process backwards?" "A regular form is not a ready-made container into which an emotion is poured."

Attacks Croce's thesis that the aesthetic idea precedes (and surpasses in value) its externalization in a medium. For Isenberg the physical medium is an indispensable part of the creative process.

A very slight work even for a primer; she explicitly follows R. F. Brewer (E489).
A primer organized by forms. His principles: metrical feet are units "which divide the time of utterance into equal parts" and which "are marked by the presence of an accented syllable which serves to individualize them." Classical meter, on the other hand, used "quantity, or time occupied in pronouncing the vowel, not accent, [to mark] the pronunciation units."

For Johnson's estimation of the prosodic skill of his predecessors, see, in vol. 1: pp. 38, 48–51 (Life of Cowley); 117, 131–33 (Life of Milton); 293–94, 329–32 (Life of Dryden). In vol. 2: pp. 314–15, 326–27 (Life of Pope), 358 (Life of Thomson). Cowley he censures for irregularity of numbers; Milton is given credit for a second-order performance, his blank verses being weakened by the want of rhyme; Dryden, despite indolence, "tuned the numbers of English poetry"—"he found it brick, and he left it marble"; Pope's consummate craft can scarcely be surpassed; and Thomson's originality earns a slightly better place for his blank verses. Johnson's disdain of "representative meter" [prosodic mimesis, both by sound and meter] appears at i, 51 and ii, 314; he thinks its legitimate province very small: "verse can imitate only sound and motion."

The article opens by questioning the notion of "content vs. form" and even the isolation of the latter: "there is no pure and independent form . . . . while formal relationships can be perceived without reference to the semantic function of language . . . they cannot be determined, nor can they be analyzed, without referring to the meaning of words." For the analysis of poetry, then, "the primary objects which can be related formally are sounds, with their properties of quality and extension," rather than syntax, meter, or rhyme.

The formal elements of poetry may serve three purposes: "organizing, intensifying, and complementing or creating of the total communication"; this latter function has three categories, or modes: "the reinforcing of description by evocation of an external sensible effect" (onomatopoeia and "sense-evoking rhythms" belong here); "the reinforcement of idea by structural embodiment" (as, for example, the musical theme of Stevens' "Peter Quince" becomes controlling musical structure); and "the creation of sense through contrast between sound and statement," i.e., tension or irony. The communicative function, then, has three modes, evoking, embodying, and tensioning.

Also objectionable are our inept notation systems for marking abstract relations of formal elements, "particularly in the foot system which Saintsbury defended" in metrics.

In sum, "poetic form has virtually no value, no interest for the reader, except as it is related to the semantic aspect, as it is understood to function."

Very elementary.

Traces the development of a more flexible voice in rhythm, syntax, diction, and tone.
With elegance and insight Keary reiterates the centrality of the study of technique in criticism. Here he examines the two aspects of verse which seem most artificial to the layman, lining and rhyme, showing their necessity, functions, happy successes. "Verse is in fact neither an accident nor a choice, not a trick nor a translation, but a necessity for certain moods of thought and, therefore, certain modes of speech." The value of this essay has not diminished.

The emphasis here hovers between the view that "poetry" is a certain characteristic content, regardless of its mode of presentation, and the view that verse is somehow essential to "poetic" articulation. But "poetry envelops more elements within it than verse. Verse is a technique in poetry . . . . Verse, nevertheless, is not all poetry."

W. P. Ker's Clark and London University Lectures have been important and influential steadily since their publication, and this collection is required reading for the prosodist (the attentive reader will notice that Ker is the source for several titles of later books on prosody). Of the Clark Lectures, "Various Meanings of 'Form' in Poetry" is the most relevant; of the London Lectures, numbers 1, 4, and 10 concern Form (especially the last of these: "Relation Between Forms of Verse and Forms of Poetry"); 5, 15, and 16 concern Poetic Diction; 11 and 12 treat metrical types and their ancestry; and 13 and 14 explore stanzaic patterns. The Appendices include two essays on Spanish versification (see L75), a review of Saintsbury (A8), and a brief essay on the Dantean hendecasyllable (L1144).

An argument that poetic form itself is the ordering-principle of Herrick's volume of poems.

An important general and non-technical essay presenting the notion that "a good number of what we think of as traditional and arbitrary conventions [in poetry] are anchored in grammatical form, and seem to be, at bottom, a consequence of how language itself is structured." The principle underlying poetic form is repetition, and as Kiparsky shows, the same abstract pattern (e.g., abab) may be filled by various linguistic elements so as to produce different surface schemas in the poem: if the elements are phonological, then the schema will be rhyme or alliteration; if stress or quantity, then meter; if syntactically equivalent phrases, then parallelism. A theory is sketched out and some surprising conclusions derived, e.g., "identity of sound is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for rhyme and alliteration." Kiparsky examines at close range syntax, meter, and sound. A synoptic, heuristic, immensely provocative essay.

Brief remarks on rhythm (stress-verse), rhyme, and alliteration, pp. 78–85, besides entire sections on Syntax and Vocabulary.


B123  ------. "Literary Criticism and Linguistic Description." Dutch Quarterly Review of Anglo-American Letters 7 (1977): 2–22. Besides examining the important question of the precise relation of these two enterprises, the essay offers detailed phonemic, metrical, and stylistic analyses of Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale" in comparison with Leavis's critical judgments of the poem.


B126  Levenston, E. A. "A Scheme for the Inter-Relation of Linguistic Analysis and Poetry Criticism." Linguistics, no. 129 (1974), pp. 29–47. Confronting the question of the uses of linguistic method for the criticism of poetry, Levenston offers an answer by setting the three traditional realms of linguistics—phonology, grammar, and semantics—against each other, producing a schema of nine possible approaches to poetry, with extended commentary. A very sensible and heuristic anatomy.

the conventions of the poem (those treated here: meter, rhyme, the line, enjambement, and caesura) "have no linguistic significance . . . . the function they perform is a purely aesthetic one." This latter function is ultimately cognitive (i.e., information-producing) as well, but the distinction is nonetheless crucial: in verse, the linguistic elements perform two functions at once. Meter, for example, is "an abstract schema of periodicity" filled by various linguistic constituents. ("The rhythm is more than simply a realization of the meter; it is an amalgam of the meter and the particular suprasegmental features required by the sentences of the poem.") The line is conventionally defined sometimes by the meter but usually by the sound devices, or else a pause. When the pause indicates a strain between language (syntax) and convention (the line), it should be considered enjambement [stipulative definition]. By the same logic caesura is not a syntactic pause at mid-line but rather the force that through the green line drives the meter. Rhyme is a pre-cognitive aesthetic (i.e., unifying) convention which may or may not interact with meaning-bearing morphemes. All these conventions serve to mark the text as poetic and to "deautomatize" its language, preventing habituated perfunctory responses by the reader, forcing him back to the text with sharpened attention. An exceptionally tough-minded, incisive paper, which revoked some conventionalities [sic] and so stirred a lively discussion, q.v.

Deviation might be said to be the primary attribute of poetic form. Two types occur: internal (deviation against the norm established by the poem as a whole) and external (the language itself being the norm). Features used systemically in poetry--e.g., meter, rhyme, typography--become conventions, but internal deviation against them is still possible. Phonological deviation--i.e., an unusual distribution of sounds--is mainly external, as is lexical ("poetic diction"), though other types do occur. The problem in explaining external syntactic deviation is the discernment of the correct norm, which can only be a generative grammar (Levin repeats the arguments of his earlier essay [F126] in large part).

Levin's monograph represents the first full-scale application of Jakobson's dictum on equivalence as the informing principle of poetic structure (see L65). Levin's theory attempts to account for the "special unity of structure" characteristic of poetry by schematizing its use of "equivalent positions as settings for equivalent phonic and/or semantic elements" ("positions" are defined as "those places in the linguistic chain where alternation is possible"). Of equivalences, then, he specifies two types:
Type I: Positional
   a. syntagmatic (syntactic)
   b. conventional (prosodic)
Type II: Natural
   a. semantic (similar or opposite)
   b. phonic (echoic).
That is, poetry offers two types of seriatim "slots" (syntactic and prosodic) to be filled by the available ("vertical") alternatives in the language. Filling of the correlate syntagmatic positions with equivalent semantic units produces what we normally think of as rhetorical devices such as parallelism and antithesis, and filling with sound produces schemes and sound-patterning. Filling of the prosodic matrix with semantic units that are equivalent produces metrical
heightening or emphasis, and filling with sound units the various types of rhyme as discussed by Wimsatt. The crux of Levin's theory is that "poetic" structure is a result of these couplings of Type II to Type I equivalences: possibilities are screened then matched and fitted into positions. Is more coupling therefore "more poetic" a priori? Not necessarily. The couplings apparently must be integrated variously with other elements in the poem, and there does seem to be a saturation point (Swinburne comes to mind at once). Levin gives a full-scale specimen analysis of a Shakespearean sonnet. Cf. B60.


B132 Logan, Conrad T., and C. B. Parks. "Rhythm and Rhyme Tests." English Journal 17 (1928): 678–81. The shrewd student of verseform may take some interest in this elementary article which gives rhymes (asking us to find the correct one) and rhythms (fifteen lines, each given in a regular and an irregular form).


B136 Lotspeich, C. M. "Poetry, Prose, and Rhythm." PMLA 37 (1922): 293–310. The differentiation of prose and poetry rests upon a difference in the nature of two mental processes: in poetry the intellectual content is furnished by the process of direct apprehension, or immediate understanding; in prose it is furnished largely by indirect comprehension, or judgment and reflective thought. The implication: thinking interferes with naturally rhythmic activities.

A lucid review and critique of the kinds and purposes of definitions of poetry. "The essence of poetry technically . . . is not that it is rhythmical. All elevated or impassioned language is that. The essence of poetry technically is that it is patterned language."

See section 2, "What is Poetry?" In any search for the specific differentia of poetry "it is not enough to say that it is language which possesses design and has decorative value. All beautiful, dignified, and elevated language has that." The crucial feature of poetry is that "in it structure and decoration are inseparable."

B140 McLeod, Stuart R. "Problems of Poetry and Dramaturgy in Modern Verse Drama." DA 29 (1968): 904A (Florida, 1961). Discusses the successes and failures of modern dramatists at finding new verse-forms that could be appropriate for our age as well as rich in sound and imagery and powerfully persuasive emotionally and intellectually. Lorca is found to be the most successful.


B145 Masson, David. "Prose and Verse: De Quincey." British Quarterly Review, 1854; rpt in his Essays Biographical and Critical, Chiefly on English Poets. London, 1856. pp. 447–75. Especially pp. 452–53 and the end: Masson makes a valuable distinction in this essay between the view of verse as an "essential condition" of any one class or degree of thoughts and the view of verse as an optional form for any thought. But he will not allow that thoughts come first, fully formed in the mind, at which point they may or may not be cast into a metered mold; rather, the meaning, "is conditioned beforehand by the form of the expression selected."

Mégroz takes Hopkins and Pound to be the two crucial influences of the period, so the preponderance of the chapter explicates their theories and practices, but the late pages discuss many minor poets, developments in colloquial diction in poetry, poetic narratives, and the use of verse in the theater.

The absence of formal patterning in three poems allows the hasty generalization that modern poetry can only be approached, by the linguist, through semantics.


Identifies the lyric with "language musically accompanied, measure marked by musically pitched accents," and with the play of atemporal relations across a temporal sequence. Pitch, stress, timbre give logopoeia, phanopoeia, melopoeia.

Examines the patterning of rhetorical figures in the poem in correlation with the other formal elements, meter, line, rhyme, and stanza.


Some attention to meter, rhyme, and tones.

Davies undertook a systematic versifying of De Mornay's theological treatise translated by Sidney and Golding, producing verse that is wincingly clumsy.

In search of a synthetic account of "the esthetic dimension of the English language," Nist identifies three major areas: theory, prosody, and phonesthesics. About prosody he identifies four "lies" told to schoolboys, as well as the error of "metrical fundamentalism," the belief that English prosody is unitary rather than tripartite. Its true parts are Meter, Cadence, and Rhythm. Schematically:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semantic Component</th>
<th>-&gt;</th>
<th>Abstract Meter</th>
<th>-&gt;</th>
<th>Content Norm</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical Component</td>
<td>-&gt;</td>
<td>Specific Cadence</td>
<td>-&gt;</td>
<td>Mapping Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phonological Component</td>
<td>-&gt;</td>
<td>Actual Rhythm</td>
<td>-&gt;</td>
<td>Expressive Value</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of phonestheses in Shakespeare, Hopkins, and Tennyson.

One of the most valuable studies available on the thorny subject of "poetic language." Mrs. Nowottny demonstrates, through a number of exhibits and extended asides, the complex inter-relations of vocabulary, syntax, meter, and sound in poems which in their joint effect and issue create a "language" of "a recognizably higher degree of patterning" than that of our quotidian speech. Alternatively, we may say, she shows the manifold elements and designs of the semantic construct that is a poem. Chapter 2 tackles the chimera Poetic Diction; chapter 5 treats the "artificial" forms of meter and stanza (explicating the famous elegy on the death of the Countess of Pembroke); chapter 1 offers a fresh discussion of semantic "mimicry" in onomatopoeia and other sound-effects.

Olson, Elder. "General Prosody: Rhythmik, Metrik, Harmonics." Diss., University of Chicago, 1938. Apparently also published by the University of Chicago Libraries in a private edition (lithoprint). Olson, later one of the Chicago School critics, wrote his dissertation in search of "principles upon which any verse, if it is to be verse, must found." Those would be the principles of a general prosody, as opposed to those of all the extant treatises in special (i.e., language-specific) prosodies, which Olson believes are mistaken to assume "that a difference of language entails a difference of principle" and "to exhibit conventions rather than forms, and to arrive, not at principles, but at rules." Olson's own principles are that "prosody is not a science but a part of the analysis of diction in rhetoric and in poetics... it is not a matter of rules, nor of notations, nor a history of prosodic conventions, but rather, an enumeration of the modes in which speech-sounds may be combined for the embellishment of diction, together with an explanation of such devices in terms of the functions of diction itself." The principle of all verse-structure is "proportionality" (it is "sensibly regular"); the atomic element of general prosody is the syllable, which may be arrayed in regular sequences according to any of its five characteristics--syntactic position, duration, intensity (accent), pitch, and entity. The most elementary groupings of syllables are termed primary ratios ("feet"), are marked by the presence and absence of emphasis, and yield primitive rhythms; the next larger groupings, demarcated arbitrarily and not by emphasis, are termed post-primary ratios and yield post-primary rhythms ("meter").

The "foot" is defined (formally) as a unit consisting of one arsis and one thesis (unemphatic and emphatic members), but these members may be actually constituted (materially) by more than one syllable, creating simple (iambic and trochaic) and compound feet; conversely, a foot containing in an anapestic line is an anapestic foot, not an iambic substitution (the definition is formal not actual).

A long Appendix provides sample analyses, such as the following, where t stands for thesis, a for arsis:

\[
\text{Red River, Red River} \\
\text{t} \quad \text{a} \quad \text{t} \quad \text{a} \\
\text{t} \quad \text{a} \quad \text{t} \quad \text{a}
\]

The method for finding out the rhythm is ad hoc: one must know the form in advance, or else find some unequivocal feet as indicators.

I know of only one application of Olson's system, that by Reeve (G79).

Omond, T. S. "Is Verse a Trammel?" The Gentleman's Magazine n.s. 14 (1875): 344–54. Responding to earlier criticism, Omond denies that verse is any shackle, primitive form, or unnecessary ornament. On the contrary: "under the inspi-
ration of high imaginings," man has always "expressed himself in regular periods"; this is a law for all verse known to man. And this law of "rhythmical expression" has nothing to do with lineation or print; the proper distinction, as Shelley said, is not between verse and prose, but simply between "measured and unmeasured language." In short, some sort of metering principle is a sine qua non for verse.

Omond can then defend Whitman as a poet, despite his free-verse lines, on the grounds that whenever his thought becomes most passionate and intense, "the language instantly assumes a metrical cadence."


B162 Parker, Marion H. Language and Reality: A Course in Contemporary Criticism. London: Frederick Muller, 1949. Slight, but see the sections on "Configuration Words" "Rhythm," and "Word Order."

B163 Parsons, Roger L. "Renaissance and Baroque: Multiple Unity and Unified Unity in the Treatment of Verse, Ornament, and Structure." D.A. 19 (1959): 2958A (Wisconsin). Adapts Wölfflin's fourth category, "multiplicity-unity," to describe the contrast between sixteenth- and seventeenth-century verse in terms of syntax, imagery, and stanza construction. In Renaissance verse syntax reinforces the line; in Baroque verse it counterpoises it. Renaissance verse is built up out of coordinate wholes; Baroque verse heightens the dominance/subordination of its stanzaic elements.

B164 Peck, James W. "Variation in Milton's Samson Agonistes: A Study of Its Occurrence in Syntax, in Diction, in Phonology, and in Metrics." D.A. 31 (1971): 3517A (Alabama). Examines 881 variations in these four dimensions in a sample of 306 lines, in search of a variance in their distribution in "climactic" vs. "non-climactic" passages (429 and 452 variations, respectively). Results are very tentatively affirmative.


B166 Perry, Bliss. A Study of Poetry. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1920. 396 pp. Chapter IV, "The Poet's Words," is long and now elementary. Chapter V on "Rhythm and Meter" explores the "conflict and compromise" of "timers" and "stressers," the rhythm of prose, concepts of quantity and stress, the analogy with music, and "enjoyment." That this exposition continues to be modestly relevant may be demonstrated by Cable (J42). Chapter VI on "Rhythm, Stanza, and Free Verse" sensibly defines rhyme and stanza as other varieties of rhythm.
Part II of the book treats the Lyric.


B173 Ranta, Jerrald. "Counting and Formal Analysis." *JAAC* 29 (1971): 453–66. Urges the use of an analysis which takes into consideration the "mathematical" relationships and patterns of poems, on the grounds that such a procedure has been commonplace for traditional (metered) forms of poetry and will therefore inform us about the new (twentieth-century, unmetered) poetry as well, which, as yet we do not understand. Sample analyses of poems by Stevens and William Carlos Williams.


B175 Raymond, G[eorge] L[ansing]. *Poetry as a Representative Art*. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1885; 5th rev. ed. 1903. Chapters on "elocution" and force, pitch, duration, timbre; meanings of sounds and meanings of words; and the idea of representation.

Divides literary language into three domains, the "rhythmical, metrical, and prosaical." Curiously, he believes the historical order of these modes to be prose, metrical prose, blank verse, and finally rhyme. Of these, rhyme is defended as the highest mode of human utterance.

In the second and third installments we discover that though rhyme is the acme of utterance, mere mortals can only attain excellence in measured prose.

A valuable study of Eliot's technical development over his entire career. Rees analyzes sound patterns, meter, and rhythms, showing how Eliot ground and worked his tools of craft for the sake of meaning. Moreover, we see clearly how Eliot continually expanded his repertoires, adopted new models, and even radically altered his styles and principles throughout his working life, the several major styles having distinctly different prosodic (besides structural, imagistic, or thematic) bases.
See also the condensation.


A sensible suggestion that students most successfully learn the facts of prosody -sound devices and metrical forms- not as rote facts but as expressive devices, which establish or augment the meaning of a poem, displaying the "inseparability of form and content." Sample analyses from MacLeish, Tennyson, Housman, and Shakespeare.

Here Richards examines and demolishes two assumptions about form in poetry which appeared in his test protocols. The first is "the notion that regularity is the merit of verse; Richards acknowledges the concept of metrical tension--"departures from and returns to the pattern"--but dismisses it too as suggesting a distinction between the rhythm/sound of words and their meanings. Any such distinction he adamantly denies. The second assumption, then, is "the notion that poetic rhythm is independent of sense." For any who believe that sound patterns in verse have independent meaning or value, Richards offers his famous "dummy" of stanza XV of Milton's "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity."
Throughout, Richards insists on the irrefrangibility of Form and Meaning.

Chapter 5 (pp. 147–88) treats rhythm, chapter 6 (pp. 189–239) Tone Patterns, and chapter 7 (pp. 240–59) Visual Devices. In retrospect it is difficult to see why M.s. Rickert should adopt such a defensive tone about her graphic, or
schematic, techniques: they seem not so much controversial as trivial. Her statistical analyses, too, seem tepid in comparison with the complex linguistic work of four decades later. See her odd graphs and charts facing p. 180, on pp. 226–27, and 256–57, then consider the judgment of one of her critics: "No kind of statistical study will open the student's mind to the poet's evaluation of human life." These methods were also applied by Chapin and Thomas (B31).

B183 Rickey, Mary Ellen. "Herbert's Technical Development." JEGP 62 (1963): 745–60. Since Herbert's entire corpus of English verse spans only six or seven years, about all that can be said of his development concerns the poems added to The Temple from 1629–33, as opposed to those known to have been written before 1629. In the former he increased his use of: (1) figurative titles; (2) multiple-stanza-form poems; (3) more subtle hieroglyphs; (4) contrapuntal structures; (5) longer and more elaborate stanzas; (6) controlled feminine endings; (7) stanza-linking; and (8) carefully modulated variation, while also decreasing his use of the sonnet form.


B187 Routh, James E. The Theory of Verse. Atlanta, 1948. 156 pp. Apparently privately printed (typescript on wire-laid paper), this volume collects three essays previously printed (E323, D253, J258) and expands them into a full theory of verse-structure, ranging from the basis of rhythm in physiology (Scripture's work) to a theory of meter, with additional chapters on line-length, rhyme, stanza, diction, subject, free verse, prose rhythms, etc. Routh's theory is that verse differs from prose in (1) rhythm, (2) vocabulary, and (3) subject-matter. "The essential quality of verse then is the placing of accents at fixed intervals of time." He allows secondary stresses (promoted or suppressed for the meter) and metrical pauses; his scansions distinguish verse-accent (ictus), word-accent, and sense- (sentence) accent, and these are all found to coincide in four cases out of five.

B188 Schiller, Daniel H. "W. B. Yeats: The Evolution of a Prosodic Style." DAI 38 (1977): 2780A (Columbia). An argument that Yeats's versification was "far more complex and far less traditional" than has been usually assumed. Furthermore, the conventionally accepted stages of Yeats's development (early-romantic, middle-symbolic, late-naturalistic) are not borne out by examination of his prosodic development, if we keep to the strict chronology of composition; what we find is a steady os-
oscillation between polarities, a dialectic of fixity and flux, which includes "three phases of radical looseness and ambiguity" very close to free verse.


R reminds us of the long tradition of speaking of the "numbers" of poetry.

Taylor was a man of action, force, and power in his verse-making, as were Donne and Herbert; he sought force of expression, as did Shakespeare, and did not shrink from "unliterary" forms. He treated strict form as he did theological typology--as a basis for freedom rather than restraint. His metrical, stanzaic, and rhyme forms reveal in him an animal power, a literary barbarism.

Not imagination, emotion, insight, or even meter, but this: poetry is expressive, prose communicative.

The section "Rhythm, Texture, and Form" on pp. 215–20 describes a program for isolating single characteristics which are patterned in a text while excluding all others.

Beginning with the conviction that criticism is "a variety of experience which has nothing in common with the art experience, and indeed may be its opposite," Shapiro sets out to show that the rhythmic organization or prosody of a poem is its "meaning." He analyzes a bit of Cummings and offers six conclusions: (1) "poetry is not language, but language sui generis which can be understood, paraphrased, or translated only as poetry"; (2) "a linguistic sense is carried over to a poem from prose and plays a minor part in the workings of the poem"; (3) "the poet thinks as poet not as thinker"; (4) "the translation of a poem is a near impossibility"; (5) "paraphrase is a total impossibility"; and (6) "rhythm is perhaps closer or as close to 'meaning' in poetry as linguistic sense.
Would anyone mistake this for formalist criticism?

A reviewer will be met with patient forbearance when he announces that a book, which he publicly owns first fired his passion for a subject he made his career, is an excellent book, an inimitable book, durable, and chock-full of insights, good sense, taste and discrimination, wide reading . . . . et cetera. Such a response will make it all the harder for him to be heard, and hence for the merits of a very solid book to be known. So too will the price of the book, which in this case is unreasonable, and prohibits wider undergraduate use of the best handbook of verseforms in print.
Paragraphs 5–8 of Part I give us some glimpses of Shelley's views on sound and meter, as well as his constant reminder that "the popular division into prose and verse is inadmissible in accurate philosophy." On sound and sense he is not entirely clear ("sounds as well as thought have relation both between each other and towards that which they represent, and a perception of the order of those relations has always been found connected with a perception of the order of those relations of thoughts") or novel. On meter he is more of both: "poetry in a more restricted sense expresses those arrangements of language, and especially metrical language, which are created by that imperial faculty, whose throne is curtained within the invisible nature of man [the imagination]. And this springs from the nature itself of language...."


The method has interesting implications; Pope used it as well.


"How freedom and obstruction meet in lines of poetry is one of the richest technical questions in the art... When impediment in poetry is not carefully, wholly, boldly, even willingly seen, there can be no successfully artistic dealing with it... The more it is poetry, the more the triumph and the impediment merge."


Chapter 4 discusses general matters of versification.


"When it is composed in an oral tradition." Recognizing oral transmission of poetry as radically different from transmission of written texts, Sinclair devises an ingenious informal experiment in transmission and then analyzes the results. He postulates three general categories or types of changes in transmission: "analogy, the influence of the immediate language environment; revision, the influence of the modern speaker's habits of language; and approximation, the influence of his inexact memory for detail." Intriguing. See also TLS, 3 June 1965, p. 455, and 10 June, p. 475.


A plentitude of examples showing rhythmic and sound patterns in the verse which produce an immense variety of effects. Notice also the collection of quotations (Chapter 3), "Notes on Technical Matters," pp. 18–31.


The second chapter of this brilliant study treats closure and the formal structure of sonnets, strict stanzaic forms, couplets, blank verse, and free verse. In contrast to what we might otherwise have expected, Smith shows that no formal structure per se entails closure: "there is no formal principle which in itself
can prevent a poem from continuing indefinitely." Structural repetition, stanzaic forms, meter, and rhyme may produce effects which can be exploited by the poet to achieve closure, but they do not themselves necessitate it. Sonnet structure will round off one sonnet but does not prohibit a series of sonnets, for example. The couplet at the end of the Shakespearean Sonnet enhances closure by the strategy of "terminal modification," but if the thematic structure is weak no formal structure can be successful alone. In couplet verse the couplet has the status of a single formal unit and is therefore equivalent to all the other devices of systematic repetition; in itself its closural resources are very limited. Blank verse achieves closure best by abandoning blank verse, as at the end of the scenes in Shakespeare. Free verse, perhaps surprisingly, offers resources fully comparable to those in the other modes. In general, as the constraints of formal structure weaken, thematic material must take on a greater burden in effecting closure.


Very unjustly neglected, probably because of a very effusive style, but well worth an afternoon's inquiry. The great virtue of the book is that underneath considerable talk of "organic rhythms," "rhythm and imagination the two essentials," and the like, Smith fixes on the abstract notion of pattern as the crux of verse-structure. He recognizes the antinomian relation of repetition and variation, and he makes a strong effort to systematize all the various prosodic elements as varieties of a single complex poetic pattern. The treatment of meter is especially good: Smith recognizes the tension between "prose stress" and "metrical accent" [ictus] very clearly and derives therefrom five varieties of verse in English: (1) verse in which accent and stress virtually coincide, (2) verse where stresses fall evenly on certain of the accents, (3) faint distortion of the meter by the stress, (4) independent stress pattern, and (5) independent prose movement.


Rambles from its subject, which is the rules and law underlying phenomena.


Suggests, by opening a great chest of instances, examples, and literary lore, that "poetry" and "prose" are by no means polar opposites but in fact interpermeate each other often.


Whether or not this thesis indirectly or directly illuminates these patterns in the poems themselves I do not know. Is there more patterning in the criticism than in the poetry?

Emphasizes that "the motive and end of any art whatever is to make a pattern." Pattern, web, is the desideratum for all art. Hence, "all that we have a right to ask of any prosody is, that it shall lay down a pattern for the writer." Result: "added difficulty, added beauty." Stevenson has a keen perception of the counterpoint of rhythm on meter, the great virtue of variety, and the subtle but important sound of the language. The elements of style: word-choice, pattern, rhythmic variety in phrasing, and melodious sound-patterns.


B211 Thorpe, Clarence D. "Some Notes on the Differentiae of Prose and Poetry, with Special Reference to the Theory of Coleridge." *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Sciences, Arts, and Letters* 14 (1930): 567–600. Most directly a very long inquiry into Coleridge's notion that the fundamental differentia of poetry and prose is not external form but internal mental state, i.e., passion. But the essay ranges into the fields of the twentieth century as well in search of specimens. Meter is discussed on pp. 580–83.

B212 Tillotson, Geoffrey. "Pope and the Common Reader." *Sewanee Review* 66 (1958): 44–78. Traces Pope's efforts (and achievements) at writing that sort of verse which speaks from the very center of common English usage--the easy, familiar use of the mother tongue that is instinct in us all. Pope's efforts lay mainly in diction (varying registers to suit the subject), syntax (naturalness of word-order), meter (which allowed both conciseness and complexity), and rhyme (allowing latitude within the rule). For his craft Pope's especial skills were inventiveness and imagination. A long essay both for and about the general reader.

B213 Trisolini, Anthony G. "An Analysis of the Structure of Hart Crane's The Bridge." *DA* 20 (1959): 2441A (Northwestern). "Structure" here includes sound-stratum, on which level a miming or mirroring of theme can be perceived: the verse is relatively smooth when the protagonist is in a balanced state of mind but rougher when he is disturbed.


who tries to make the original suggestion look ludicrous, ludicrously.


B218 Viereck, Peter. "Strict Form in Poetry: Would Jacob Wrestle with a Flabby Angel?" Critical Inquiry 5 (1978): 203–22. Wished prose by a practicing poet on the palimpsest of the "non-word language of rhythm" underneath the verbal/syntactic/semantic layer of language. Heavily emphasized also are the biological and psychological correlates of rhythm: "rhythm and probably also rhyme are not luxury but . . . our very anatomy." Proposes "crisscross rhyme"--the sound ending one line and beginning the next or another close by.


B220 Von Hallberg, Robert. Charles Olson: The Scholar's Art. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1978. Based on his dissertation at Stanford University in 1975. Passim. Chapter 5 (pp. 170–204) offers the most sustained treatment of prosodic matters, especially Olson's stylistic development, but notice also the section on "Process Poems: Prosody and Syntax" in Chapter 2 (pp. 65–73) and the one on "Discursive Form" (pp. 141–50) in Chapter 4.

B221 Waaub, Jean-Marie. "A Few Notes on Poetic Technique." Revue des langues vivantes 27 (1961): 83–116. These very extensive "notes" on metrical technique are careful, methodical, and thorough: from a set of disputed scansion the author derives most of the principles of modern metrics, such as the distinction between meter and rhythm, the Relative Stress Principle (not all the stresses in a line are equally stressed, nor are the unstressed equally unstressed--what counts is relative contiguous values), a double-tiered scansion system (two degrees of metrical ictus, five degrees of rhythmical stress), varieties of pauses ("rests," "breaks," "links"), the effects of word-length on tempo in the line, degrees of enjambment, sonal texturing, and the effects of such texturing (quantity, density, pattern) on tempo also. All of this exemplified in essentially only one Henry Treece poem.


laureatus. Otherwise there are useful and interesting remarks on versification scattered abroad, passim.


This chapter amply contributes to the lucidity of the whole. Wellek distinguishes at once between performance and pattern (metrics can be based on the latter), (pure) sound and meaning ("there is no 'musical' verse without some general conception of its meaning"), and inherent vs. relational features of sound (the former form the substance of euphonics, the latter of rhythms and metrics). Rhythm is anatomized to show the variety of possible approaches, and mimetic (onomatopoetic) sound--discussed at some length--is divided into three related problems: "actual imitation of physical sounds," "elaborate sound-painting," and "sound symbolism." Theories of rhythm may be classed into those that require some notion of periodicity at all and those broader ones which do not. Worse, "the very foundations and main criteria of metrics are still uncertain, and there is an astonishing amount of loose thinking and confused or shifting terminology even in standard treatises." The types of metrical analysis are the graphic (longs and shorts; simply inapplicable), the musical (merely records a performance), and the acoustic (objective laboratory analysis of sound; ignores meaning and subjective perception). Insisting that meaning is indispensable to metrical theory, Wellek approves of the statistical methods and radical assumptions of the Russian Formalists: "The fundamental unity of rhythm is, then, not the foot but the whole line . . . . Verse is conceived as an elaborate contrapuntal pattern between the superimposed metre and the ordinary rhythm of speech." Altogether, the emphasis in this account falls on the primacy of meaning in versification theory.

Elaborating Northrop Frye's distinction between these two fundamental modes, the aural and the visual imaginations, Welsh inquires into their primitive origins, finding there eight roots of lyric: riddle, emblem, image, vortex, ideogram, charm, chant, and rhythm. It is this last (Chapter 9) which interests us: Welsh discusses stress rhythms in Skelton and Wyatt. See also the discussion of rhyme on pp. 226–32, and of stress-rhythms in Beowulf and later, pp. 232–49.

B227 In Welsh's subsequent book based on this dissertation, Roots of Lyric (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), the chapter on Rhythm (pp. 190–242) is completely revamped, the section on Skelton being expanded, augmented by a following discussion of Wyatt's meter, and prefaced by a long commentary on the development of the pentameter line, for which material Welsh draws heavily upon Thompson (E91).

Poe was diligent about sound-patterns, careless about his rhymes, inordinately conservative in meter, modern and sensible about diction and syntax, and irregular about stanza-form. Werner concludes that Poe had a good ear for sound and rhythm but lacked the requisite discipline (or skill?) to confine himself to strict forms. Critique by Allen (G2).
B229 Whitehall, Harold. "From Linguistics to Poetry." Frye (A15), pp. 134–46. Brief illustration of the valuable-if not indispensable-assistance linguistics can lend to poetic criticism of Sound Patterns (e.g., the C-V-C description of syllables), Rhyme (vis-à-vis the Great Vowel Shift), Metrics (isochronic, iso-accen tual, isosyllabic, and isosyntactic systems), and Syntax.

B230 Wilbur, Richard. "The Bottles Become New, Too." Quarterly Review of Literature 7 (1953): 186–89. In the fascinating symposium on "Experimental and Formal Verse." Wilbur produces a brilliant defense of the uses and virtues of Form. "No poetry," he thinks, "can have any strength unless it continually bashes itself against the reality of things." No "poems made out of poetry." And how can the abstract, gesturing form reproduce the reality? How can it be that "paradoxically it is respect for reality which makes a necessity of form"? How can the poet's combat with form enhance his expression? By difficulty. "In each art the difficulty of the form is a substitute for the difficulty of direct apprehension and expression of the object." A sort of distraction, then, or subtler flank attack. Take rhyme, for example: "the presence of potential rhymes sets the imagination working," providing unexpected possibilities and directions to pursue. Or in meter: surely the poet using meters and stanzas to get at the Real will prefer the "formidably meaningless" to the "alien." By such means does the poet find his freedoms in restraint. Cf. B16 and E1549.


B233 Wimsatt, W. K., Jr. "In Search of Verbal Mimesis (Supplement to 'Laokoön: An Oracle Reconsulted')." Yale French Studies 52 (1975): 229–48; rpt in his Day of the Leopards. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976. pp. 57–73. A seminal essay: Wimsatt here confronts directly the nature of the verbal medium itself in its effort to mime (express, represent) reality, as opposed to its other function—to refer to the external world. Distinguishing between the graphic and phonetic forms of language, Wimsatt collects eight types of verbal iconicity, together with luminous examples. The schema deployed here is provocative, and more than worthy of book-length treatment. The issue raised is very likely the most crucial one in all of poetics.

B234 ------. "Verbal Style: Logical and Counterlogical." PMLA 65 (1950): 5–20; rpt in his The Verbal Icon: Studies in the Meaning of Poetry. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1954; rpt London: Methuen, 1970. pp. 201–17. Taking his cue from Fowler's Modern English Usage, Wimsatt notes the figures of speech available in prose and their concomitant faults if overused. In poetry, the "figures" are meter, rhyme, alliteration, etc., and even though we do not have good terms for the faults of taking them to excess, still they are, Wimsatt argues, distinctly meaningful verbal signs, signs which construct a matrix of meaning that is "counterlogical."

B235 Winter, D. "Verse and Prose." JEGP 5 (1903–5): 271–86. The common (hence confused) usage of the terms "Poetry" and "Prose" fails
to distinguish between essences and media; in regard to the former, the proper antithesis is Poetry vs. Non-poetry, while for the latter the terms should be Verse vs. Prose. Can the formal devices of Verse produce effects not obtainable in Prose? No. They can produce other effects, but not necessarily better ones. Most of the world's masterpieces are writ in verse simply on account of convention (tradition). Indeed, verse is the more difficult medium because the rules in versifying are aids to composition. Prose allows greater freedom, naturalness, and individuation of rhythms. And "nearly all versification is to some extent a process of fitting thoughts to a form of expression, instead of fitting the expression in every detail to the thought." A wonderfully refreshing, sober, sensible piece of heresy.


B238 "Words Connected with the Technique of Poetry." Word Study 6, 1 (1930): 1–2. Etymologies of poetry, meter, rhythm, etc.
